

Friends of the Anglesey Red Squirrels Trust

# Red squirrel conservation: news and updates

## Hafan y Wiwer Goch—Funding Success!

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We are delighted to announce that that we have been awarded a £300,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund Wales. This grant represents 78% of the funding for the £384,000 'Hafan y Wiwer Goch' red squirrel project which will be launched this summer.

The project application was submitted in February 2009 and contained a wealth of learning activities and op-

portunities for people to get actively involved in the practical conservation of red squirrels on Anglesey and in northern Gwynedd.

The successful Heritage Lottery Fund funding will enable us to further develop the red squirrel hair sample genetic archive, reintroduce red squirrels into the Llangefni Dingle, get local people involved in population monitoring and collect-

ing information about red squirrel distribution, and finally to eradicate grey squirrels from the island to create a UK red squirrel. We will be outlining the project timetable, events and activities on our project website :

[www.redsquirrels.info](http://www.redsquirrels.info)

Anyone interested in getting involved should contact us using the details on page 4.

### Kingsbridge Caravan & Camping Park

Graded



by Wales Tourist

Llanfaes  
Beaumaris  
Isle of Anglesey LL58  
8LR

Tel. 01248 490636  
Fax: 01248 490736



Supported by

**The National Lottery**<sup>®</sup>  
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



## Red squirrels on Marain Common, Llangoed

Red squirrels are now active in woodland and gardens at Marian Common, Llangoed. The woodland has hit the local headlines because scrub was removed and a series of roads cut through the site.

Local resident Tom Pollock sent us this wonder-

ful picture of a red squirrel on a peanut feeder (*right*) and images of squirrels feeding in Sitka spruce and larch trees.

We have supplied a squirrel feeder and are happy to provide nest boxes and advice on woodland management should the Llangoed Community Council require our help.



## Newborough Forest Update— Community letter

Newborough forest forms part of the Abermenai SAC (Special Area of Conservation) which has large areas of open sand dunes. For almost seven years the Countryside Council for Wales has stated that significant areas should be felled to make more open sand dunes.

Two years ago the Welsh Assembly started a review of the CCW demands and recommendations, essentially widening this into a look at all management factors affecting the SAC.

Without labouring the point, there have been numerous complaints about failures of process and that evidence of a range of independent scientists was not being reflected. A letter was being drafted by Anglesey NGOs and the community to lodge a further complaint.

We are however, delighted that the Welsh Assembly officials have recognised that a balanced review of the available information was in danger of being lost, and that they have now put in place measures to ensure that they are provided with the complete picture.

The Chief Scientific Officer for Wales will eventually consider all the evidence and may call in specific experts for their opinion before he makes a decision.

We will keep you updated on events.

### How to get involved

Let us know if you are interested in any of the following ways in which people can get involved in the project:

- Collecting red squirrel hair samples using hair tube traps.
- Monitoring mammal activity in your garden using footprint traps.
- Setting up a supplemental feed hoppers.
- Having a red squirrel nest box.
- Monitoring woodlands for red or grey squirrels.
- Helping with information stalls and displays.
- Trapping grey squirrels.
- Managing our online website and facebook pages.
- Fundraising.



Red squirrel in Menai Bridge garden 2011  
© Gwen Gardiner

The following organisations have funded the Anglesey red squirrel project 2011-2014:



LOTTERY FUNDED



Carreglwyd House and Grounds

## Can't see the wood for the trees...

We often meet local landowners who have planted trees under the Better Woodlands for Wales scheme and are keen to talk about red squirrel conservation. Sadly all too often the tree species mixtures are dominated by birch, ash, alder, willow and rowan and contain small amounts of oak and hazel. This unfortunately is a poor habitat for red squirrels because the species produce very small seed.

Although red squirrels will eat tree flowers and buds, their diet is dominated by tree seeds, and population densities are highest in woodlands with Sweet chestnut, hazel, oak, beech and walnut. Coniferous trees such as Scots pine, European larch and Norway spruce all produce very favourable seed crops and squirrels will also benefit from lodgepole pine and Sitka spruce if these are present in woodland stands.

We would recommend that anyone considering planting new woodlands with a view to creating an attractive red squirrel habitat should minimise the use of small seeding broadleaved trees such as birch, ash and willow and place an emphasis upon oak, hazel, beech and sweet chestnut with both larch and Scots pine scattered through any mixture. Large leaved lime, cherry and ash can be included and European walnut too.

Where early seed production is important, species such as hazel, Scots pine and larch will produce seed by the time the trees are ten years old; attracting red squirrels and benefiting a range of woodland species.

## Red squirrels take Gwynedd by storm

In 2009, we reported that two male red squirrels had been found in the Treborth Botanical gardens and in woodland in the Faenol estate, both sites located on the Gwynedd side of the Menai Straits. This year we have had a flurry of reports from Penrhos Garnedd and Caernarfon Road in Bangor including a red squirrel crossing the Ysgol Garnedd school playing fields.

In Treborth gardens red squirrels are now seen regularly and we are working with Nigel Brown of Bangor University to learn more about the animals. Hair samples are being collected which we will have analysed by researchers at the Wildgenes laboratory based within The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, Edinburgh Zoo.



THE ROYAL  
ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
OF SCOTLAND

Grey squirrels are controlled in Treborth gardens because they do significant damage to some of the specimen trees within the arboretum. The species also poses a major risk to red squirrels because grey squirrels carry Squirrelpox virus and adenovirus infections.

## Reporting Squirrel Sightings

We are keen to hear of any red or grey squirrel sightings from Anglesey or the Bangor area of Gwynedd. Sightings can be sent using an online form:

<http://www.redsquirrels.info/sightings.html>

Or emailed direct to us: [mail@redsquirrels.info](mailto:mail@redsquirrels.info)

Or alternatively give us a call on 07966150847



Join us on 24th September at the  
**Anglesey Woodland Festival**  
To be held at the Carreglwyd estate  
<http://carreglwyd.info/>

**NEW ADDRESS**

Friends of the Anglesey Red Squirrels Trust,  
Plas Newydd Country House  
Llanfairpwll,  
Anglesey  
LL61 6DQ

Phone: 07966150847  
E-mail: craig@redsquirrels.info

**Don't forget we have moved address...**

In the autumn we announced that the Anglesey Red Squirrel project has a new address.

From 1st October 2010 we have been based Plas Newydd, the ancestral seat of the Marquess of Anglesey and a property now managed by the National Trust.

With extensive gardens and broadleaved woodlands, red squirrels now flourish within the grounds, and we too are delighted to now call it home.



**"Red Squirrels in Wales"**

**Squirrel Web-Cam**

[www.redsquirrels.info/squirrelcam.html](http://www.redsquirrels.info/squirrelcam.html)

**Forthcoming Events:**

**2nd August, Plas Newydd Summer Fair**  
**18th Sept, SquirrelFest, Brockhole, Cumbria**  
**24th Sept, Woodfest, Carreglwyd, Anglesey**

**Let us know your red squirrels sightings!**

We are always keen to hear about red or grey squirrel sightings from Anglesey or Gwynedd.

We are especially interested if red squirrels are visiting gardens or bird tables and for copies of any pictures which we can put on our Facebook page. Send to: [mail@redsquirrels.info](mailto:mail@redsquirrels.info)

Anyone finding a sick or injured red squirrel can call us on [07966150847](tel:07966150847) (24hrs)

In the event that a dead red squirrel is found, please collect in a plastic bag and contact us [07966150847](tel:07966150847) (24hrs)

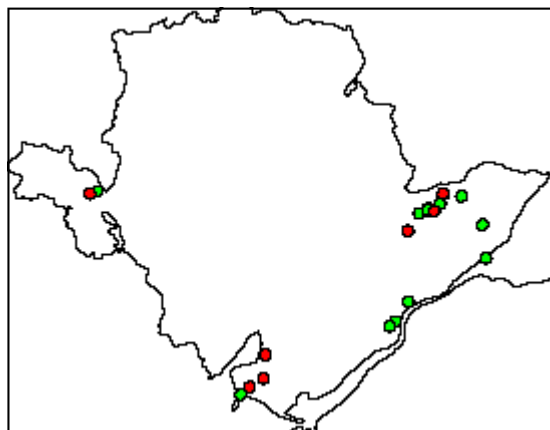
**Red Squirrel virus research update**

A pioneering research project into adenovirus and Squirrelpox virus in red and grey squirrel populations is being carried out in north Wales.

David Everest of AHVLA Labs Wybridge, Dr Colin McInnes of the Moredun Research Institute, Prof Steve Rushon of Newcastle University, Mark Stidworthy of IZVG and Dr Craig Shuttleworth are examining blood and tissue samples from squirrels and Woodmice to determine viral exposure and infection rates, and quantifying how frequently pathological disease is caused.

The study is also quantifying what levels of risk there are for diseases to be passed between different woodland rodents, and is looking at records of Squirrelpox virus infection in Wales since records began to determine how antibody levels change through time.

We will keep you updated on the latest news.



Green circles- Negative cases of the virus  
Red circles- Positive adenovirus cases

**Media Coverage Summer 2011**

The Anglesey red squirrels featured on programmes broadcast on S4C and on ARD German Public Broadcasting Channels. We would like to thank ARD & Kristina Heideman for their generous donation to the project.