

Supplementary material 4. Details on the red squirrel supplementary feeding survey

Survey responses could be submitted digitally or via printed formats, ensuring accessibility for all participants. The following is the printable format of our ethically approved survey. The digital format was developed using the online digital survey platform Jisc. Participants first review the information and consent form on the opening page, proceeding only after providing their consent. Subsequent pages collect responses to questions, with tailored instructions to ensure clarity and ease of use. Distribution was coordinated through Gatekeepers, Isle of Wight residents who adhere to strict ethical and privacy guidelines outlined by Bournemouth University. Gatekeepers disseminated the survey through online links and at in-person events. All collected data was consolidated for comprehensive analysis, providing valuable insights to support red squirrel conservation efforts on the Isle of Wight.

Isle of Wight Red Squirrel Supplementary Feeding Survey

Participant Information

The title of the research project:

Conservation management of the Isle of Wight red squirrel population

What is the purpose of the research/questionnaire?

Hello, I am Alyson Buchanan, a Postgraduate Research student at Bournemouth University. I am conducting a survey as part of my research project to earn a PhD in Science and Technology.

The goal of this survey is to find out more about the supplementary feeding of Red Squirrels that is occurring on the Isle of Wight; where supplementary feeding is the provision of extra food (i.e., nuts, seeds, fruit, vegetables, etc.) to wildlife.

The survey will be available for a minimum of 3 months.

Why have I been chosen?

The goal is to acquire a minimum 100 participants. You have been invited because you reside on the Isle of Wight and are at least 18 years of age.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to read. You can withdraw from participation at any time and without giving a reason, simply by not submitting your survey responses or closing the browser page. Please note that once you have completed and submitted your survey responses, we are unable to remove your anonymised responses from the study. Deciding to take part or not will not impact you in any way.

How long will the questionnaire/online survey take to complete?

The questionnaire/online survey should take 5 to 10 minutes to complete.

What are the advantages and possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?

Whilst there are no immediate benefits to you participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will help us learn about the food resources available to the red squirrels and its potential impacts. This knowledge can be used to help determine conservation management plans on the Isle of Wight.

We do not anticipate any risks to you in taking part in this study.

What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research project's objectives?

Your postcode is being requested because this allows us to relate collected information to generalised locations while keeping your precise location unknown and upholding the respondent's anonymity.

The survey has been designed to learn how much food is being provided, types of food, frequency of feeding, location of feeding, etc., so that we can learn about the food resources available and how this impacts red squirrels' behaviour, population viability and mortality.

Use of my information

Participation in this study is on the basis of consent: you do not have to complete the survey, and you can change your mind at any point before submitting the survey responses. We will use your data on the basis that it is necessary for the conduct of research, which is an activity in the public interest. We put safeguards in place to ensure that your responses are kept secure and only used as necessary for this research study and associated activities such as a research audit. Once you have submitted your survey response it will not be possible for us to remove it from the study analysis because you will not be identifiable.

The anonymous information collected may be used to support other research projects in the future and access to it in this form will not be restricted. It will not be possible for you to be identified from this data. Anonymised data will be added to BU's Online Research Data Repository (a central location where data is stored) and which will be publicly available.

Contact for further information

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact my lead supervisor,

Dr Emilie Hardouin, Faculty of Science & Technology, at ehardouin@bournemouth.ac.uk or myself at abuchanan@bournemouth.ac.uk.

In case of complaints

Any concerns about the study should be directed to Dr. Tiantian Zhang, Deputy Dean for Research & Professional Practice for the Faculty of Science & Technology, Bournemouth University by email to researchgovernance@bournemouth.ac.uk.

Consent to Participate (to be included as a consent statement as part of the online questionnaire):

Please indicate that you have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet for this research project and that you consent to take part in this questionnaire before continuing:

☐ I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet and consent to take part in this questionnaire

☐ I do not consent to take part in this questionnaire [exit at this point]

Please indicate your agreement for the Research Team to access and use your recorded responses to this questionnaire before continuing:

☐ I give permission for members of the Research Team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my anonymised responses may be reproduced in reports, academic publications and presentations but I will not be identified or identifiable.

☐ I understand that my data may be included in an anonymised form within a dataset to be archived at BU's Online Research Data Repository.

Welcome to the Isle of Wight Red Squirrel Supplementary Feeding Survey. This survey is only for supplementary feeding occurring on the Isle of Wight, United Kingdom.

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey, it should take no more than 5-10 minutes. Your survey responses will remain anonymous. Your postcode is being requested because this allows us to relate collected information to generalised locations while keeping your precise location unknown and upholding your anonymity. Please fill in or circle the appropriate responses to the following questions.

Postcode: _____

Date: _____

1. Do you have a garden? **Yes** **No**
2. Do you have cats, dogs, or other pets in your garden? **Yes** **No**
3. Do you get squirrels in your garden/outside your residence? **Yes** **No**
4. Do you place feeders/food outside for squirrels, birds, or other wildlife? **Yes** **No**

If no, is there any specific reason you do not feed any wildlife at all? _____

If yes, please continue the survey. If you do not put out feeders or any type of food for squirrels, birds or other wildlife, the survey is now complete. Thank you for your time and responses.

5. Do you supply food to wildlife year-round? Yes No

If no, please explain when you supply food and when you do not: _____

6. Have you read the Wight Squirrel Project's feeding guide? (<http://www.wightsquirrels.co.uk/Red-Squirrel-Feeding.html>) **Yes** **No**

7. Do you attempt to follow the Wight Squirrel Project's feeding guide? **Yes** **No**

8. Do you have more than 1 feeder/food location in your garden? **Yes** **No**

Please answer the following questions regarding your feeder/food location. If you have more than one feeder/food location, please choose to answer the questions based on only one feeder/food location. Ideally answer for the feeder/food location that you think has the most squirrel activity.

9. Are you intentionally feeding squirrels? **Yes** **No**

If no, who is the food intended for? _____

If no, do you try to prevent squirrels from feeding from your feeders? **Yes** **No**

10. What type(s) of food(s) do you place in feeders/outside? Please circle all that apply.

Hazelnuts	Peanuts	Sunflower Seeds	Pine Nuts	
Walnuts	Bird Seed Mix	Fruit	Coconut	Other

If other, please describe:

11. How often do you put out food? Please circle one (the most appropriate answer).

Every Day	Twice a Week	Once a Week	Once a Fortnight	Once a Month
Other				

If other, please describe:

12. Is the feeder empty when you add more food? **Yes** **No**

If no, how much food is usually remaining? Please circle one (the most appropriate answer).

1/8	1/4	1/3	1/2	2/3	3/4
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If no, do you remove the old food before adding new food? **Yes** **No**

13. On average, how much food(g) do you put out at a time?

Example: "500 grams" or "250 grams Peanuts + 300 grams Sunflower Seeds"

14. How often do you clean the feeder? Please circle one (the most appropriate answer).

Every Day	Once a Week	Alternating Weeks	Once a Month	Never	Other
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If other, please describe:

15. What type of feeder do you use? Please circle one type of feeder most similar to the feeder you are answering these questions about.



Standard Squirrel Feeder
(Any material type: plastic, metal, wood, etc.)



Squirrel Jar Feeder



Squirrel Picnic Table



Bird Feeder



Other

If other, please describe:

16. Where is your feeder/food located? Please circle one (the most appropriate answer).

On a tree On a pole/post On a fence/boarder wall On the ground On a window/building

17. Approximately how high is the feeder/food above the ground? Please circle one (the most appropriate answer).

0-30(cm) 30-60(cm) 60-90(cm) 90-120(cm) 120-150(cm) 150-180(cm) More than 180(cm)

18. If the feeder is not attached to a tree, approximately how far is it from the nearest tree? Please circle one (the most appropriate answer).

0-1 (m) 1-2 (m) 2-3 (m) 3-4(m) 4-5(m) Greater than 5(m)

19. If you wish to provide any additional information or describe additional feeder(s)/food locations, please comment below:

Alyson E. V. Buchanan *et al.* - Conservation of an isolated and genetically unique population: Red squirrels on the Isle of Wight

Biodiversity and Conservation

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