

PAWS & CLAWS

Living with Wildlife – More on Squirrels

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www.wildlifeinfo.ca

The American Red Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) is a much smaller species, less than half the size of the eastern grey squirrel, but what it lacks in size it more than makes up for in spunk. It frequently makes its home in coniferous or evergreen trees such as pine, spruce and cedar.

While it shares many habits of the grey squirrel, there are some distinct differences. It's more territorial and quite aggressive in chasing the larger grey squirrel away. It seldom ventures far from trees and while you may not always see it, you can hear it's chick-chick-chick sounds, warning of an intruder.

In midsummer, it stashes hundreds of pine cones when they are still green, storing them in damp places called middens which prevents the scales from opening and the seeds dispersing. Its success is owed to the wide variety of food it relies on. Besides the cones it eats nuts, buds, flowers, mushrooms, a wide variety of insects, and sap in season. In rehabilitating young orphans, we found they definitely had more of a 'sweet tooth' than the greys – with a real liking for fruit.



Like the grey squirrel, in caching tree seeds, the red squirrel plays an important role in reforestation.

The other local squirrel is the Northern Flying Squirrel (*Glaucomys sabrinus*). Few of us have the privilege of observing flying squirrels in that they are nocturnal and most active between sunset and sunrise.

Although larger than the Southern Flying Squirrel, both species are small and delicately built. A large fold of skin called a patagium, extending from their wrist to their ankle, serves as an air foil, allowing them to glide effortlessly up to fifty yards from tree to tree. Another gliding assist is the squirrel's flat tail which serves as a rudder.

They have huge black luminous eyes – a characteristic of night animals – and exceptionally soft, silky, dense grey-

brown fur. Their perfectly round pink mouths, add to their enchanting quizzical expression, leading some to call them 'imps of the forest night'.

Flying squirrels are very sociable, with adults feeding and playing together and as many as twenty occupying the same den during winter.

Their distinctive physical characteristics are evident from birth. When in care at the Centre, they would cling to the formula feeding syringe with tiny feet that were attached to this large umbrella-like fold of skin, making them appear like little old ladies wearing a shawl.

This remains the height of the birthing season for wildlife. Remember to consult www.wildlifeinfo.ca before taking any action.

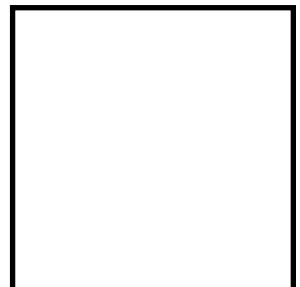
Pet Adoptions



#3242 Autumn D/S/H Spayed Female
3 years



#3667 Sawyer D/S/H Neutered Male
3 years old



#3453 Toby D/M/H Neutered male
5 years old

PET OF THE WEEK #3675 JASPER



Jasper was brought to the shelter in March, he had been a stray for several months. He was in terrible condition when he was first brought in, his fur was badly matted and full of burrs requiring a few patches of hair to be shaved. Jasper is now healthy, and ready to find a good home. He is a 4 year old, D/M/H neutered male. Jasper is a friendly cat, he likes attention and can be quite affectionate. Jasper is tolerant of most cats, but gets along best with females. He is very outgoing and curious, he likes to explore. Jasper can play rough and would be best suited in an adult home.

Arnprior Humane Society

Please note: Arnprior Humane Society has many other companion animals available for adoption. Featured animals are adopted quickly! To learn more about adopting an animal from the Arnprior Humane Society Website: www.arnpriorhumaneociety.ca Email: district.sPCA@bellnet.ca • Telephone: 613-623-0916