

**Red Squirrel Post Mortems**

If you find a dead red squirrel it can be sent for post mortem, in order to further our knowledge on the conservation, welfare and diseases of red squirrels.

Please ensure that you wear disposable gloves when handling dead squirrels.

* All dead red squirrels found inScotlandshould be sent to:

Easter Bush Pathology

Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

University of Edinburgh

Easter Bush Veterinary Centre

Roslin

Midlothian EH25 9RG

Contact: Elspeth.Milne@ed.ac.uk

 Direct Dial: 0131 650 6221 Reception: 0131 651 7458

# Postage and Packaging

The Royal Mail is able to accept diagnostic samples via the normal post for postage within the UK. To protect public health ***it is imperative that red squirrels sent for post mortem are appropriately packaged*.** Royal Mail or courier services may refuse to handle a leaking package.

If it is not possible to post the red squirrel the same day that it is found, carcases should be stored refrigerated but only if you have the appropriate facilities, (e.g. at a wildlife centre, veterinary surgery). DO NOT use domestic fridges – carcasses *may* carry dangerous infectious agents. Carcasses may be frozen only as a last resort, as freezing can destroy some of the post mortem evidence.

Any direct contact with the dead squirrel should be avoided, i.e. place your hand within a plastic bag, pick up the carcass with covered hand and invert the bag over the carcass and tie the bag securely. Use a separate bag for each carcass.

The secured bag must then be wrapped in plenty of absorbent material e.g. kitchen roll, which then must be placed in another two securely sealed plastic bags (which should not have the ventilation holes common to many carrier bags.)

The package should then be placed within a crush proof container, such as a rigid margarine tub. This does not have to be done separately for each squirrel, but **each specimen must be accompanied by a completed form (see below)**. Please package the container(s) within a jiffy post-bag, or a substantial brown paper parcel.

The senders name and address should be written clearly on the back of the package and the package MUST be labelled:

**BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCE - CATEGORY B - HANDLE WITH CARE**

and a hazard diamond shape containing the number UN3373

Packages must be sent either by guaranteed next day delivery or first class post. Please do not send packages on a Thursday or Friday, as the laboratory may be closed at the weekend.

Although you will have used an inverted plastic bag or disposable gloves, please remember to **wash your hands** after dealing with the dead red squirrel and disinfect any surfaces used.

**Please alert the lab by phone or email to expect your package.**

# *Red Squirrel Post-Mortems*

**Date squirrel found:**

**Location found & grid ref:**

**Treatment (if any, e.g. frozen or refrigerated):**

**Any indications of cause of death:**

**Comments:**

**Finder’s name and postal address:**

**\*Email: Tel/Mobile:**

**Sender’s name and postal address: …………………………………………………………………….**

(if different from above)

**…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..**

**\*email: …………………………………………………\*Tel/mobile: ……………………………………..**

Please complete this form and send together with the appropriately packaged dead red squirrel.

A separate copy of this form should be completed for each squirrel sent.

 \*email or telephone contact is useful if any follow-up information is required.

Postal address is for returning the report to the finder; sender address required by Royal Mail.