

Name _____



Squirrels: Curious and Clever Little Acrobats

Squirrels are curious and clever animals that many of us see often, especially if we live near parks, forests, or even in cities. These furry creatures are small and quick, and they are known for their playful antics. Let's explore more about these delightful animals!

What Do Squirrels Look Like?

Squirrels come in various colors, but the most common ones have soft, grayish-brown fur. They have long, bushy tails that help them balance when they climb trees and leap from branch to branch. Squirrels have sharp claws that allow them to grip onto tree bark, and their big, round eyes help them spot any potential dangers.

Where Do Squirrels Live?

Squirrels are very adaptable and can live in many different environments. You might find them in your local park, your backyard, or even in the middle of a bustling city. They make their homes in tree branches, creating nests called "dreys." These nests are made of leaves, twigs, and other materials.

What Do Squirrels Eat?

Squirrels are omnivores, which means they eat both plants and small animals. They love munching on nuts, acorns, seeds, and fruits. You might have seen a squirrel holding a nut in its tiny paws, using its sharp teeth to open it. They are also known to eat insects, bird eggs, and even small birds if they can catch them.

How Do Squirrels Move?

Squirrels are incredibly agile and nimble. They are excellent climbers and can scamper up and down trees with ease. Their long tails help them balance, and they can even use them as umbrellas on rainy days! Squirrels are also fantastic jumpers, and they can leap from one tree branch to another, sometimes over quite long distances.

Family Life

Squirrels are usually solitary animals, which means they prefer to live alone. However, they are not entirely antisocial. You might see several squirrels in the same area, especially during mating season. Baby squirrels, called "kits" or "pups," are born blind and hairless. They depend on their mothers for care and protection until they are old enough to venture out on their own.

Conservation

Squirrels play an essential role in the environment by helping to plant trees. They bury nuts and seeds in the ground, and sometimes they forget where they buried them. These forgotten seeds can sprout and grow into new trees, helping to keep our forests healthy.

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Reading Comprehension Questions

1. What is the purpose of a squirrel's long, bushy tail?
2. What types of food do squirrels eat?
3. How do squirrels use their sharp claws?
4. What are the nests that squirrels build in trees called?
5. Why are squirrels important to the environment?