



REMEMBER to wear sturdy gloves any time you handle wildlife and don't give the baby animals food or water. Avoid handling unless absolutely necessary, so you don't cause unnecessary stress and make sure you keep any pets well away.

Grey squirrels can breed twice a year and have three to four young in a litter. The young's eyes open at four weeks, they start to explore outside at six weeks and are weaned at 10 weeks.



Found a **baby grey squirrel** on the ground?

A new law on 'Invasive Alien Species' means that it is no longer possible for wildlife rehabilitators to rear young grey squirrels that have become separated from their mums, therefore reuniting infant squirrels with their mothers is their best chance at survival.

Keep the infant where you found it and follow the advice below. If the infant has been taken away from where it was found – such as to a vet or wildlife rescue centre – the new law prohibits returning the young squirrel to the wild.

Mammals are able to collect and relocate their babies to alternate sites, and they will do so if given the opportunity. Ultimately they can take better care of their babies than humans can.

Do any of the following apply to the squirrel:

- It's sick or injured
- It's been in a dog or cat's mouth
- It's covered with flies' eggs (look like small grains of rice)
- It's known the mother is dead (a lactating squirrel will have bald circular patches surrounding her elongated teats)
- Has the squirrel been taken away from where it was found?



Does the squirrel:

- Have a fluffed-out tail?
- Have a body longer than 6 inches (15cm) not including tail?
- Approach humans and/or pets?



THIS SQUIRREL IS NOT A BABY

You do not need to intervene.

THIS IS A BABY SQUIRREL

You will need to reunite with its mother.

1. Babies require a heat source even in warm weather. Place uncooked rice or birdseed in a sock and warm in the microwave for 20–30 seconds, or until warm. Wrap the sock in a soft towel and place it next to the young squirrel (so they can move away if too hot) in an open container (e.g. a shoebox or basket) lined with nest material or hay, grass or leaves.
2. Identify the tree containing the nest, or if the nest was destroyed choose the tree closest to where the squirrel was found.
3. If the young squirrel's eyes are OPEN, place the squirrel on the tree and encourage them to climb. If they do not climb, or if the infant's eyes are CLOSED, securely attach the open container to the tree away from predators. If this is not possible mum can still collect her babies from an open container placed at the base of the tree.
4. Observe the young squirrel from a distance for the next six to eight hours of daylight. The baby should cry which will encourage the mother to collect her infant. Squirrel baby distress noises (available online) can also be played. Reheat the sock if necessary, but try to avoid disturbing them as this may prevent mum collecting her offspring.

Grey squirrels: If it is sick or injured; it is known the mother is dead; reuniting infant and mother is not possible before nightfall; or the baby squirrel has been moved away from where it was found – sadly euthanasia is the kindest option as it is illegal to rehabilitate and release them. Please contact your local vet.

Red squirrels: It is still legal to rehabilitate and release red squirrel infants. If the red squirrel is injured or orphaned, please contact a local wildlife rehabilitator or vet. If neither is available call the RSPCA on: **0300 1234 999**.

You have helped reunite a young squirrel with their mum.

Has mum returned for the infant?

Video examples of reuniting squirrel infants with their mothers are available on the RSPCA baby squirrels webpage: www.rspca.org.uk/babysquirrels