
SCIENCE in the Park

Eastern grey squirrel

Sciurus carolinensis

Family: **Sciuridae**

Herbivore/Insectivore / Prey

Native to Virginia



Very common to the James River Park System, the Eastern grey squirrel is a populous rodent that easily adapts to urban and rural environments. The grey squirrel prefers heavily wooded areas for protection and nesting purposes. The grey squirrel subsists on tree bark and buds, berries, nuts, and fungi, and are most active during the day. They are preyed upon by snakes, birds, weasels, raccoons, foxes, and both domestic and feral cats.

Fun Facts

- In urban areas, white or black squirrels can sometimes be seen. This is due to a mutation that becomes more evident because of lower predation in man-made areas.
 - Squirrels use their tails for a variety of purposes: to balance; to warn other squirrels of danger, and as an umbrella when it rains.
 - Squirrels often raid bird feeders for sunflower seeds.
 - The grey squirrel is one of the few mammals that can descend a tree headfirst.
 - Squirrels hide their food in holes or crevices and will use their sense of smell to retrieve the food later in the year. They will also pretend to hide food if they feel they are being watched.
-