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## Press Release

Now that the Game shooting season is over and the woodland canopies are still bare, it is the ideal time to get to grips with grey squirrel populations.

While nests are still abundant, drey poking and grey squirrel shooting can be an effective way of controlling these invasive alien pests. Dreys are constructed of twigs and other materials to create a safe refuge. One squirrel may build several dreys, but during the winter they are often shared for warmth. Drey poking can result in a number of squirrels being disturbed.

It is important to poke the drey rather than shoot it out as the drey might be occupied by other animals such as owls. In addition, unless you destroy the drey properly, then it still remains a home for grey squirrels.

Grey squirrels cost the UK economy around £14 million every year and drey poking and shooting is one method of controlling greys alongside trapping and poisoning using Warfarin. As well as damaging trees, parks and gardens, grey squirrels have driven our native red squirrels to the verge of extinction, both through competition and as carriers of the squirrel-pox virus to which greys are immune.

“Both science and good practice demonstrates that culling grey squirrels works in protecting our native fauna and flora. Drey poking is an enjoyable and effective way for those interested in shooting to help preserve our native species and protect our trees,” said George Farr, chairman of the European Squirrel Initiative.

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