



Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group

Newsletter

Summer/Autumn 2015



A New Ranger Joins The Team



Image - Sarah McNeil

It is with great pleasure the P&DRSG would like to welcome Andrew Hodgkinson to our team of rangers. This new position has been made possible thanks to the continuing support of Darell Thompson-Schwab (pictured below on the right) who has made the donation that allowed the creation of the role for a year initially. Darell has for many years been a keen supporter of red squirrel conservation and has been very active in his local area working with fellow land owners and volunteers to do what they can to protect our native reds.

Andrew previously worked at Center Parcs Whinell Forest as a conservation ranger for several years working closely with red squirrels and all that is involved with monitoring and conserving them. During his time at Center Parcs Andrew accrued a wealth of hands on conservation knowledge ranging from structured squirrel transects (surveys) to working closely with Center Parcs' own red squirrel ranger.

In his spare time Andrew was an active volunteer often assisting the other rangers on their patches as well as keeping an eye in the local woods where he lives.

The plan is for Andrew to cover the Calthwaite and Hutton area but to also be a 'Flexible' ranger where once he is established, will be available to assist other rangers in the peak periods.

We wish Andrew all the best of luck and with all his endeavours and would once again like to thank Darell for his incredible generosity and support.



Summer/Autumn Summary & A Big Thank You!



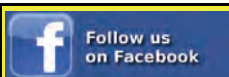
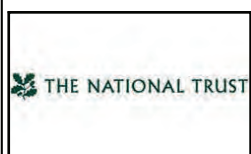
Image - Sarah McNeil

You may remember we mentioned in our previous Winter/Spring 2015 newsletter that it has been a bountiful year for nature in general, with natural food being produced in abundance at the end of 2014. This years crop doesn't seem to have been as productive however with conditions having been good for squirrels in general, there certainly has been a lot of activity on both the red and grey squirrel front!

The red population in some areas appears stable, with populations in others seeming to fluctuate (which is natural) and in one or two cases reds have made an appearance where they haven't been seen for some time - encouraging indeed. The rangers and supporters/volunteers continue to work tirelessly on the grey front, having had a very busy period this autumn with the annual movement of grey squirrels at this time of the year.

We would like to take this opportunity to give a heartfelt 'Thank You' to all those who have supported us in our cause to date, in whatever shape or form that may take.

From a simple red or grey sighting report to monitoring local woodlands, we can't stress enough the help this gives us having as many eyes and ears out there keeping a watch. Last but not least we would like to extend a huge thank you to the local organisations who have offered tremendous support with our fundraising endeavours.



Don't forget to look for us on Facebook and like our group.
You can find all sorts of interesting things and get your picture posted!



Raising Awareness & Funds



Junior Affinity Regular Saver Account

Squirrel away your savings & support the Red Squirrel Group too!

3.00%* Gross/AER Variable

- Regular Monthly Savings of between £5 and £100 per month
- 5 year term, variable interest rate
- One account per customer age 0-16 and resident in the UK
- Two withdrawals per calendar year (Jan-Dec) subject to a minimum balance of £5
- Interest compounded annually on 31st Dec

0.5% Gross Annual donation (of average balance) from PBS to Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group

PENRITH BUILDING SOCIETY | juniors
www.penrithbuildingsociety.co.uk

*The gross annual interest rate is variable and may change at any time. Interest will be paid gross to eligible savers who register with us as required by HM Revenue & Customs. *AER stands for Annual Equivalent Rate and represents the rate you would be if the interest was paid and compounded once each year.

The group has expanded in recent months thanks to funding made available for new rangers across our region. This has put a greater burden on us now to keep the current levels of full and part time rangers going. It goes without saying that without your support this would not be possible - but now more than ever we need to push harder to make sure we can sustain current levels of activity and if anything, continue to grow, spreading the message and awareness as we go.

Some fantastic members and supporters have gone out of their way to network with local people and organisations to do just that. Our chairman Robert Benson aided by Julie Bailey helped to set up a new account with the Penrith Building Society called the 'Junior Affinity Regular Saver' account. Working with the Chief Executive of the Penrith Building Society, Amyan Fazal has kindly agreed to pay 0.5% gross interest of the total of all the mentioned accounts at no cost to the account holders, with the money going to Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group. Many thanks to Fiona Askins the Branch Manager for all her work and arranging a superb launch of the account.



Nichola Connell has been extremely busy once again working with the local businesses not only around her patch of Ullswater but further afield as far as Shap. Both Shap Wells Hotel and Leeming House Hotel have not only agreed to sell the groups' merchandise to visiting guests but also put a red squirrel teddy in each room with information of why it's there and how by purchasing it, they will be helping protect the red squirrels that visit both hotels' grounds.



To date the two hotels have raised £804 for the group which is a fantastic help to our fundraising efforts. A very big thank you to Nichola for setting this up with both establishments and her continued hard work in the pursuit of raising funds.

Englethwaite Hall Caravan Club site and its members showed their continued support by hosting a 'Red squirrel corner' in the on-site office that has a collection box. Recently they held a fundraising bonanza weekend where wardens Lynn & Eddie were present. In total to date they have raised £913.27 and wanted to say a few words - **"The sightings of red squirrels on site and within the surrounding High Stand Plantation is only made possible due to the dedicated work of the P&DRSG members and their continuous efforts to control the grey squirrel incursions. Thank you."**



Once again Daystate Ltd (UK air rifle manufacturers) paid for and supplied the equipment for a team of volunteers to run a 'Have a go' range (for a small cost, of course!) at the Lowther Show where the public could get their hands on some top end air rifles and have several shots down the range expertly guided by one of the volunteers.

A fantastic day was had by all with some good networking opportunities with local land owners as well as raising awareness of the group & cause. In total £1278 was raised with a generous donation from Ballistol Gun Oils who had a stand on the range of £178.30.

Many thanks to both Daystate for their continued support and Ballistol.

The Pooley Bridge Dominoes club also had a fundraising evening where there were a number of prizes on offer with all money raised being donated to the Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group. By all accounts a fun evening was had by all and the club raised a staggering £676 with a cheque that was presented (with local press present) to Christian and Tufty the squirrel by the club members.



There have been several other events over the summer/autumn 2015 period, Sebergham had an 'Open Gardens Day' organised by Wendy Rheam raising a phenomenal amount of £2192.30 - a HUGE thank you to Wendy for running such a successful event.

Kelly McClelland held a raffle sale via her business 'Studio K' that raised £300 and of course the Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group also held a raffle this year raising £1939.21 where three great prizes were won.



Thank you to all for helping raise awareness and funds so we can continue protecting our red squirrels.

Spotlight On...

Although living in Suffolk, and having not seen a red squirrel in those neck of the woods for many decades, that hasn't stopped the dedication and commitment of Maureen & Geoffrey Moss (parents to Jerry Moss) to our native reds. For years now both Maureen and Geoffrey have supported the group since the start, be it through membership or making some of the best



jams and marmalades to sell at local events. Geoffrey has also spent a lot of his spare time wood turning everything from bowls with squirrels engraved in them to wine stoppers which were always popular and sold well helping to raise funds for red squirrel conservation.

Recently Maureen and Geoffrey celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a gathering of family and friends. Instead of presents and gifts they asked those attending to make a donation to the P&DRSG in a squirrel feeder turned into a money box at their local village hall. A fantastic day was had by all with an amazing £740 raised by the family and friends. Thank you Maureen & Geoffrey for your years of support and dedication.



Eat...Sleep...Squirrel!



We were delighted to hear from a young enthusiast and no doubt future squirrel ranger by the name of Dexter.

He contacted one of our rangers as he was coming on holiday to Ullswater and was completely nutty about red squirrels. He asked if it would be possible to know where he could go and see some.

The Ullswater ranger replied to Dexter to say he would be happy to show him and his family around Whinell forest where he would hopefully catch a glimpse or two. Kindly arranged by Jerry Moss, they all met up and as Dexter and family pulled up in their car, right on cue a red squirrel dashed across the way! Suffice to say lots more squirrels were seen and Dexter had a superb day.



Image - Sarah McNeil

Annual Public Meeting

This years Annual Public Meeting held at the Penrith Rugby Club on Monday the 13th of July was another great success with 87 members and supporters of the group attending. Our Chairman Robert Benson opened proceedings welcoming all present and gave an update of the situation in general in and around the Penrith and district area.

We were privileged to have Dr Craig Shuttleworth from the Anglesey Red Squirrel Project as the guest speaker who gave a very interesting and entertaining presentation on how the project has developed over the years. With Anglesey now being 'grey free' and the red population thriving, Craig is wanting to push out and extend the buffer zone on to the mainland of Wales around the Port Penrhyn, Bangor and Parc Menai areas with the aim to stop the flow of further greys entering the Island. Raffle tickets were on sale and along with other squirrel goods on offer, £176.70 was raised (with a sterling effort from Edward Lowthian selling £115 of raffle tickets!). Thanks to all who attended and volunteered their time to take part.



Greystoke

Early summer had a quiet start as red and grey squirrels continued feeding on the natural food that was still available from the previous autumn which led to people not seeing them where they normally would, with the summer seeing reds return to old haunts as natural food diminished. Only a handful of grey squirrels have been seen and caught around the red squirrel reserve of Greystoke forest - this can only be good news for red squirrels. The natural harvest this autumn has been poor and people feeding reds should have regular visitors, so please report sightings to the relevant ranger.



Matthew Stuart - employed by RSNE

Dalston & Caldew



Little surpasses the joy of watching red squirrels bounding about at close quarters and I'm pleased to say during 2015 I've been privileged to have witnessed this more frequently than previous years. This is not to say that all is sweetness and light and it's been a busy year controlling greys. At Stockdalewath, an episode of squirrel pox in late September took out three delightful youthful reds, but since then others have shown up in the area so I'm hoping it hasn't been catastrophic. The commitment of several volunteers is greatly appreciated, as is the continued support of those who report greys.

David Cowen - funded by P&DRSG

Northern Eden Valley

Overall grey numbers seem to be down in comparison to last year however they have been a lot more difficult to trap this year. At present the greys are favouring the acorns even though there hasn't been an abundance of natural crop this year they still seem to be favouring the oak trees.

Squirrel pox has made an appearance a couple of times in the Eden valley over the summer but on the positive side there are still a lot of healthy reds around.



John Lisle - funded by P&DRSG

Ullswater



Since the last newsletter, things have (thankfully!) certainly quietened off on the grey squirrel front although there has been quite a bit of grey movement as is normal for the autumn period. Red squirrels are once again being seen in woods and gardens where they had been absent for some time with the odd sighting in places they hadn't been seen for several years. Many thanks as always to the landowners and supporters that report sightings and help keep our reds safe.

Christian - funded by P&DRSG

Upper Eden Valley

It has been a sad period around the Appleby area losing around 30 reds to pox even with very few greys having been seen and removed. Uldale is now part of my patch and I have to date removed 58 greys with more reds thankfully being seen. Overall reds are making a comeback from Mallerstang to Tebay & Sedburgh. Thanks to everyone for all the red & grey sightings reported and the photo's that delighted people send me.



Gary Murphy - funded by P&DRSG

Whinfell



The summer months were steady away, picking up the odd grey squirrel but pleased to see red squirrel kittens on a regular basis. September & October proved to be very busy with many sightings of greys, proving a challenge as they move about looking for natural food that hasn't been abundant this year. Sightings of greys have now slowed with a good population of reds in general. Sadly there has been pox in Whinfell forest but I along with other rangers and the team at Center Parcs are closely monitoring the area.

Jerry Moss - employed by Center Parcs

Calthwaite & Hutton

I've been volunteering for the group over the last couple of years around my local area and supporting the existing rangers. Thanks to an extremely generous donation to the group I can now operate on a full time basis. I am extremely excited about this opportunity and know it can only benefit the squirrels - I look forward to the challenges ahead and meeting some of you in person.



Andrew Hodgkinson - funded by P&DRSG

Banks Group



Julie has been as busy as ever working on fundraising endeavours for the group and recently contacted a company based in the north east called the 'Banks Group'. The Banks Group is a family owned, County Durham based business founded in 1976. The company has nearly 40 years experience of developing and delivering complex projects. The groups development with care approach ensures that the developments have a positive long term effect on the environment and the local communities. Recently Julie invited some of the Banks Group out for the day to experience first hand the work of the P&DRSG. Phillip from the Banks group wrote the following of his experience:-

"We had a fascinating day with Julie, Jerry and Christian, their knowledge and enthusiasm for red squirrels was infectious. I had not seen a red squirrel for over 20 years and it was fantastic to see numerous reds running through the trees at Lowther.

The red squirrel is really quite different to its grey cousins, it is a far more interesting and distinctive animal which is now disappointingly absent from large parts of the British countryside. I am sure many people are totally unaware of the beauty of seeing a red at home in its natural environment - at best they have probably only seen the scrawny greys flitting about. It was also really impressive to see how effective the work of the Group has been in creating suitable conditions for the red squirrel to dominate and to give them a fighting chance against the prolific greys. There are clearly lessons to be taken from this Groups' experience and to help spread their approach and enthusiasm to other parts of the country. From a Banks' perspective we will be looking at our future development schemes across northern England and Scotland to see how we can incorporate measures to provide suitable habitat for red squirrels and how we can encourage our landowners and tenants to adopt management practices on their land to support their retention and population growth."

We would like to thank the Banks Group for their time and interest and certainly look forward to working with them in the future.

BANKSGroup
development with care

Feeders

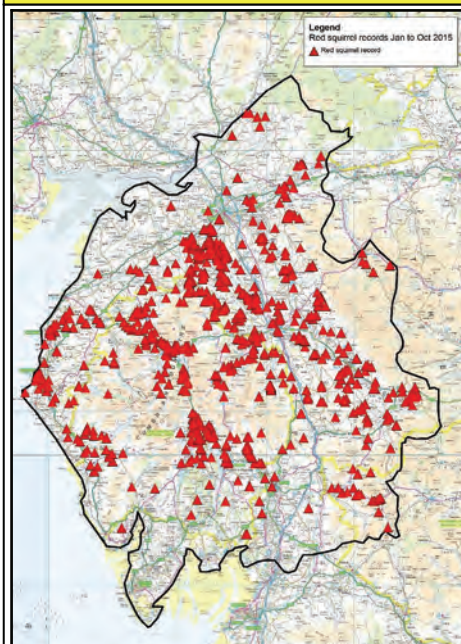
Our newsletter is an opportunity for us to update you on all things squirrels - but also a platform to say thank you to all those involved. So a special thanks goes to both Sam Bertram and Bob McTaggart who on behalf of the group voluntarily make squirrel feeders and monitor woodlands for squirrels. Thank you both!

Please don't forget to regularly clean & disinfect your feeders.



How many kittens can you see?

The Big Picture



The map to the left shows a recent correlation of data gathered from all the various groups, volunteers and members of the public who report red squirrel sightings and was compiled by RSNE (Red Squirrels Northern England).

This map gives a good idea of red squirrel distribution in Cumbria and is only possible thanks to all your reports and help.

Encouraging indeed!

Snorkel & Flippers!



Alan and Valerie Fox from Eamont Bridge, Penrith sent in this fabulous photograph of a red squirrel that regularly visits their garden seen here swimming across the River Eamont!

"We know there are reds on both sides of the Eamont but had no idea they swopped sides!!" said Alan & Valerie.

Squirrels are in fact reasonably good swimmers and have been known to cross rivers, lakes and at times estuaries!

Thanks to the both of them for sending in this picture which is rare to capture on film.

Flying The Flag



Image - Sarah McNeil

Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group member Sarah McNeil has recently been praised for her outstanding contribution to red squirrel conservation here in Cumbria after being publicly nominated for the 'Cumbrian Woman Of The Year' award 2015. Sarah said "I am extremely touched to have been nominated for this marvellous award. As a proud Cumbrian lass it is always a privilege to be able to help encourage the survival of our beautiful native red squirrels both here in Cumbria and beyond. So to be recognised for doing something which is part of my day to day life nowadays I was a bit taken aback with the invitation.

I had an amazing day at the Laura Ashley Bellsfield Hotel in Windermere where I listened to some incredible stories from fellow Cumbrian women. In turn they listened intently as I described the work of our group and not forgetting the neighbouring groups in the county. I am still none the wiser who nominated me but hopefully one day this kind selfless person will make themselves known so I can thank them from the bottom of my heart for treating me to the most amazing day in the presence of those incredible ladies. Many congratulations to the 'Cumbrian Woman Of The Year 2015', community campaigner Rachel Holliday. Her remarkable story - "Time to change" project certainly touched the hearts (and eyes!) of all who attended."

Sarah McNeil has been a member and supporter of the P&DRSG from its very start and has been an active volunteer ever since. A keen photographer Sarah has captured some stunning images of Cumbria's wildlife and scenery and has a wealth of red squirrel images which have been used countrywide as well as for making bespoke cards, fridge magnets and key rings which she sells on behalf of the group.

Often to be found on our P&DRSG stall around the various shows and fetes Sarah is a very active volunteer and very much deserving of this recognition and we congratulate her for this nomination and thank Sarah for all her work.



Image - Sarah McNeil

Road Safety

We have had some new, larger (A1 size) road signs made for the Rangers to locate on their patch. They are also available to purchase from the group at the princely sum of £5.

There is also a larger triangular 'Slow Down - Red Squirrels' sign available at the cost of £30.

If you are interested in purchasing or would like to find out more information on them please contact Julie Bailey Tel. 07788 264571.



Ways You Can Help P&DRSG

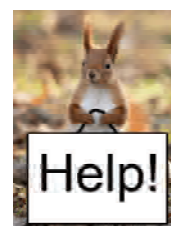
You can help us by:-

- ✓ Making a donation and/or becoming a member
- ✓ Volunteering to monitor squirrel numbers
- ✓ Promptly reporting sightings of grey squirrels or sickly reds to group contacts – list on last page
- ✓ Reporting grey kills by you or others in or outside of this group, with date, location etc.
- ✓ Recruiting new members and corporate sponsors
- ✓ Promoting the view that red squirrel conservation is predominantly about grey squirrel control
- ✓ Organising a fund raising event – coffee mornings, garden open days, selling quiz or raffle tickets etc.
- ✓ Host or find hosts for our charity collection boxes
- ✓ Raise awareness locally – schools, organisations, parish councils / magazines etc. & talks to groups

Would Your Group Like A Red Squirrel Talk?

Volunteers Trish Mansbridge & Emma Tapp are waiting to hear from schools and groups who would like a talk on red squirrel conservation.

Our PowerPoint presentation slide show outlines the plight of the red squirrel, gives a brief history, distribution, facts, explains who and what is involved with their conservation and what can be done. If you would like to find out more please contact Trish via email - trish.mansbridge@gmail.com



Penrith & District
Red Squirrel
Group

A registered charity
number 1137458

Protecting
our
red squirrels



Slide show equipment generously funded by the John Speed Lewis Foundation

Individual or Family Membership

Membership is the life blood of any organisation and we are no exception. Please sign up and become a member today!

All memberships are for the calendar year but are payable at any time. Members who join later in the year and wish to pay by cash/cheque are invited to make a pro rata adjustment to take in membership for the following year. For example a family taking out membership in June 2016 may wish to pay £45 for it to run until the end of 2017.

A plea to all members - Please consider paying your subscription by standing order - Ideally by a 'monthly' standing order, as it smoothes out our cash flow, though of course an 'annual' standing order still does away with the expense of sending renewal letters.

Membership as a Major or Corporate Sponsor



This scheme is simply for those who wish to give more than our standard membership, whether they are private individuals, landowners or businesses. Starting from as little as **£10.00 per month**, all payments should be tax deductible, as charitable donations or set against our invoice for advertising / services rendered etc.

Your regular standing order payments will not only allow us to budget our commitments but will also provide you with valuable marketing opportunities. You can use our corporate sponsor logo on your literature and have a links to/from our website. What an opportunity for you to show your clients and customers that you not only care but are prepared to do something about it.



Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group Membership Form

Membership is for the calendar year, payable at any time - Please tick the appropriate membership level or feel free to enter a higher amount should you wish to increase your subscription by including a donation or pro rata it, to take in the following year

Individual Membership £20

- ☐ By **Cash/Cheque** or £..... pro rata adjusted / including donation
- ☐ By **Annual** Standing Order or £..... pro rata adjusted / including donation
- ☐ By **Monthly** Standing Order **£5** ☐ **£10** ☐ Other £

Family Membership £30

- ☐ By **Cash/Cheque** or £..... pro rata adjusted / including donation
- ☐ By **Annual** Standing Order or £..... pro rata adjusted / including donation
- ☐ By **Monthly** Standing Order **£5** ☐ **£10** ☐ Other £

Membership as a Major or Corporate Sponsor

Please **GiftAid** your membership - Only applicable to individuals and the self employed. Companies make payments 'pre-tax'

Sponsor Bronze £10 month ☐

Sponsor Silver £25 month ☐

Sponsor Gold £50 month ☐

Sponsor Platinum £100 month ☐

Sponsor Patron £250 month ☐

If none of the options shown left are appropriate, please indicate your level of payments;

I will pay £..... by standing order Monthly ☐ Annually ☐

I will pay you the amount indicated left by standing order Annually ☐

I will pay you the amount indicated left on invoice, Monthly ☐ Annually ☐

I will pay you £ on invoice Monthly ☐ Annually ☐

Title/s: First name/s: Surname/s:

Company Name: (if applicable)

Address:

..... Postcode:

Phone: Email:

Signed: **Date:**

☐ Please tick this box if you wish P&DRSG to claim **GiftAid** on your donation. If you are a UK income or capital gains tax payer **GiftAid** allows us to claim back the tax (currently 25p for every £1) on all of your donations.

Please note the total reclaimed tax (on this or any other donations to charities or CASC's) must not exceed the amount of tax you pay in the current tax year.

Please return this form to: **Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group, Woodside, Armthwaite, Cumbria CA4 9SX**

If you see a grey squirrel or a sickly red ... Don't delay!
Please contact one of the below - immediately

WHINFELL Penrith, Lowther, Temple Sowerby, Whinfell Forest

Jerry Moss Tel: 07736 779965 jmossjerry@aol.com

NORTHERN EDEN VALLEY Armathwaite, Lazonby, Kirkoswald, Langwathby & Melmerby

John Lisle Tel: 07841 449648 john.lisle@btinternet.com

UPPER EDEN VALLEY Appleby, Kirkby Stephen, Brough, Ravenstonedale & Tebay

Gary Murphy Tel: 07974 788434 garymurphy2408@btinternet.com

ULLSWATER Ullswater Haweswater & Shap

Christian Bensaid Tel: 07815 784381 cjb06@hotmail.co.uk

GREYSTOKE Greystoke & Caldbeck

Matthew Stuart Tel: 07949 366334 mstuart86@hotmail.com

GREYSTOKE Dalston & Caldew area

David Cowen Tel: 07542 191865 dec@davidcowen.co.uk

GREYSTOKE Calthwaite & Hutton area

Andrew Hodgkinson Tel: 07983 459918 silverhodge@hotmail.com

Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group. Woodside, Armathwaite, Cumbria CA4 9SX

The Administrator can be contacted on 07788 264571 e-mail: info@penrithredsquirrels.org.uk



Northern Red Squirrels

Use this site to report any squirrel sightings outside the P&DRSG's area or make contact with the Red Squirrel Group nearest to you. NRS - the organisation for all groups in Northern England.
NRS Cumbria Chair, Julie Bailey 07788 264571 or visit www.northernredsquirrels.org.uk



Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group Standing Order Form



To the manager.....Bank/Building Soc Sort code.....—.....—.....
Bank address..... Account number.....
..... Account Name.....

Instruction to your Bank / Building Society to pay by Standing Order

Please pay HSBC Bank, Market Square, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 7SN, Sort Code 40-36-10 for the credit of Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group. Account Number: 01310968

the sum of £ (Pounds and pence)

commencing on the /..... /20..... and thereafter every month/annually* on the same day until further notice in writing and debit my/our* account accordingly. (* delete as necessary)

Signed: Date:



Please tick here if you would like us to claim GiftAid on your donation*

*If you are a UK income or capital gains tax payer, GiftAid allows us to claim back the tax (currently 25p for every £1) on all of your donations. Please note the total reclaimed tax (on this or any other donations to charities or CASC's) must not exceed the amount of tax you pay in the current tax year.

Please return this original completed form to Penrith & District Red Squirrel Group. Woodside, Armathwaite, Cumbria CA4 9SX