

Red Squirrels Trust Wales

TREE CHATTER

Red Squirrel Disease Research Project

Inside this issue

- HLF Round One application success for Anglesey Reds
- Rhys Jones' Wildlife Patrol
- Wanted FED or ALIVE
- The Luckiest Granny on Anglesey
- New Merchandise
- Painting the Town Red (Red Squirrels in Gwynedd)
- Newborough & NRW

A pioneering research project has been launched in Gwynedd by Red Squirrels Trust Wales and Bangor University.

Undergraduates are investigating the frequency and pattern of interactions between red squirrels and greys in Treborth Botanical gardens. The research is also looking at ways in which scientists could improve squirrel monitoring methods and their estimates of population densities.

Elsewhere, in Gwynedd RSTW are continuing the long term surveillance of viral infections in resident grey squirrel populations. Screening encompasses Squirrelpox virus, rotavirus and adenovirus, with sam-



ples being sent to AHVLA Weybridge for analysis.

Adenovirus outbreaks have caused localized but significant mortality in both wild and captive red squirrel populations in North Wales. We therefore hope the research will enable us to better protect the reds

For Sale

Red Squirrel and woodpecker', by Philip Snow BA, from his new book 'Tall Tales from an Estuary' *



Painting the Town Red

RSTW launched the 'Painting the Town Red' project in the autumn of 2011 with the aim of clearing grey squirrels from a 90km area between Llanberis & Bangor.

Work is well underway with the project developing a large network of volunteers trap-

pers. Red squirrels have since been found in the Ogwen valley and in Llanberis!

Anyone interested in getting involved in grey squirrel control should contact Dr Craig Shuttleworth using the details on page 4.



***The image is available as a Ltd Edition Print, with 1/3rd of the proceeds going to Red Squirrels Trust Wales. To purchase the book or print visit www.snowartandbooks.co.uk**

Dr Rhys Jones Investigates Red Squirrels!



Picture: Dr Rhys Jones on Anglesey

Dr Rhys Jones & David Bailey have been filming red squirrels in Gwynedd for the new series of Wildlife Investigations. Red Squirrels Trust Wales invited the team here to look at some emerging threats to the wild red squirrels living in the Bangor area.

Using a combination of wildlife stealth cameras and photographic hides, Rhys and his dedicated team have already obtained some fascinating footage of forest animals in the Faenol estate. And they will be continuing their investigations this spring with the resulting program Rhys Jones' Wildlife Patrol being broadcast later in the year on BBC One Wales.

DID YOU KNOW:
There are fewer than 1000 red squirrels remaining in Wales

Newborough Forest—A Fresh start with NRW

The Trust warmly welcomed the apology from Natural Resources Wales (NRW) about the failure of Forestry Commission Wales (now merged within NRW) to develop the red squirrel conservation plan for Newborough. Three years of complaints fell on deaf ears until the merger and an opportunity to raise the issue at a public meeting attended by both Albert Owen MP and Rhun Iorwerth Am.

NRW to take forward red squirrel conservation at this key Welsh site. To that end, we were delighted when NRW announced they would plant 2000 hazel samplings in 2014 and allow the Trust to plant sweet chestnut.

Anyone wanting to see reds in Newborough should visit the Llyn Parc Mawr car park on the road between Newborough & Malltraeth.

We look forward to working with

Wanted: Fed or Alive! Send us your sightings!



A Big THANK YOU to everyone who has sent in sightings of red or grey squirrels.

The information is invaluable as we try to document the natural expansion of the islands' red squirrel population and attempt to remove any remaining grey squirrels.

Last year we did not catch any grey squirrels on Anglesey. In mainland

woodlands bordering the Menai Straits and within 2km of the bridges we removed over 500, so the danger of island re-colonisation is a very real threat.

Sightings can be reported online or by phone. See our contact page for further information.

Anyone wanting a wooden squirrel feeder can also contact us!

'The Luckiest Granny on Anglesey' - by Honey Tolman

When we first moved to our house near Talwrn nearly 20 years ago, Craig Shuttleworth knocked on our door one day and asked if he could put up a squirrel trap. He explained to us how he and his team were working to eradicate the grey squirrels on Anglesey so that the reds could return. I thought this was a wonderful idea and readily agreed to fill the feeder in the trap and check it regularly. In the 20 years the trap has been up I have never seen a grey squirrel or a red one.

I have four things I want to see before I die, an otter in the wild, badgers, alive rather than squished on the roadside, a green woodpecker and a red squirrel!

On April 28th I opened my bedroom curtains to see what I thought was a red squirrel dart across the lawn!

I thought I must have imagined it, and that it couldn't possibly be one.

I cannot describe the sheer excitement and joy I felt a few minutes later as I opened our back door to let the dogs out and there sitting just a few feet away from me on a wall was the squirrel! I was wide awake now and simply thrilled! I immediately worried that the dogs would scare it off, they are very noisy vocal hounds who pick up the scent of any animal and make an awful lot of noise when they do! However the squirrel ran up a small hawthorn tree which I hang bird feeders on and just hid there until the dogs were safely inside again. After a short while it came down through the branches to feed on the peanuts in the bird feeder.

I really wanted to get my camera as I needed proof for myself and my family that I really had witnessed this sight on this Sunday morning! I was sure if I went to fetch the camera I would be too late and also miss out on watching it! I couldn't resist it though and rushed off to fetch it and was relieved to find it still there eating breakfast! It was so well behaved and allowed me to open the door to take lots of photos without scurrying off. I just loved it! I couldn't believe that here I was at last not only being fortunate enough to actually see a red squirrel, but it was in my garden only a few feet from my door! Just amazing! I hadn't had to go on a squirrel search and spend hours searching in tree tops, hiding and keeping quiet and hoping that just maybe I will see one. It was right in front of me!

Within minutes his picture was on Facebook and I suddenly found myself the envy of all my friends!!

I contacted Craig to report my sighting and he bought round a feeder and a nest box for me to put up. He told me of the Red squirrels in Wales page on Facebook which I immediately joined and found a host of squirrel lovers from as far away as California who were sharing their squirrel stories and photographs with other red squirrel lovers. What a great idea this Facebook group is! It has given me somewhere to share some of the hundreds of photographs I have taken of my little squirrel over the last couple of months to a very receptive audience!

I expected that I would probably not see the squirrel again after this first day, but how wrong I was! He, and it is a he as my photos have proved to me, is around nearly every day. We have a huge ancient ash tree in the middle of a lawn where he seems to like to play for hours. I put a feeder on this tree and he can be found most days having his breakfast or tea. So I have turned into a granny who hides in bushes and flower beds with my camera!

The sheer pleasure I am getting from observing this squirrel is immense and it is all down to the fabulous work done by Craig and his team over the years. How fortunate we are living on Anglesey to have this dedicated team who it seems have successfully rid us of the grey squirrels and given us back our native charming, comical, endearing little red ones! I am sure one day most gardens on the island with trees will be able to enjoy the wonderful sight of watching red squirrels outside their back doors as I am.

A Thank you to Craig hardly seems enough for the joy I am getting from watching this little animal daily. I am



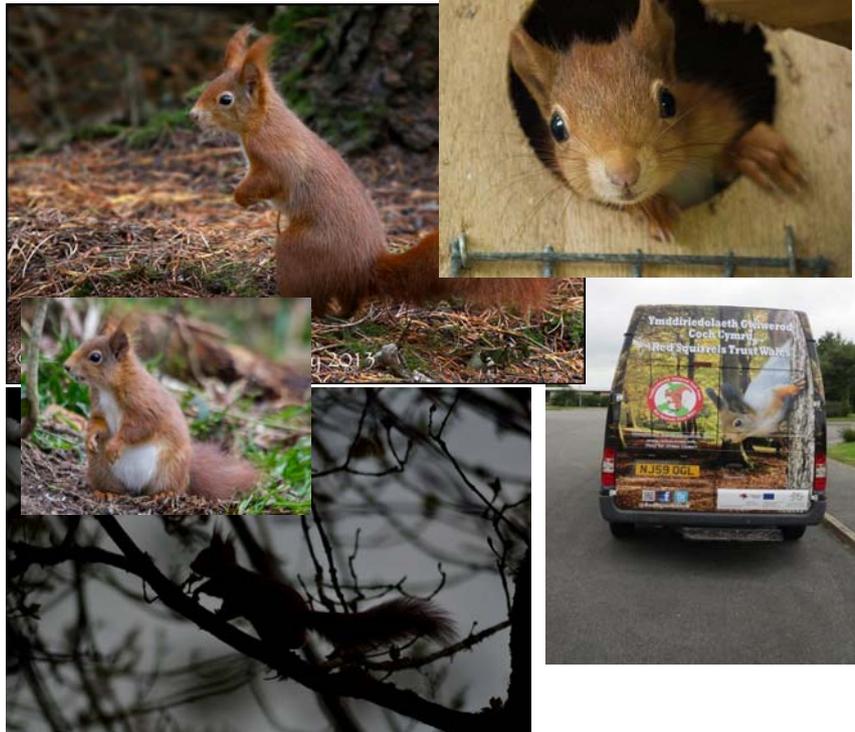
hugely grateful and I will be heartbroken if he moves on! I dearly hope he finds himself a young Miss to bring along to share the garden with him.

Thank you Craig and team for enabling me to be able to tick off one of the four sights I want to see before I die! It was more than worth waiting for.

Now, where are the otters?!!

Red Squirrels Trust Wales
Plas Newydd
Llanfairpwll
Isle of Anglesey
LL61 6DQ

Mobile: 07966150847
Landline 01248 725735
E-mail: craig@redsquirrels.info



Want to keep up with the latest news and events? Why not Join our Facebook page “Red Squirrels in Wales”

Red Squirrels are no Mugs!

The Trust have been developing a range of new red squirrel merchandise including book marks, calendars and mugs which we hope will raise funds for local red squirrel conservation.

The latest mug design was crafted by local artist David Jones of Beaumaris and is one of a series of designs featuring Anglesey history and landmarks.

We were delighted when David agreed to our commission and the resulting design is fabulous!

The squirrel mug is for sale in Beaumaris or can be bought direct from the Trust for £10 with all proceeds going to red squirrels conservation on Anglesey or Gwynedd.

Our new webpage and squirrel App will go live soon and will contain an online shopping facility!



We are on the WEB
Www.redsquirrels.info

“Red Squirrels in Wales”