

A close-up photograph of a red squirrel perched on a dark tree branch. The squirrel is facing right but looking back over its shoulder towards the camera. It has reddish-brown fur, a white patch on its chest, and long, thin whiskers. The background is a soft-focus green and yellow, suggesting a forest setting.

**ALL ABOUT**

# **SQUIRRELS**

**Explore life with these quick and clever tree acrobats!**

**A NONFICTION UNIT**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Meet the Squirrels! .....	3
What Squirrels Are Like .....	4
Where Squirrels Live .....	5
From Kit to Adult .....	6
What Squirrels Eat .....	7
How Squirrels Move .....	8
Life in a Nest .....	9
How Squirrels Stay Safe .....	10
Did You Know? .....	11
Question Time! .....	12
Answers .....	13
Glossary .....	14

## MEET THE SQUIRRELS!

Scamper-scamper! A fluffy tail flashes up a tree—it's a squirrel! **Squirrels** are small, fast mammals that love to climb and jump. You might see them in parks, forests, or even backyards. They are busy animals that are always searching for food or building nests.





## WHAT SQUIRRELS ARE LIKE

Squirrels are **mammals**, so they have fur and feed milk to their babies. They have sharp **claws** for climbing and strong back legs for jumping. Their long, bushy tails help them balance and keep warm.



## WHERE SQUIRRELS LIVE

Squirrels live in many parts of the world. They can be found in **forests, woodlands**, parks, and neighborhoods. Some even live in busy city parks like Central Park. As long as there are trees and food, squirrels can make a home.

## FROM KIT TO ADULT

A baby squirrel is called a **kit**. Kits are born in a soft nest and depend on their mother for warmth and milk. As they grow, they learn to climb, jump, and find food. Soon, they become quick and **independent** adult squirrels.



## WHAT SQUIRRELS EAT

Squirrels are mostly **herbivores**. They eat nuts, seeds, fruits, berries, and tree bark. Sometimes they also eat insects or eggs. Many squirrels collect and hide food in the ground to eat later. This is called **caching**.



## HOW SQUIRRELS MOVE

Squirrels are amazing climbers and jumpers. They **scamper** up tree trunks and leap from branch to branch. Their strong back legs help them jump far distances. Their tails act like a rudder to help them balance in the air.





## LIFE IN A NEST

Tree squirrels build nests called **dreys**. A drey is made of twigs, leaves, and grass and is often built high in a tree. The nest keeps squirrels warm and safe while they rest or care for their kits.



## HOW SQUIRRELS STAY SAFE

Squirrels stay safe by being quick and alert. They watch for **predators** like hawks, snakes, and cats. If danger comes, they dash up a tree or freeze to blend in. Their speed and climbing skills help them escape.

A close-up photograph of a squirrel with grey and brown fur, sitting on a bed of brown, fallen leaves. The squirrel is holding a large, brown, textured nut in its paws and is looking towards the right. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a forest setting.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Squirrels help plant new trees without even trying. When they hide nuts and forget where they buried them, the nuts can grow into trees. This helps forests grow and spread.

# QUESTION TIME!

1. (True or False) Squirrels are mammals.
2. (True or False) Squirrels can climb trees.
3. (True or False) Baby squirrels are called kits.
4. (Fact or Opinion) Squirrels use their tails to balance.
5. (Fact or Opinion) Squirrels are the funniest animals.
6. Where do squirrels live?
7. What do squirrels eat?
8. How do squirrels move through trees?
9. What is a squirrel's nest called?
10. Why do squirrels hide food?



# ANSWERS

1. True. Squirrels are mammals.
2. True. They are great climbers.
3. True. Baby squirrels are called kits.
4. Fact. Their tails really help them balance.
5. Opinion. "Funniest animals" is a personal idea.
6. They live in forests, parks, and neighborhoods.
7. They eat nuts, seeds, fruits, and plants.
8. They climb and jump from branch to branch.
9. It is called a drey.
10. They hide food to eat later.



# GLOSSARY

**Caching** — hiding food in different places to eat later

**Claw** — a sharp, curved nail on an animal's foot used for climbing or grabbing

**Drey** — a squirrel's nest made of leaves and twigs in a tree

**Forest** — a large area of land covered with many trees

**Herbivore** — an animal that eats plants

**Independent** — able to do things on its own

**Kit** — a baby squirrel

**Mammal** — an animal that has fur or hair and drinks milk from its mother when it is a baby

**Predator** — an animal that hunts other animals for food

**Scamper** — to run quickly with small, light steps

**Squirrel** — a small furry mammal with a bushy tail that lives in trees

**Woodland** — land covered with many trees, smaller than a forest

## FUN WITH SQUIRRELS

*Q: Why can't you be friends with a squirrel?*

*A: Well, because they drive everyone nuts.*

