

## The Story of the Red Squirrel..So Far !

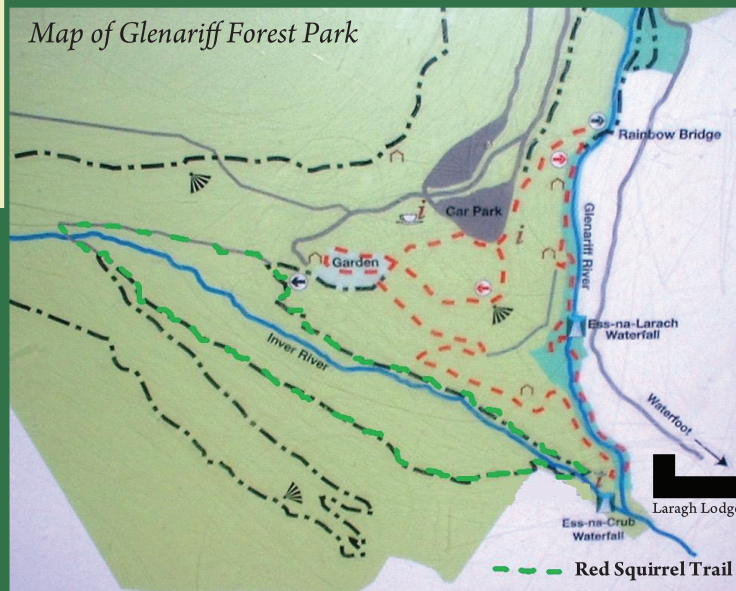
The Red Squirrel is the native European Squirrel. Commonly found throughout the British Isles when the area was extensively wooded

During the 17th century when timber was needed for building the great English shipping fleets, for houses and fuel, Ireland was almost stripped of its huge forests.

This coupled with hunting this species for both food and fur drove the Red Squirrel population to the point of extinction in this country.

In the 18th century a number of breeding pairs were re-introduced to this country and the Red Squirrel began to thrive. The closest release to North Antrim was near Toomebridge.

Then mankind intervened again and in 1911 a number of Grey Squirrels were brought from America to “Castle Forbes” in Longford as a wedding gift to some local Gentry and so began a spiral of decline which now sees the Red struggling to survive.



## Report all Sightings

It is important that we receive as many reports as possible please contact us on the Hotline number and let us know what you see.

**0871 3157 376**

<b>Location</b>	
<b>Time</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	
<b>Red or Grey</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Contact No.</b>	

## The GREY Menace

The Grey Squirrel is an Alien and Invasive species.

The 1976 Wildlife Act protects the Red Squirrel and makes it illegal to trap or keep one captive. The same act forbids the release of any Grey Squirrel trapped and designates them as vermin.

The Grey Squirrel simply “out eats” the Red when they invade an area. They are able to digest unripe nuts and berries that the Red cannot and so clears the area of food.

In the past few years a good number of Red Squirrels found dead have died due to starvation.

The Greys can also carry a Squirrel Pox virus that does not affect them but will kill the Reds.

There is a need for an effective Policy of Grey Squirrel Control in all areas and positive steps taken to eliminate them where they threaten Reds.