

Social media

BBC South asked me to provide cute clips of red squirrels on video and do a 'selfie' piece to camera for their Facebook page. Here is the link: <https://bbc.in/35Bf66t>

Karena is going great guns at raising our profile on social media. Keep an eye on Wight Squirrel Project Facebook page for updates or better still become a friend and like us.

If you are a keen photographer why not enter our photo competition, details are on our Facebook page. The theme is red squirrels and bluebells and the closing date is May 20th. The winner will have their photograph in our red squirrel calendar.

Bluebell day May 3rd was virtual this year. You can see it on You Tube—<https://youtu.be/0YSC211ouc> Look forward to seeing you at the 'real thing' next year.

Woodland monitoring

Bi-annual woodland monitoring has been going on for 20 years and I owe a very big thank you to those dedicated few who have stuck with it all that time. Dave Dana in particular has been a stalwart by monitoring 3 woods and training volunteers. Dave has decided to retire from woodland monitoring to concentrate on other interests and I wish him all the best and thank him for his good work over the years.

I have been waiting for the All England Red Squirrel Strategy to go along with their guidelines on woodland monitoring methodology but may look at other options before the end of this year anyway. Whatever the methodology it will be non-intrusive and done without distressing the red squirrels, as Wight Squirrel Project is actively against harming the sensitive reds.



Squirrel sightings update

Thanks to publicity from local media, social media and the BBC including us on their Facebook page, reports from citizen scientists on the Isle of Wight have been coming in steadily. There have a few road kills but not as many as usual for this time of year. Keep in touch and keep your squirrel sightings coming via the website, email, phone or the app from Epicollect 5.



Red squirrel Publication

This is proceeding slowly but given there are three volumes broken down into sections, chapters and headed paragraphs it is not a quick task. I'm grateful to volunteers who are typing out reports that are pre-computer as that saves me a bit of time.

I'm also grateful to Hugh Milner who has agreed to write about woodland habitat on the Isle of Wight and vet Tiffany Blackett who is going to write a chapter on feeding a balanced diet to garden squirrels, particularly when it comes to peanuts. Psychologist, Dr Jon Fishman has contributed a description of the brain and how it functions in relation to red squirrel behaviour.

A big thank you also to volunteers who are typing up pre-computer documents and helping with tables and graphs. It all helps to get this huge and long overdue job done.

This going to be a huge publication and too detailed for most people so I will publish a booklet of bullet points for those who just want some interesting facts about red squirrels without all the science and data. Our partner group, The IOW Red Squirrel Trust is all about education in schools and to community groups so the bullet point booklet will be useful to them.