

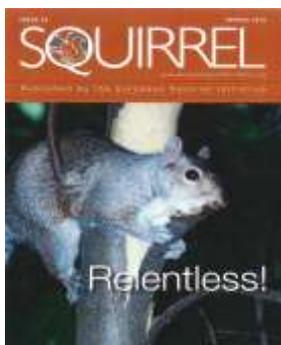


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Press Release
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ESI highlights the economic and environmental cost of grey squirrels.



The latest edition of the European Squirrel Initiative's magazine "Squirrel," published this week, highlights the continuing and growing damage being done by grey squirrels to Britain's woodlands, parks and gardens.

"It is estimated that grey squirrel bark stripping costs the UK forestry industry £14m per annum," said ESI chairman Andy Wiseman. "Trees planted using grant funding are being destroyed by grey squirrels, an additional cost to the UK tax payer."

In addition to the economic damage caused by grey squirrels Mr Wiseman, writing in the magazine, highlighted the knock on effect damaged trees had on associated fungi, invertebrates and their predators as well as having a direct impact on woodland bird eggs and chicks.

The spring edition of "Squirrel" also welcomed the enactment of the Invasive Alien Species Regulation which came into effect on 1st January 2015. The regulation seeks to address the problems of invasive alien species in a comprehensive manner so as to protect native biodiversity and ecosystem services. Of greater interest to the supporters of ESI will be the list of invasive alien species of union concern. ESI expects the "blacklist" to include the grey squirrel.

The magazine also announces the publication of a new book, funded by ESI, "The Grey Squirrel Management Handbook", written by Charles Dutton, providing a comprehensive guide to grey squirrel control. The book, which will be published on the 10th May, reviews and compares methods of control of grey squirrels, how to identify damage to trees by grey squirrels and where you might expect to find damage in woods. It provides practical advice on methods of grey squirrel management including landscape control with timing and costs using case studies.

END



Notes to Editors:

Please contact Storm: Storm.waller@kendallscom.co.uk

The European Squirrel Initiative:

The grey squirrel, *Sciurus caroliensis*, a native species of North America, was introduced to England from the late 19th century, until 1938 when it became illegal to import or keep the species in captivity.

The European Squirrel Initiative was founded in June 2002 by a group of concerned conservationists and foresters. The organisation seeks the restoration of the native red squirrel and the protection of the natural environment by removing the impact of the alien grey squirrel in Europe.

Its role is to:

- Persuade conservation bodies and governments of the absolute necessity of ridding Europe of the grey squirrel.
- Continue to commission research into the Impact of the grey squirrel on local ecosystems.

For more information visit the ESI website: www.europeansquirrelinitiative.org

Issued on behalf of the European Squirrel Initiative by Kendalls.

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