



Westmorland Red Squirrels

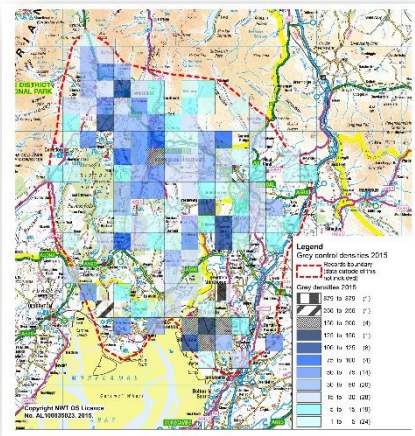
About Recording

Part of our work involves keeping records of red and grey squirrel sightings and for the conservation work we do to protect red squirrels. If you are a member of the public and have seen a red or grey squirrel, you can report your sighting using our online form: <http://westmorlandredsquirrels.org.uk/sightings/>

The following sections give information on keeping records for control and monitoring and how and when to submit them. The WRS website gives a form to record your conservation activity: <http://westmorlandredsquirrels.org.uk/squirrels/recording-forms/>

Why do we need records?

Letting WRS have your grey squirrel control and your monitoring figures tells us what is happening across our area and helps to identify any gaps in the grey control effort. We send our cull figures on to Red Squirrels Northern England (RSNE) who produce cull maps for us like the one illustrated. These maps encourage others in our area to take on grey control because they can see that they will not be working alone. Being able to show that we keep adequate records and that we have comprehensive grey control cover helps us to gain credibility with, and support from, the larger conservation organisations, and also helps when we apply for grant funding. We are very grateful to our volunteers for carrying out grey control and monitoring and really appreciate it if they can make the extra effort to report their figures.



About recording forms

Red Squirrels Northern England provides a recording form that allows for the recording of grey and red squirrel sightings and grey culls, and can also record trap pre-baiting, the various monitoring techniques (for example: cameras, feeders, Flir cameras) plus the amount effort that's gone into this conservation work. The form is used across the North of England and allows RSNE to compile a regional database of red squirrel conservation activity.

The RSNE form covers all circumstances and can be used by anyone - from the person with a single trap in their garden through to full-time red squirrel rangers. The form can also be printed out and completed by hand.

You can download the RSNE recording form from our website: <http://westmorlandredsquirrels.org.uk/squirrels/recording-forms/>

Westmorland Red Squirrels

Information we need you to record – the basic essentials

You should always include the following basic information:

1. Your **name** (only your initials will be used in the statistics)
2. The name of the **place(s)** where the conservation activity took place – give the nearest town/village/estate, then the woodland name. For example: Staveley, Craggy Wood.
3. A **grid reference** – either 6 figure or 10 figure – for each location. For example, NY457017 or SD4637792786. If you have several traps or monitoring sites within a particular wood, you can use a central grid for all of them.
4. The **period for which you are reporting**. Ideally, we'd like your figures broken down to give **a total for each calendar month** of reporting for each location. Use the start and finish dates for the month in the two date columns: 01/06/2016 and 30/06/2016.
5. The **method** – T for Trap, S for shoot, or your method for monitoring. Each method used at a location should have a separate line in the spreadsheet.
6. The **number of greys culled or monitoring results** at each location during the period of reporting.
7. Please also record any **red squirrels seen or trapped** (and released) at any of your control sites during the reporting period

Further information to include

The forms have a **Comments** column which can be used to record anything unusual such as non-target species caught and grey squirrels caught in breeding condition late in the year. You can also use this column to record the sex and age (adult/juvenile) of squirrels caught - this is entirely optional. For example: 1AF, 2JF, 3AM, 4JM.

Recording monitoring activity

Because we've known there are grey squirrels present across most of our Westmorland Red Squirrels area, monitoring for greys has not been a high priority, although our trappers usually do some monitoring before deciding where to place their traps.

The RSNE recording form allows for the recording of the various monitoring methods - wildlife cameras, hair tubes, feeder monitoring and using FLIR cameras.

As grey numbers fall, we expect monitoring to become increasingly more important as a stand-alone activity. Please get in touch if you plan to do some monitoring and would like help with recording.

Recording effort and pre-baiting

The RSNE recording form also asks for the number of traps or cameras you used and the number of days your traps were set to catch, or the number of days you went shooting or were monitoring – which combined with the other data shows the conservation 'effort'. You can also record any pre-baiting you do prior to setting your traps to catch. We would welcome this additional information if you can provide it on the RSNE form, but it does require disciplined personal record-keeping and some detailed form-filling, which we don't expect from all our volunteers who have already given up their time to carry out grey control. In addition to the grey control reporting form, there is Catch/Kill form on another tab in the RSNE Excel workbook that allows you to record individual details of each squirrel trapped or shot – again, we don't expect this extra information from all volunteers.

How often should you submit your recorded figures?

Please submit your cull and monitoring figures to Westmorland Red Squirrels after the end of each calendar month – ideally by the 7th of the following month.

Alternatively, you can let us have your figures every 3 months, 6 months or even annually – whatever works best for you. If you are submitting less frequently, we'd still like your figures broken down into monthly totals, if possible.

RSNE produce 6-month and annual grey control maps for our area, so to have your culls included on these maps we need to have all your January-June figures by the end of the first week in July, and all your figures to the end of December by 10th January (in the following year).

Ways to submit your recorded figures

- 1) The best method for us is for you to **submit your records electronically** on the RSNE form provided, with the completed form sent as an **email attachment** to: steph@westmorlandredsquirrels.org.uk. If at all possible, please avoid attaching a scanned version of the form because the data cannot then be copied and pasted into the master spreadsheet.
- 2) For those without email, the forms are also designed to be printed out and completed by hand. The forms can be **posted** to: Westmorland Red Squirrels, c/o Ulthwaite Fold, Kentmere, Kendal LA8 9JH. A handwritten form can be scanned and sent as an email attachment as an alternative to posting.
- 3) If you plan to collate the records for a sub group of volunteers before submitting them to Westmorland Red Squirrels, please get in touch – we're very happy to help you to get started.

Help with grid references

Grid references can be either 6 figures (eg SD 406 986) or 10 figures (eg SD 40890 98882). For our area, the letter pre-fix is NY from a line roughly to the north of Troutbeck Bridge and SD for anywhere to the south of there.

To Find a Grid Reference Online

UK Grid Reference Finder www.gridreferencefinder.com enables you to find a grid reference by using your cursor to pinpoint the location of your sighting on a map, and then right-clicking to produce a pin marking the spot you've selected. Left-clicking on the pin will then show its grid reference in a tag. The satellite view is easier to work with once you've zoomed in.

Just copy your grid reference from the tag and paste it into your sighting report or record.

To Find a Grid Reference from a Map

If you prefer to use a map to find your grid reference but need a reminder about how to do it, the Ordnance Survey provides a guide to the National Grid here:

<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/docs/support/guide-to-nationalgrid.pdf>

Any questions?

Please contact us if you have any questions about keeping records. This includes any questions about the computing side – computer experience differs widely, so better to deal with questions as they arise rather than trying to anticipate where there may be difficulties. Please email your questions to: steph@westmorlandredsquirrels.org.uk or telephone: 01539 821714.