

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT!

EASTERN GREY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

NATIVE RANGE

Eastern Grey Squirrels are native to Eastern North America (South-Eastern Canada to Eastern US).

DESCRIPTION

Eastern Grey Squirrels...

- Have a large body, twice the size of native squirrels
- Have a large, fat, bushy tail
- Have a 23-30 cm long body, with a 19-25 cm long tail
- Can be grey, brownish or black in colour, with a white or red underside
- May be tinged with cinnamon colour on hips, feet and head
- Fold tail over head when resting

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Eastern Grey Squirrels...

- Compete with and displace native squirrels
- Compete with native birds for tree cavities and bird feeders
- Damage native trees and seedlings such as Garry Oaks
- Are costly to home owners as they dig up lawns and eat garden bulbs
- Chew on wire, remove shingles and shakes, and chew through eaves to nest in attics, roofs and chimneys
- Damage trees and deplete nut production (hazelnuts and walnuts)

BIOLOGY & SPREAD

Eastern Grey Squirrels have naturally dispersed across land as they are able to survive in different habitat types. People have also aided in their dispersal by releasing them into new habitats. It is believed that there have even been cases of Eastern Grey Squirrels hitchhiking on vehicles, allowing them to cover greater distances.

HABITAT

Eastern Grey Squirrels inhabit deciduous and mixed forests in B.C., along with urban areas. Further spread of this species into new regions of B.C. is of high concern.



Photo Credit: Rebekah D. Wallace, University of Georgia. Bugwood.org 542363

PRIMARY IMPACT:

Displace native species and cause damage to homes, properties, and orchards.



Photo: Steven Katovich, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org 32973

DID YOU KNOW?

Around 1914, Eastern Grey Squirrels were given to Stanley Park in Vancouver as a gift, thus initiating their spread in B.C.

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LOOK-ALIKES

There are three squirrel species in B.C. that could be confused for the Eastern Grey Squirrel. Refer to chart below for distinguishing features of each species.

Distinguishing Features	INVASIVE Eastern Grey Squirrel (<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>)	NATIVE Douglas Squirrel (<i>Tamiasciurus douglasii</i>)	NATIVE Red Squirrel (<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>)	INVASIVE Fox Squirrel (<i>Sciurus niger</i>)
Size				
Colour	Year Round Type 1: grey with cinnamon tinge Type 2: brown-black	Summer: grey-brown Winter: brown * Black side bar between front and back legs	Year Round red-brown	Year Round grey-brown
Underside Colour	Year Round Type 1: white Type 2: reddish	Summer: orange/yellow Winter: grey	Year Round white	Year Round dark red
Eye Ring	none	orange/yellow	white	orange-red
Tail	bushy	narrow, less bushy	narrow, less bushy long	white fringe
Known Locations in B.C.	Lower mainland, Okanagan and Vancouver Island	Southwestern coastal areas of B.C.	Across B.C., including Vancouver Island and Haida Gwaii	Interior of B.C. close to Okanagan falls

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND ONE?

Report Eastern Grey Squirrels, or any other invasive species via the **Report Invasives phone app**, or via the **webform** available on the B.C. Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group website:

www.gov.bc.ca/invasive-species

HOW CAN WE STOP THEM?

- Do not possess, breed, release, sell or transport Eastern Grey Squirrels in B.C.
- Do not feed Eastern Grey Squirrels
- Control access to attractants such as garbage, compost and bird feeders
- Use a Squirrel deterrent in bird seed to repel squirrels and still attract birds

REPORT INVASIVE SPECIES
www.reportinvasives.ca

