

# Glens Red Squirrel Group

## Annual Report 2019/20



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## **GRSG CHAIR'S REPORT**



Liz Weir, Chair of "Glens Red Squirrel Group", 2017-2020

In November 2019 the Glens Red Squirrel Group committee paid tribute to the work of long-time volunteer Dennis McBride who stepped down from his role in helping our work in Glenarm. Dennis worked tirelessly there for ten years and was very helpful in introducing our new volunteer Colin Urwin to the tasks which need to be done there.

Over the year the question of volunteer recruitment is one which has concerned our committee, several of whom like myself are ageing. It is vital that we bring on new active people who have a passion to preserve our native Red Squirrels and who will do more than simply pay their membership, though we are indeed grateful for that income. We are so lucky to live in one of the few places where our Irish native Red Squirrels can be seen and local people have the opportunity to help the local Glens Red Squirrel Group preserve these beautiful creatures.

Due to covid19 restrictions it was felt that this year the group had a responsibility not only to keep our reds safe but to keep the people of the Glens safe as well. With the R number on the up it was felt that the group had an obligation to do as much as possible to prevent Covid19, so with this in mind we didn't run any public events during the last few months.

In the current pandemic we felt that was best for all but it has meant that we have lost our main fund-raising opportunities so we urgently need the support of the local community to continue our work.

Liz Weir

Chair, Glens Red Squirrel Group.

### **MBE for our Chair**

Congratulations to Liz, our Chair who was awarded an MBE in the 2019 New Year Honours list. She was awarded this for her services to the Arts and to Education.

## **Grey Squirrel Control**

From the start of our record keeping in 2-4-2011, we have logged 572 Grey Squirrels dispatched across the Glens with 49 being dispatched this year. The majority of these dispatches happened in Cargan as part of our buffer zone to prevent greys making their way into the upper end of Glenariff Forest. The second area that provided a large number of squirrels was the Torr area. We have picked up several greys across our historical trapping sites and this is one reason why we maintain these monitoring points throughout the Glens and at set key buffer zones. We have seen that in areas where we have Pine Martens that we are having less grey if any grey activity at all.

Over the last year our volunteers have looked into each and every report that we have received as best we could. In a lot of cases, the "Reds" turned out to be greys. It is very easy to mistakenly identify the wrong colour when all you see is a flash of a tail, especially as a lot of our reds have a whitish tail. We welcome all reports, regardless of the colour, please keep them coming.

Those who are trapping are passing their information back to Daniel McAfee and all dispatches are logged in group records and in the Centre for Environmental Data and Recording (CEDaR).

## **CEDaR**

The information recorded is

Date

Grid Reference

Sex of animal

Weight

Who Dispatched

Date recorded to CEDaR

We ask the dispatcher to provide a photo and it is logged with the CEDaR report as proof. Each dispatch is given a GRSG number and logged to CEDaR with that number. If we do not get enough information we will log it on our GRSG records but may not be able to log it with CEDaR. We have been officially recording with CEDaR since 2014. The three key species we log are Red Squirrels (543), Grey Squirrels (290) and Pine Martins (35). We do find other animals on our trail cameras, but we only record these three, live sightings, RTA and dispatched greys.

The number of reds recorded is not an accurate number as our Rangers and Volunteers do not record each and every sighting of a red that they have seen. Mainly because they are visiting the same sites regularly.

We only log our Grey Squirrel dispatches once a year now, as we found that we were having trap sites traced down within 3-7 days of the logging record so to prevent this, all records will be made once across all sites and with limited information given. We did mark them as sensitive but were advised not to as this can cause issues with mapping (Blocks out large areas).

## Forest Service Northern Ireland and GRSG Partnership.



Over the last number of years and from the formation of the group we have worked with the Forest Service Northern Ireland. This partnership in our early years was vital to the work we did and still do in the Glens. Forestry Service property's (Ballycastle, Breen, Ballypatrick, Glenariff and Glenarm) offer an opportunity for members of the public to access large areas to walk and run and the opportunity to come in contact with its wildlife. This is where we, with our feeding sites give people the chance to see our native Red Squirrels that make the forestry's their home.

This partnership has allowed us to highlight the fact that "Yes" we do have Red Squirrel in the Glens. An issue we had found is that people didn't know we had Red Squirrels in Northern Ireland let alone the Glens but with our work with the Forest Service NI and within their Forestry's we are educating the young and the not so young about NOT only Red Squirrels but about much of the plants and animals that call these areas their homes.

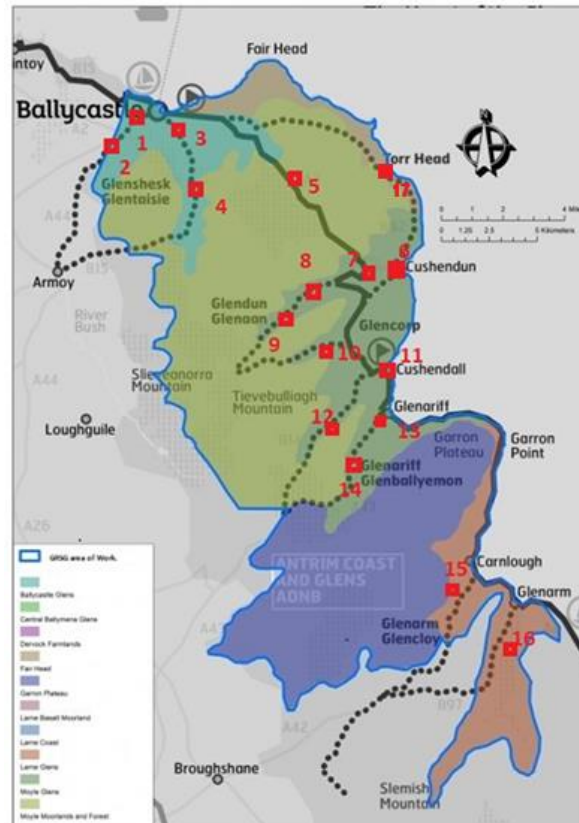
The Forest Service NI have supported us with feed for two of the sites that we operate in across the Glens, the two sites supported are Glenariff and Glenarm. We are very grateful for this support as feed is a large outgoing for the group and one of the most important parts of the work we do. By providing supplementary feed for adults and young reds, we have found that Red Squirrel numbers are increasing and so they are expanding to new areas.

Thankfully our healthy Red Squirrel numbers are linked with the overall health of our Red Squirrels. Our volunteers do keep a close checks on our squirrels conditions. Part of this good health is down to very little encroachment of Grey Squirrels within the Forest Service NI property's that we work in. We believe there are several reasons for this, one is because of the publics vigilance and forestry staffs vigilance as they are quick to report to us any greys they see. A second reason is because most of Forest Service NI property's in the Glens are home to Pine Martens. The presents of Pine Martens does have a negative impact on Grey Squirrel behaviour and abundance in an area, the concentration of Pine Martens in Forest Service NI property's vary from property to property but we do pick them up when monitoring and going about our work.

The Forest Service NI staff that we have made link with within the Glens area are a vital asset to the work we do and assisting us with that work. If it's topping up feed bins, informing us of work taking place or assisting with activities. We must give a BIG THANKS to Forest Service NI Educational Guide, Liz O'Connor, who has assisted with education walks that we have held over the last year, Liz's knowledge and manner of portraying this knowledge to those on the walk is brilliant. Liz is a true asset to the Forest Service NI. We also must thank Jim Marshall. Jim has been key in our planning for setting up site in areas to ensure no works are planned that could impact on equipment, etc. We also feedback to Jim on any issues we may find on our weekly duties in the Forest Service NI property's, such as fallen trees that may cause injury to the public, any damage to roads, fences bridges and any damage done due to weather or antisocial behaviour. This works well for us and we hope, also for the Forestry Service NI too. We also want to thank the men in Glenariff forestry yard, they are more than willing to help and they keep an eye on the reds in the yard as well, they all are very helpful and we are very grateful.

Over all we see this partnership going from strength to strength for the protection of Red Squirrels in the Glen and we are very great full for it.

# General Report on Feed and Monitoring Sites.



## Working areas.

Feed sites that are open to the public to view are:-

- 1 Ballycastle Forest
- 6 Glenmona Cushendun (Temporally shut down for ongoing control.)
- 7 Cregagh Wood (Temporally shut down for ongoing control.)
- 11 Cottage Wood Cushendall
- 14 Glenarriff Forest
- 16 Glenarm Forest.
- 15 Carnlough.

Feed sites that are not open to the public:-

These sites are out of public view and are used to monitor if there has been any Grey Squirrel activity. Most of these sites have cameras covering them all the time. Some cameras are moved between sites as we have a limited number of cameras.

- 2 Glentaisie
- 5 Ballypatrick
- 8 & 9 Glendun
- 3 & 4 Glenshesk
- 17 Torr Head

Numbers of additional feed sites:-

Glenarriff 6, Ballycastle 3, Cushendall 2, Capecastle 1, Moyarget 2, Ballypatrick 1, Cushendun 2, Tavanaghan 1, Gaults Road 1. These sites are not covered by camera but are in location that Greys have been seen/ reported or a single animal has been removed in the past. Cameras can be set on feeders if needed. Some of these sites are within private land/ house holders, who would report back to group Rangers if any grey activity takes place. We have other sites throughout the Glens that are privately maintained which we have limited input to unless requested to be looked in on, if owners are away, etc.



## Active members reports on their Feed / Monitoring Sites.

### Hanging Wood

A mix of Oak, Hazel, Ash and Holly with no Conifer trees. The mixed site has a wide range of tree ages. It has a variety for wildlife and plant life and is set aside, not to be grazed, but from time to time livestock (sheep) will get into the site. The site has a large Badger set with up to 8 Badgers living in it. This site was set up as a control site to impact on the number of Greys Squirrels that were making their way into Ballycastle Forest. The site had a number of Greys when it was first set up and no Red Squirrels, after a number of Greys had been removed, a set of Red Squirrels were found to visit the feeder. Shortly after the Reds appeared a female Pine Marten was found to use the site and no Greys were seen, unfortunately the Pine Marten is not a regular visitor though it can come several times a week.

There is only a pair of reds in the area and they appeared to have only had one set of young this year. There was a third adult red that visited for a week but it was chased off at every opportunity by the resident squirrels. One grey appeared but was only there for a day or two it never used the feeder or paid it any attention, only passed through the site. The Female Pine Marten that would have been in this site in the past has not been seen at all this year she may have moved on or fell victim to the road that has claimed 3 badgers and 2 foxes that I was able to see while visiting.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger and Vice Chair.

### Ballycastle Forest

Ballycastle Forest is a mix of mature conifer blocks and broad leaf planting between 15-20 years old. One of the first sites for a GRSG observation site in 2008 and with assistance from the CCGHT was one of 3 Squirrel Trails in the Glens alongside Ballypatrick and Glenariff. These all became part of the Glens Red Squirrel Safari Trails.



The new sign that we put up in Ballycastle Forest, Fairhill Street Entrance.

There are 8 feeders within the forest as part of the Squirrel Safari and they are well used and situated on the main Ballycastle Forest walk/ road way. This walk starts at the low entrance to Ballycastle Forest, part of the Ballycastle railway line and then round the forestry loop to the forestry yard and down what is known locally as Donnelly's Lane, back to the low entrance. All the feeders are well used and well known by many of the walkers and users of the forest, who regularly inform us of reds they have seen and if there are any issues with the feeders, such as damage or lids that may have come off.

We have 1 fixed Trail Camera point in Ballycastle Forest. This is at the feeder on the big bend known to all the locals and walkers as the "Big Bend Feeder". It is in a stand of Larch. These Larch are all that remain of the original Ballycastle Forest, planting started in 1931. These Larch were planted in 1936. The reason this camera is fixed in this location is because it is the first location for any encroaching

greys, when they come to the forestry. This year we had one grey at this feeder. It did not use the feeder or stay in the area it was tracked down to a nearby farm yard and the farmer was able to report it had been shot successfully.

We received a sighting in September of a grey at a feeder on the Safari route, this feeder is not very far from the Big Bend feeder. The camera was in place for 6 weeks with no grey spotted. We did however pick up a very grey "Red Squirrel". We have found this a number of times since starting work in the forestry in 2008 that some reds will have an almost "grey" coat in the autumn and winter months. We received a sighting in early February/ March from one of the many mountain bikers of a grey on one of their cycle trails at the upper end of Ballycastle Forest. A camera and feeder were put in place for 2 weeks but only reds were spotted. This grey made its way to the nearest housing development and was there for a few days before it moved on.

The resident Pine Marten has been very regular with two visits each week to the big bend site. We have seen no impact on our red numbers or on our red activity at this feeder. Sadly at this time of writing, April, the Pine Marten has not been seen for 3 weeks. I can only hope that he is looking for a mate. Over the last few years, we noticed that he does go walk about, but it will normally be in February or March but not as late as this.

This year we were able to take the Country File team to look of our reds.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger

## **Glenshesk**

I have a number of monitoring sites for watching reds and watching for grey throughout Glenshesk. Additional sites are set up as required when a Grey Squirrel is reported. I have a large network of locals, who keep me informed about any squirrel that they see, red or grey, the latter being removed soon after their appearance. The Pine Martin pair had three kits this year and thankfully they are all healthy and very active, even during the day.

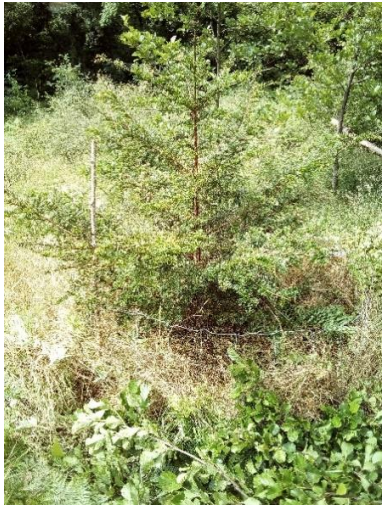
Gerard Mc Caughan, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger

## **The Curragh.**

This site was given to the group to be planted out with trees that would benefit the Red Squirrel population in Glenshesk. For those that do not know the site, it is between the Greenans Road / Glenshesk Road junction and the Glenshesk River.







We had some fruit this year, mainly for the birds.

The Yew trees are doing well, as are the Scots Pines and Beech. We also have a lot of soft fruit bushes that were cleared by the birds as soon as the fruit became nearly ripe.

Gerard Mc Caughan, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger

## Carey

There are a number of permanent sites in the Carey area. Additional monitoring sites are added as required. There is a healthy population of Red Squirrels about Maghera and some have moved up to the Drumnakeel area.

We got reports of a Gent releasing a number of Grey Squirrels, out of the back of his car in one of the Murlough Bay car parks. We have suffered over the last few years from people who do not want Grey Squirrels on their property. So they trap them and rather than dispatching them, they take them up the North Coast and release them. Little do they know about the damage that they are doing, never mind the laws that they are breaking. These greys are now trap shy and so are very hard to catch. We did not see them in Murlough, but we did notice them moving towards Ballycastle and we eventually caught them in different places in Carey and Ballycastle.

Gerard Mc Caughan, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger



## Murlough Bay

Mix planting in small blocks of Oak, Ash, Holly, Beech, Larch and Scot Pine, mostly along rock faces and the steep slopes of the headlands, a monitoring site from 2016 when the first grey was seen and removed. Monitoring takes place every four months for 2-3 weeks with a camera and a feeder. There have been two sightings reported to us, of a single red, by members of the public walking in the area. They were spotted around the rocks at different times so it posable they were stoats and not Red Squirrels. None were ever spotted on our Trail Cameras. This site is one of the areas we normally do as part of the "Presents and Absence" survey over the last number of years. The site is rich with wildlife with a large number of Deer. A healthy Rabbit population and in turn a good Fox population, which is not very common where there is such intensive sheep farming. Monitoring is still ongoing at this site and control will take place as and when needed.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger and Vice Chair.

## Ballypatrick Forest.

Large blocks of conifer planting with a small number of broad leaf trees which were all self-seeded. Originally part of the first Squirrel Trail but due to works within the forestry and illegal felling, the squirrel population in the area vanished or moved on. We have found that squirrel activity in the area around the carpark has never picked up to the same as it was in 2015-2016 pre this work.

We still operate a camera in the forestry, no feeder, but scatter feed areas for a few weeks and have found that squirrels activity in the overall forestry is good and that there are reds moving back into an area around the new board walk. We intend to put feeders into this area to determine the status of the red population here. The camera also showed that there are also several Pine Marten across the forestry and a large population of Deer. Bird activity can be mixed depending on location, along the edges and boundary's we picked up Jay, Magpies, Crows and a wide mix of small birds.

A good population of Wood Mouse exists across the forestry, unfortunately no owls were spotted in any of our monitoring.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger and Vice Chairperson

## Torr



An unexpected find. Small slip of trees on the Torr road less than 3 acres of trees that stretch from the sea up the cliff face. At its widest point it would be about 30 meters and its thinnest point, it would be 4-7 meters. The trees are a mix of Ash, Oak, Hazel, Holly and Sycamore all of various ages. The area has a small stream subject to rain fall that runs through it. You would drive past it before knowing you had. An eagled eyed, moth trapper on the way to put out a moth trap at Torr Head spotted a dead grey on the road between the two sections of trees and reported it with a few photos to confirm the report. He couldn't believe what he had found in this unlikelyst of places. A few days later, I went out with a camera and a feeder to see if it was a one off or something more. The camera was left for a week and over that week the camera picked up not one but several greys. Over the following days, 17 greys were removed, all adults, no young and all very weary of the traps. The only reason I feel these 17 were trapped so easy was because there was little to no natural food supply available at that time of year for

them and they were more than happy for this food source. Trapping had to stop because access to the road was closed off because of filming for a block buster movie. So trapping was stopped and will resume when the road is open again shortly.

I feel that the large numbers at this site may be the result of the illegal, release of greys because of the increased pressure we have caused around the Cushendun area. The person or person's doing it have moved around the coast and found this isolated planting of trees, there is a small lay bay not too far that would make it a simple area to pull in and let a squirrel or squirrels go. They could make their way to the line of trees. This is what I suspect is happening.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger and Vice Chair.

### **Cregagh Wood, Local Nature Reserve.**

The GRSG first developed a Feeding and Observation site at Cregagh Wood in 2009. The wood itself is an excellent example of an old mixed woodland and provides a varied habitat that lends itself well to nature trails. This has now become a well-established part of the group's areas of work. In 2015, the then, Moyle District Council took on the management of the wood as its first Nature Reserve. With changes in council, this then became the first Nature Reserve of the Causeway Coast and Glen's Council. The Hide was funded by the NGO Challenge fund and has been a great asset for the woodland with the GRSG using it and the Councils Biodiversity Officer running events at the Hide with a number of groups booked for use over the summer months.

The Group have been active with Grey Squirrel control in the wood from 2011 when the first Grey was seen at the fixed feed site. Over the years, Grey Squirrel control has become an active and continuing part of the work that takes place in the wood. This year, we have had fewer greys picked up on our monitoring sites in the wood. We have a number of monitoring sites within the Nature Reserve. All the sites that we use here operate as scatter feed sites, although we have feeders around the Hide, these are not filled to prevent the risk of reds and greys having direct contact with each other.

The red population has continued to thrive, we are picking up reds at all our monitoring sites and the nearby houses and farms are also seeing more red activity. On all of the group events at the Hide, we have been lucky to get a sighting of reds, some have been flitting sightings and some have been 30 minute to an hour, feeding frenzy. We have had a number of booking from both local and not so local photographers, coming to snap our Red Squirrels and the birds that visit the Hide. The Jays are still very nerves around the Hide but they are getting a little braver.



In 2015 a single Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was spotted in the wood. Over the last few years they have successfully had chicks and fledged young, this year has been no difference with a very public nest site near to the marked path, this took many on the hunt to get photographs of them.

I also spotted a Barn Owl twice this year with talks on going for the erection of a nest box for the bird, to offer it a possible nest site. There is an abundance of mice in the woodland that could sustain a pair. This year seen the information panels finally installed to complete the 2015 Heart of the Glens LPS Project, to open the woodland up to the public. Several GRSG members, Katie English and members of the LPS were there for the unveiling of the two panels, one at the Hide and one at the Chapel car park. The boards show a map of the woods, information on the wildlife that call it their home and a short history of the wood.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger and Vice Chair

## **Glendun**

Apart from the Glenmona and Craigagh Wood there are 3 additional monitor sites. These are along the river Dun on private ground. These sites have cameras as they are near areas that had been in the past, part of control programs. This year has seen a reduction in the number of greys being picked up in these sites. The reason for this may be because we have been very vocal in the area about the illegal release of greys that we have suspected over the last number of years, and the reasons for these sites being set up in the first place. The evidence we had at the time was the sheer numbers, the behaviour of these squirrels around traps and the age and condition of the greys.

These sites when no grey activity takes place, are looked every two weeks. There are reds in the area and they have been doing very well. This year has seen a boom in their numbers with some having a third litter, this may have been down to the mild weather.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger and Vice Chair.

## **Glenmona Feed site and Playground**

The playground is still shut down because of intermittent grey activity. This has not had an impact on the red in the area as the National Trust Rangers have increased the feeding they do in and around the workshop and have taken on trapping when any grey has appeared. Several feeders are located around the Glenmona grounds in private gardens. These owners have taken on trap monitoring when needed. There has been a small amount of interest in Grey Squirrel control from some land owners in the area who were given feeders to monitor their lands. They have had some success in the last few weeks at removing greys, with this it is hoped that if there are no additional sightings in the Glenmona House area, that the playground could be re-established.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger and Vice Chair

## **Cushendall**

I have several feeder sites around the Cushendall area. The main sites are Cottage Wood, Gaults road, River Dall and Glenville House. There are a few more sites that I use when needed. All feeders are observation / Monitoring sites, where I hope to feed reds as well as catch greys if they arrive. I have had many reports of Grey Squirrels being spotted in the area. When I investigate further the greys appear to have moved on. I feel it may be adolescent squirrels in search of a mate and a suitable living environment. I am continuing to monitor the situation. Later in the year when natural food resources are less plentiful, I hope to locate the greys that have been spotted and trap and remove them.

I find that the entire local population are very supportive of all attempts to save the local Red Squirrel population. They are very happy to report sighting of reds and want to get rid of the greys.

Raymond Watson, GRSG Volunteer



## **Glenariff and Parkmore Forest Park**

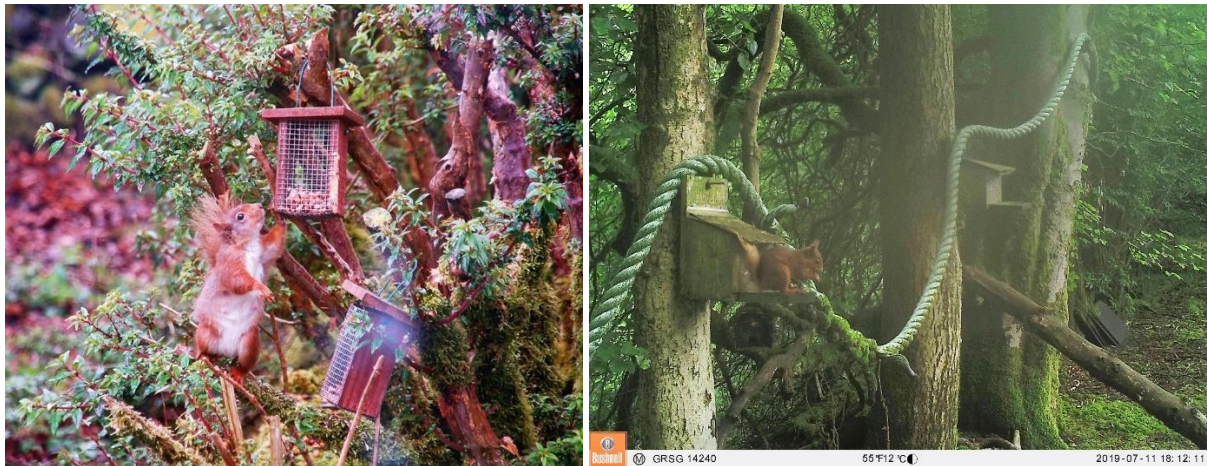
The last twelve months have been an exciting time in Parkmore Forest Park in Glenariff. We had a shutdown due to the Coronavirus when the Park was closed for a few months. However it didn't take us long to get back to normal and the squirrels did not seem to mind - they were as active as ever. Sightings are frequent, in fact one was spotted in a garden near the beach. Greys are rarely reported and a sighting is not always confirmed. We had an isolated Grey road kill about half a mile outside Waterfoot Village on the Glenariff Road, but I suspect it came over the hill from Cargan.

Our Reds seem to be in a very healthy state - Road kills are rare and the feeders confirm they are certainly enjoying their food. Visitors to the Forest Park have increased dramatically due to the Coronavirus and I would suspect this can only help the squirrels as some welcome titbits are invariably left behind.

So all in all it has been a good year for Parkmore Forest Park and I've no doubt there is a very bright future for our Reds.

Joe McKavanagh, GRSG Volunteer

## **Ballyeamon Barn**



Over the year Ballyeamon Barn has continued to be visited by Red Squirrels, up to three at a time who enjoy our feeders and running across the rope, part of my squirrel playground. When photographs are posted on social media, the response is terrific from friends far and near. When the guests are staying in the accommodation, they enjoyed snapping pictures from our upstairs loft, which has a feeder situated just outside its window. A real bonus for guests to the Glens, many of whom has never seen a Red Squirrel before.

Liz Weir, Chair of GRSG.

## **Martinstown and Glenravel**

Approximately 3 years ago I became a member and volunteer for Glens Red Squirrel Group, because I had a keen interest in nature and especially the Red Squirrel. This year has been exceptionally difficult to monitor due to Covid restrictions and as a result I have only been able to control the Grey squirrels in the Glenravel area. Hopefully by managing and controlling the Grey Squirrel population, it will encourage our native reds back to our woodlands and surrounding areas. By removing them as they come into this area, I am preventing them from moving down into Glenariff.

Paul McHugh, GRSG Volunteer



## **Carnlough**

I continue to service 5 feeders in the Waterfalls / Gortin Quarry areas. I have not replaced the camera that I had in that area, because of the theft of the last one I had there.

Feeders were supplied to a number of households in the area that had Reds Squirrels visiting their gardens. I have volunteers looking after another 7 feeders in the Ballymena Road and Largy Road areas (North & South of the village). I get good reports of numerous Red Squirrel sightings, especially of Kits.

Looks like Lockdown is going to tighten again so not much chance of going anywhere anytime soon. Because of this, I have been making and repairing feeders myself, it's wonderful what you can turn your hands to when needs must.

Gabriel McAuley, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger

## **Glenarm**

The Red Squirrels in Glenarm Forest are going from strength to strength. Not a day goes past without photographers tripping over themselves to get photographs of the many reds that are in the forest and surrounding area. Colin and his team are certainly doing an excellent job, which we all appreciate. The number of comments and remarks that we get regarding Glenarm Red Squirrels, thanking the Glens Red Squirrel Group for all the hard work and dedication that our volunteers put into feeding and protecting these precious squirrels, encourage Colin and his team, to continue there work.

# **Rangers Reports**

These are GRSG members / volunteers who have committed to giving extra time to actively pursue Red Squirrel conservation work on behalf of the group. They are badged representatives of the group, having a sound knowledge of both Red and Grey Squirrels. They are able to train volunteers in Grey Squirrel Control (as a non-native alien species), have knowledge of the legislation governing wildlife protection and animal welfare. They are able to co-ordinate volunteer activity and expand public knowledge on Red Squirrel Conservation and Grey Squirrel Control, as well as having an understanding and experience of practical conservation.

## **Daniel McAfee's Report**

This year has disappeared in a blink. It had been very busy up to March and with the current pandemic many booked events and planned walks had to be postponed to such times are more suitable for all parties. The walks I lead this year have been very successful, with all walks and walkers seeing Red Squirrels. This was fantastic to share with others to see their excitement, when seeing for many, their first Red Squirrel, no matter how big or small the group were.

This year's Squirreltober event was another success. I was very happy with the way things worked out even though there was less events happened this year. With a welcome addition to my family this year, I wasn't able to give as much time as in past years to Squirreltober events. Thankfully with the help from Liz O'Connor, Forestry Guide, she was able to take our planned Glenariff walk and I was able to assist with the information table at the Storytelling Festival. This meant that nothing on my planned activity list for Squirreltober had to be cancelled and this took some pressure off me.

Grey Squirrel control has been a big part of this year's work as per normal and with the help of fellow Ranger, Gerard Mc Caughan, assisting me with trapping throughout the year. This was of great help for giving me, more family time. I did feel this year that we had to do less trapping than normal in our historical sites. On the other hand we did find one new site, in the Torr area.

Feeding sites this year were attended, but work was done a lot quicker, I didn't have the time to sit and enjoy the squirrel activity on sites like in the past so the cameras were very important to me this year to

maintain an idea of what was happening. I had no issues with damage to feeders or theft of feeders, cameras or traps so this did help with getting the work done.

I was lucky to be approached to see if the GRSG and the Ballycastle squirrels would like to appear in the BBC Country File. This was a fantastic opportunity to "show case" the work that the group does in a UK wide platform. It was a full day filming, very different to past filming that I have taken part in such as "Lesser Spotted Journeys" for UTV and "Wild about Ulster" with Brian Black for UTV. This was a lot more staged and repetitive and they were slightly more pressing to get squirrels recorded, thankfully we did, even if it was for only 10 minutes on the show.

Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger

### **Gabriel McAuley's Report**

In November I organised a General Knowledge Quiz in the Bridge End Bar, Glenarm. This event was well attended and raised a lot of money for our funds. Many thanks to the locals for the "plugs" on their social media pages.

I assisted Daniel with a walk in Glenarm and a number of other events. I also represented the GRSG at Antrim Coast and Glens AONB Vision, Aims & Objectives Key Stakeholder in Carnfunnock Country Park. I have talked over the last year to a lot of farmers in the greater Carnlough area and have introduced a lot of them to Red Squirrel Conservation. Thankfully this is paying off as I get regular updates about sighting of reds.

Gabriel McAuley, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger

### **Gerard Mc Caughan's Report**

As a Ranger I had a good year. Grey Squirrel control and visiting monitoring sites took up most of my time. Again this year I have visited areas that I found were really beautiful and are unknown to most within the glens.

I have helped Rangers and volunteers with controlling greys. I was able to arrange for some of our volunteers to regularly visit new sites, mainly for grey control. Anyone that has reds in their gardens or land, are more than willing to feed and maintain them, themselves, which saves on volunteers time.

In September I applied on behalf of the group for the Micro Grant again and we were delighted to be awarded it again. I also applied for and got a Volunteer Grant from the Department of Communities, administered by Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI) which enabled me to organise a Volunteer night in the Old Church, Cushendun.

I helped complete our yearly report to the Charity Commission and conducted the yearly equipment audit which I started when I first took on the role of equipment caretaker. The Equipment Audit is very time consuming, but very necessary.

Gerard Mc Caughan, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger

## **Equipment Report.**

In late September we applied for the Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme, from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, administered by Northern Area Community Network (NACN). We got a few more Trail Cameras and Traps as we were getting to the stage where we had to move traps around the glens when we needed them for grey control. This Grant pays 85% of the cost, but the group have to pay for and buy the equipment first. We are out the total cost of the equipment

until we receive the money from the Department. All equipment was got and payment from the Department was received. Thanks to Sandy Wilson and the staff of NACN for their help with this Grant.

An Equipment Audit was completed as per normal on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2020. I find that this is a very time consuming process, but is very necessary so that we can keep control of all of the equipment that we own,

Because of the Micro Grant, we have been able to maintain our level of equipment. We had a camera stolen in Carnlough, which was disappointing, the Police were informed as normal. Some of our older cameras and other equipment is coming to the end of their lifespan and are giving problems. The damp air that we get from time to time, here in North Antrim plays havoc with our cameras and reduces the life span of our outdoor equipment. Once anything become unreliable, it is of little use to us. We continue to improve our security equipment so that our cameras and other equipment become more secure when being used.

Editor's Note: This camera was left back again at the site where it was taken from. Thanks to whoever returned it?

## **Squirreltober Report 2019.**

### **28<sup>th</sup> September** Cregagh Wood Walk and Hide visit

A great morning for a walk in the woods, a small group of six led by our Vice Chair and Squirrel Ranger Daniel McAfee. The woodland didn't disappoint with a sharp air of autumn and full of bird song and yes the flash of a Red Squirrel, not long after we entered the woodland with a second being seen and it stayed in view a little longer to let everyone see it. For many on the walk this was their first time to the woodland and the first time to see a Red Squirrel. The walk finished with a visit to the Hide for an hour with another Red Squirrel showing up, but giving us all the run-around as it was very hard to see.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> October** School Walk

Our annual October walk took place in Ballycastle forest with two of the Ballycastle Primary Schools, Ballycastle Integrated PS and St. Patrick and St. Bridget's PS. The walk was taken by Vice Chair and Squirrel Ranger Daniel McAfee. The walk covered many topics from Red Squirrels to seed distribution and touched on some of the environmental problems we now face. Sadly, no Red Squirrels were seen on the walk. For many, it was the first time they had visited the forest.

### **6<sup>th</sup> October** Ballycastle Forest.

A good morning with a fantastic turn out, all local to the area and for many, it was their first time to visit to Ballycastle Forest. We were lucky to see one red at the feeder. The weather was great and there was lots to see on the walk. Daniel led the walk with the help of Liz O Connor, Forestry Guide and Red Squirrel Education Ranger. All enjoyed the walk with several donations made to the group.



**12<sup>th</sup> October** Feeder workshop in partnership with the CCGHT, Cregagh Wood Cushendun Red Squirrel Hide.

The event was fully booked with a max of 15 people but very disappointingly only two appeared on the day. This event had been oversubscribed on the lead up to the event, with the opportunity if anyone cancelled, others could be added. Those who had booked had not given any word that they were not coming, which meant that others lost out on the day, this was very dishearten. Those who came got hands on and 15 feeders were made on the day followed by a short walk of the woodland. One red was seen at the Hide as the event was ending.

**20<sup>th</sup> October** Glenariff Forest Park Walk

10 people had booked on to the walk, sadly no squirrels were seen on the walk but two were seen by those on the walk not long after the walk was finished. Liz O'Connor Forestry Guide and Red Squirrel Education Ranger lead the walk. All enjoyed the walk and the water falls were in full flow.

The Glens Red Squirrel Group feel that this year's Squirreltober was a good success. The events ran from Ballycastle to Glenarm. We feel that we reached out to a lot of people that would not normally think of Red Squirrels and the Environment. We were more than happy to be in a position to inform them about the work we are doing.



# **2019-20 Monthly Report.**

## **April 2019**

### **Saturday Morning Hide opening during the month of April.**

The Hide was open every Saturday morning during the month of April. The number of photographer in attendance every morning was really uplifting. Some had travelled long distances because they had heard about our wonderful Hide. We had a Visitor from the Isle of Man who had heard about the group and our Hide through the internet and Facebook and had made a detour to visit it specially. We had a lot of locals from Ballycastle to Carnlough also attending. All visitors got to see Red Squirrels visiting the feeders and running around the ground near the Hide. Some great photographs were taken, both professional and amateur. There is a real need to have the Hide open more often, if we had the volunteers to do so. Most of the Professional photographer enquired how to get access at other times and the appointment book is now filling up nicely.





#### **1-4-19 Ballycastle Rainbows**

Squirrel Ranger Daniel McAfee was delighted to be invited to come along and talk to the girls of Ballycastle Rainbows. All the girls were very interested in our local reds and loved seeing the videos from our Trail Cameras. The Girls had lots of good questions and finished the evening with some craft work, making Squirrel Badges.



#### **7-4-19 Dead red reported.**

A dead red was reported in a garden shed just outside Ballycastle. One of our Red Squirrel Ranger picked up the animal. The shed had a window but there was no glass in it so the animal could have



escaped if it wanted too. The owner only became aware of the squirrel when moving tools. Our Ranger picked the animal up but it must have been dead for several days due to condition of the animal and the level of decompose that had taken place. The red had no visible injury that could be found. The home owner was advised to keep an eye on the health of the other Red Squirrels that they had visiting their garden.

There have been no reports to date of squirrels being sick or acting strangely.



#### **24-4-19 CCHG Caolan McCaughan Hedgehog research.**

Caolan has been working across the Glens, recording the numbers of Hedgehogs and also trying to get their numbers up. He highlights the plight of Hedgehogs through educating people and children about what we can do to help them. Part of his work is to place Trail Cameras out to locate Hedgehogs. He has sent us lots of photos of Red Squirrels and Pine Martens he picked up while working in Glenarm forest.



#### **28-4-19 Milliken Tours Ireland and Glenarm walking Group Visit to Glendun.**

A first time partnership with Milliken Tours Ireland and Glenarm Walking Group. Ranger Daniel McAfee was asked to assist with a walk and tour of Cregagh Wood, Glendun. The walk was from the chapel carpark through Cregagh Wood with a visit to the Hide, on to the Viaduct and back along the Glen again. Seamus Milliken took the historical aspect of the tour and Daniel gave information on the Wood and the wildlife within the wood and the work the group is doing in Glendun and the wider Glens area. There were 30 people on the walk with some travelling from as far as Bangor to take part. We were able to see a red as we walked in the wood, for some this was the first time they had seen a Red Squirrel. The visit to the Hide was short due to the numbers but all were very impressed with it and the work we do to save our local Red Squirrels. It was a very enjoyable walk and a great link between the two groups.



## **May 2019**

### **2-5-19 Ballymoney Probus**

Our Squirrel Rangers was asked to give a talk to the Ballymoney Probus. There were 20 members of the Probus in attendance and they were all very interested in the work we are doing in the Glens to help our local reds. It appeared that the Glens had been the theme for the last number of talks they have had in recent months.

All had seen Red Squirrels, unfortunately only a few had seen them in N. Ireland. All had seen Grey Squirrels in the Ballymoney area. Two of the men were actively carrying out Grey Squirrel control on land they owned as and when they came across them. These gents had noticed that they come in waves but more frequent in the last 3-4 years. The talk covered control and the importance of doing control not only for red but for our overall tree and wildlife health.





#### **5-5-19 Jonny Collins Red Squirrel media project.**

Jonny Collins, who is doing a Masters in Media, selected Red Squirrels as his topic to document. Jonny visited the Hide on one of the Saturday morning opening in April. Jonny was able to get footage on the day at the Hide but was keen to try and get more footage of reds in the wild. Jonny had visited other squirrel groups already and had some footage from them of reds at feeding sites but was looking to try and get some footage of them in the trees. Our Squirrel Rangers took Jonny to Ballycastle and to several sites across Cushendun and he revisited the Hide that was being used by another photographer at the time. He was lucky to get Red Squirrels playing in the tree tops by chance in one of the feed sites in Glendun. He also was able to see them at feeders. He wanted to see a grey and as trapping was taking place in the area, he was able to see a trapped grey.

Jonny was very happy with the footage he got and is working on finishing the documentary at present.





### 12-5-19 RSU Survey work.

Daniel again volunteered for the fourth year, and his third year with the Red Squirrel United, doing survey work on reds, greys and Pine Martens. He covered a lot of previous visited sites and some new ones. One of the new sites, on the outskirts of the Glens, is less than half a mile from one of our feeders in the Hanging Woods in Glentaisie, produced some interesting results. We weren't expecting any squirrels due to its sparse tree numbers and very poor ground cover. We picked up a grey on camera. The following week trapping took place to remove the single squirrel, it was trapped within 8 hours of the trap being set in place. We decided to keep the single trap in place in case of a second grey appeared, in fact a total of 4 greys were removed from this site. The camera is now in a new site to carry on with the survey work, it will be moved back to resurvey the area and see if additional trapping is needed. Closer to Ballycastle we had received reports of an additional grey sighting. A feeder and camera is now in place after one of our Ranger also spotted the grey using the feeder. The location is not very easily accessed but trapping will take place.



### 7-5-19 Pine Marten road kill in Glenshesk.

Sadly one of the Glenshesk, Pine Martens was killed on the Glenshesk Road late on the 6<sup>th</sup> early 7<sup>th</sup> morning. Thanks to the person who moved it to the side of the road. Squirrel Ranger Gerard got a number of emails about it and Daniel got several messages on our Facebook page that morning from drivers on the road. A true show of how those in the area are keen to help out and report sightings. The animal was picked up and it was sexed as a female. Gerard will look over old monitoring photos from the area to determine if this was the pine marten that was coming to some of his monitoring sites. The shape of the white patch or bib as it is known on the front of all Pine Martins are different and this is how researchers can identify individual animals in the wild.



### 10-5-19 GRSG AGM

Big thanks to those for attending our AGM at the Laragh Lodge. A most informative evening.

After our AGM business, Caroline Finlay, Red Squirrel United, Squirrel Officer from Ulster Wildlife gave us an update on the work of the Red Squirrel United project. Caroline verified what we in the Glens knew all along, that **the Glens of Antrim have the largest Red Squirrel Population within N. Ireland.** This is due to the support that you, our members, have provided the GRSG. We have been operating for about 11 years protecting our Red Squirrels and it has been a great success.

Then our guest speaker Darren Houston, Garron Plateau Project Manager for the RSPB's led CABB (Cooperation Across Borders for Biodiversity) Project, gave us a talk about his work on the Garron Plateau. Garron is the largest area of precious blanket bog in N. Ireland and the only bog in Ireland to have some totally intact habitat. Darren is working closely with NI Water, landowners and farmers to prepare a Conservation Action Plan for this wonderful area and organising the restoration of damaged parts. Darren can be contacted at [darren.houston@rspb.org.uk](mailto:darren.houston@rspb.org.uk) or on his Mobile, 07702 948822.





### **15-5-19 Coleraine RSPB AGM talk**

Squirrel Ranger Daniel McAfee was asked to attend the Coleraine RSPB, AGM to talk about the work the GRSG do in the Glens. There were 25 in attendance several of those in the group had attended past walks that the group had done in the Glens from Breen to Glenariff over the last 3-5 years. Topics such as Grey Squirrel control was well received, with many having negative experiences with greys in their gardens and the woodlands they visited to watch birds. Some reporting damage to birds' nests in gardens and in other sites where they work, monitoring bird numbers as part of BTO work.

The evening ended with Ken Perry presenting Daniel with a pair of binoculars and tripod to be used at our Hide on behalf of the McArthur family whose father passed away and who loved to visit the Hide and watch the birds and squirrels. Daniel thanked Ken and asked that this thanks be passed on to the family. He wanted the family to know, that the Binoculars and Tripod would be a fantastic addition to the Hide and would be used in memory of Mr McArthur. They would greatly enhance the enjoyment that people get when watching wildlife from the Hide.



### **18-5-2019 Glenmona Red Squirrel day**

Raymie Watson represented the group at the Glenmona Red Squirrel walk. We had received an invite from Kevin Duncan, National Trust Ranger for a representative to attend and assist. The Glenmona walk was a great success. A Scout and Red Squirrel group arrived by bus from Aghadowey as well as a number of other interested individuals. At the feeder site we were fortunate enough to see two Red Squirrels. After the walk there was an information slide show and brief discussion. The Scout group were very interested in Red Squirrels and were very knowledgeable.

## June 2019

### 5-6-2019, Talk and walk to Rasharkin Schools.

On 5th June children from two schools in Rasharkin descended upon Glenariff Forest Park. Their mission to learn all about Red Squirrels and their habitat. As is often the case with our weather, it was an exceptionally wet day, but the school children were not fazed. Their day started indoors with a discussion about Red Squirrels and it was a pleasure to hear how knowledgeable many of the children already were. Once the rain subsided the children started on a Red Squirrel Trail around the forest park. Various stations were set up where they showcased how far they could jump, as Red Squirrels jump from tree to tree. They gathered nuts for the squirrels and helped set up feeders. Once they were finished practising being squirrels they took a walk to the waterfalls which were in full flood. A spectacular way to end the day. All in all, an enjoyable and educational day was had by all despite the rainy weather.

Shauna Hughes, GRSG Committee Member and Volunteer led this walk

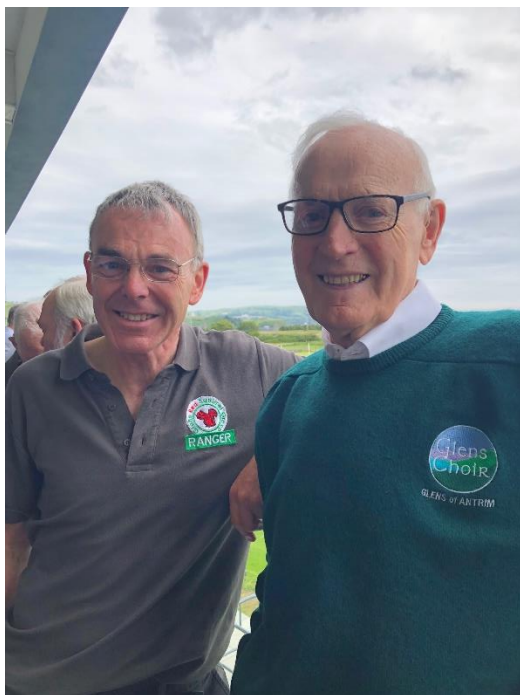
### 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2019 Opening of Glenariff Community and Recreation Centre







L to R: Gerard McCaughan, GRSG Ranger. Fern Major, a Director of Friends of Glenariff. Liz Weir, GRSG Chair and Myra Murray, Chairperson of Friends of Glenariff.



I was invited to represent the group at the official opening as the GRSG had partnered with Friends of Glenariff in getting a few grants. Both Liz Weir and Joe Mc Kavanagh were attending representing other local groups. The centre is a credit to the people who envisaged this Community Centre and to those that worked tirelessly to get it finished. I was very impressed by both the finish and the equipment within it. It was great to meet up with Fern again, as most of our chats are via e mails or texts.

Gerard Mc Caughan, GRSG Ranger.



## August 2019

### 7-8-19 Lark in the Park

A Great Family day. The weather that day was grey with a heavy showers asking the question if it would carry on, luckily this pasted and the sun came out. Daniel sat up the Marque and information table with the assistance of Vince, due to expected low numbers of volunteers for the day our craft table and our fundraising game was not set up. The day was very well attended, considering the weather conditions earlier in the day. We received lots of attention with the stuffed squirrels being a great attraction to children and grownups alike. Thanks to the Heart of the Glens Festival for the invite and for all their work at running this event. Daniel was joined by Nuala and Chair, Liz.



### 10-8-19 RNLI Day Cushendall

Big thanks to the Cushendall RNLI for the invite to have our information table at their event. The Day was dull, weather wise, but was well supported. We had lots of interest in the work we are doing in the Glens. Those most interested were visitors to the area, most from the Belfast areas who all had grey squirrels and didn't want them. The Red Squirrel United information was gave to all those who lived outside of the glens, a lot of them wanting to get rid of their greys. Two men living in the Cave hill area of Belfast, told us how they were actively removing greys because of the damage they were causing in their gardens. Over all, the day was a success Daniel set up and manned the table with Nuala.

### 11-8-19 Cairns Community Day.

Postponed due to bad weather.

## October (Squirreltober 2019)

### 15<sup>th</sup> October North Antrim Community Networks Annual General Meeting



Our Chair Liz Weir attended this meeting and she had our Information table with her. The meeting was fully booked and was a fantastic evening with a range of exhibitors from across Co. Antrim. There was great interest in the group's information table.

### 26<sup>th</sup> October, Glens Storytelling Festival Walk, Information table at the Laragh Lodge Carpark, Glengariff.



Chair, Liz Weir and Liz O'Connor, Forestry Guide and Red Squirrel Education Ranger.





The Glens Red Squirrel Group mounted an information stand, manned by Liz O'Connor and GRSG Chair Liz Weir at Laragh Lodge, as part of the annual Glens Storytelling Festival. Over 70 people, adults and children, gathered to take part in a forest story walk and great interest was taken in the work of our group and many people made donations. On the subsequent walk storytellers told wildlife themed tales to suit the natural environment.

This sort of event is great for reaching out to people who may not even be aware that we have Red Squirrels in Glenariff.

## November 2019

### 15-11-19 Not a trick but a treat.

A Big thanks to Boyles Spar in Ballycastle and Carnlough for the donation of Halloween Monkey Nuts. The nuts were used as an additional treat at the Hide in Cushendun.





## **22-11-19 Quiz night Bridge End Glenarm**

Our annual Quiz night in Glenarm was well supported by the locals and from those from outside the area. A lot of thanks goes to Gabriel McAuley for all the work that he puts in every year and also to all of his friends that provided us with the prizes, not forgetting the Bridge End Bar, Glenarm who gave us the space and all the help that we need to make this quiz a success.

## **December 2019**

### **4-12-19 Country File filming.**

BBC 1's Country File team were visiting Ballycastle to film aspects of what the town has to offer those living there and for those wanting to visit. One aspect was the Red Squirrels that call Ballycastle Forestry their home and the work that the Glens Red Squirrel Group are doing to help them.

In the pre filming talks, the Country File team were interested in anything different that we may do that other squirrel groups, they have covered across the UK, may not be doing. It was suggested that they look at our education work within the local schools. They thought this was a fantastic part of our work as very few other Red Squirrel Groups do any education work with schools. Most just give talks, visit markets and fairs as we do as well. Talks with Ballycastle Integrated PS's "Eco-School", ensured that we could go ahead with this within the TV programs schedule.

On chosen day, filming started at 9:30 with Daniel meeting the presenter, Charlotte Smith and the team, with a walk along the forestry road to the first four feeders in the forestry. The team were keen to see a red, asking continuously, how likely they were to see one?? Daniel's usual answer followed, that they are wild animals, we would have to see. With no squirrels to be seen, we walked to the Big Bend feeder. The camera man set up his tripod and said we would just see what happened. Before he had the camera on the tripod to everyone's delight, a Red Squirrel came to use the feeder. This was fantastic and the first time all of the crew and Charlotte had seen a Red Squirrel within 20 minutes of arriving at any site, normally they have to wait a few hours before they would even see a red. Before they had finished filming, a second red appeared.

At 11:00 am it was time to meet the children and their teacher, to go through a few scenes. The children enjoyed the whole filming process and found it a real eye-opener, to the work that goes on behind the camera. We did some other activities such as looking for Drays, looking for cones that had been eaten by the reds. Then the children did some scatter feeding in one of our other monitoring sites within the forest. The Children were fantastic and a credit to their school and families.

After the children went back to school, we covered Grey Squirrel control and the importance of the Trail Cameras we use in monitoring for greys and to keep an eye on the health of our reds. They also show us what other wildlife is in the areas across the Glens. The day finished at 4:30 as light was starting to go.



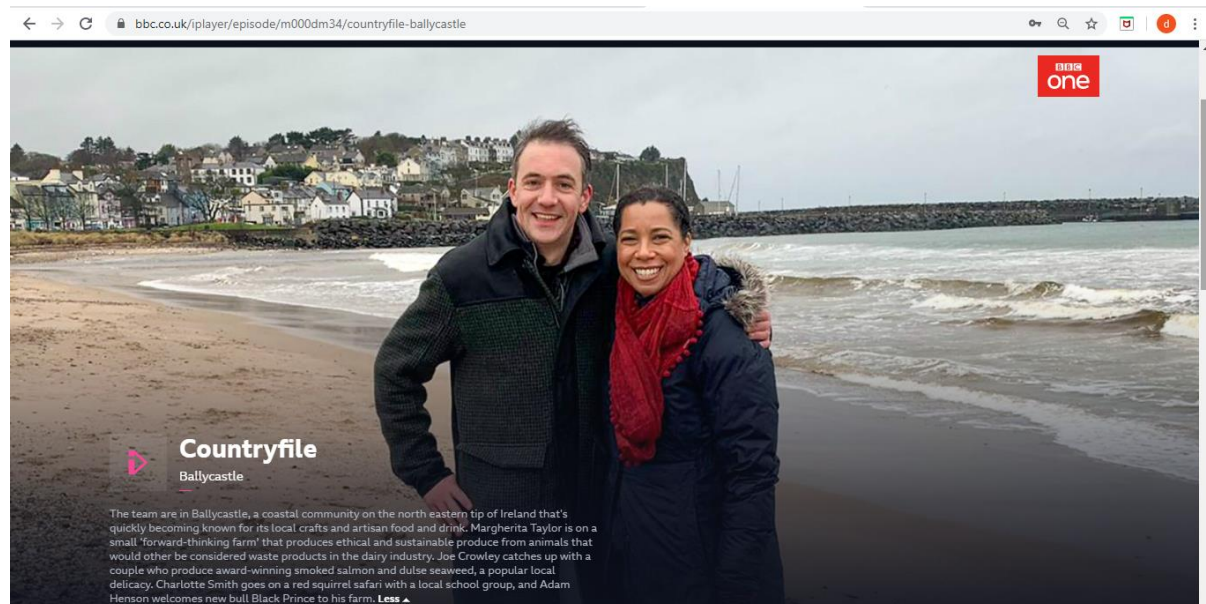
Daniel McAfee, GRSG Red Squirrel Ranger and Vice Chair

## January 2020

### 19-1-2020, Ballycastle BBC1's Country File

The Ballycastle program aired on BBC1 and on the BBC i player. We got a lot of follow up from this program, both from within N. Ireland and from across the rest of Ireland and the United Kingdom. The inquiries ranged from how we get volunteers, what other work we do with the local schools, problems retaining a red population in an area, how we locate greys, Grey Squirrel control, the Equipment that we use, where we get it from and how we get the local population to "buy into" Red Squirrel conservation work.

The program we felt was very beneficial to Ballycastle but more so to Red Squirrel Conservation. We found that people who contacted us after the program, as a whole were looking behind the scenes to what conservation of the reds really entailed. It is nice to see a red when you are out walking or on a TV program or nice photograph. The background work is what is really keeping them there. We need to educate our young people in the importance of all conservation work, not just Red Squirrel conservation. We also need volunteers to do the work that goes on in the background. We can but hope that these young people will carry on the work that we have started.



## February 2020

### 1-2-2020, Ballycastle Forest Red Squirrel Safari.

Following the success and coverage from the Country File program a Ballycastle forest walk took place booking only with numbers limited to 15 people we filled this within a few hours of advertising with enough names to have a second walk. All these people were pointed to our events page for other upcoming walks and events.

### 19-2-2020 Cregagh Wood Board launch

Members of the GRSG, CCG council, Katie English and staff of the LPS attended the Launch of the Cregagh Wood Information Panels. These panels were part of an NGO challenge fund awarded to the woodland pre the erection of the Hide when the marked walkway was put in place. It is great the information panels are now in place.



**28-2-2020, Antrim Coast and Glens AONB Vision, Aims & Objectives Key Stakeholder**  
Gabriel McAuley attended this workshop to represent the GRSG at Carnfunnock Country Park.

### **29-2-2020 Ballynature Day.**

Yet another fantastic day. Vice Chair, Daniel McAfee attended with the Groups information table. There were many groups from across the country covering all aspects of N. Ireland's natural environment, bug, birds, trees and much much more. The information table drew a lot of attention from young and old alike. Many of those who engaged with the table and the topic of Grey Squirrel control were very much in favour of Grey Squirrel control across the whole of the country, not just in red only areas. Thankfully many had seen a Red Squirrel at some point, with all having seen too many Grey Squirrels. A very enjoyable day.

## **March 2020**

### **12-3-2020, Volunteer Night**

We held a Volunteer Night in the Old Church Cushendun. Unfortunately this was held just before the C19 lockdown and the numbers attending was disappointing. The few hardy souls that did attend, enjoy the talk by Daniel, followed by a question and answer session. After a cup of tea and some eats we held a feeder workshop.





Later that weekend the committee unanimous decided to cancel our AGM and all our other upcoming events and attendance at events that we had committed to, in line with the government regulations and the Charity Commissions advice.

## May 2020

In line with the Charity Commission advice the committee unanimously decide that they all would carry on in their present positions until an AGM could be arranged in the future. As with other groups, we are holding our Committee meeting over the internet.

## **Thanks to our Supporters.**

The Glens Red Squirrel Group wish to thank those individuals, groups and organisations who have worked with, and have supported the Glens Red Squirrel Group in our work this year:-

The NI Forestry Service have been very helpful to us over the years and have supported us in all our work. A special thanks goes to Liz O Connor for all her help and advice. Heart of the Glens Landscape Partnership, Causeway Coast and Glens Council, Ballycastle Integrated PS, St. Patricks and St. Bridget's PS, North Antrim Community Network, Glenariff Improvement Group, The National Trust, Northern Ireland Squirrel Forum, The Wood Land Trust Northern Ireland, Ulster Wildlife, The Heart of the Glens Festival, Laragh Lodge Restaurant, Glenariff Forest Tea House, Glens Garden Furniture, BBC Country File team, Richmond's Feeds, Ballyeamon Barn, Boyles Spar Ballycastle and the Bridge End Bar Glenarm.

The Group would like to thank those dedicated members who carry out feeding, trapping, attending information stalls, walks, talks, tree planting and other events that the group are asked to attend. A big thanks to those members who worked and are working hard dealing with grants and funding applications for the group. The work that the Glens Red Squirrel Group does would not be possible if it wasn't for all the hard work of all these members.

We would also like to thank all those who made donations to the group to help us over this stressful time. Due to the present circumstances, we have not been able to gather resources from our usual means and so these donations are helping us through these lean times.