

Project WildLIVE – Gray Squirrel Project Educator Resource Sheet

Post-video Activity suggestion:

Squirrels are wildlife that are widespread and often very easy to find, watch, and observe. Challenge your students (either on their own, in groups, or as a class) to observe and record squirrel behavior. You can do this in whatever way works best for your setting and timeframe. This could mean taking a walk to find squirrels, practicing walking quietly and stealthily to avoid scaring the squirrels away, establishing an outdoor sit spot for students to unobtrusively watch wildlife, or even placing out a birdfeeder or birdseed to attract squirrels to an easier-to-watch location while you're studying them.

Have students pretend they are wildlife biologists who are studying squirrel behavior. You can even have students design a research question or hypothesis to guide their studies. Help students record behavior. Behavioral studies are often strictly timed, with an observation recorded every 30 seconds, every minute, or every few minutes. Often, behaviors are categorized and the category is referenced instead of explaining the behavior itself. For example, feeding, running, tail-flicking, tree-climbing, sitting, etc. Students – especially young kids – will really like observing real wildlife behavior, especially if it is in a setting where the students are quiet enough that the squirrels are unafraid and behave as they would in a natural setting. Take this opportunity to work with such a widespread species such as the Eastern Gray Squirrel and get your students outside and watching these interesting creatures.

Resources for further learning:

<https://www.animalspot.net/eastern-gray-squirrel.html>

Designing a squirrel box: <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/eastern-gray-squirrel>

