

Get off/on my land!

Towards a landscape level approach to squirrel management



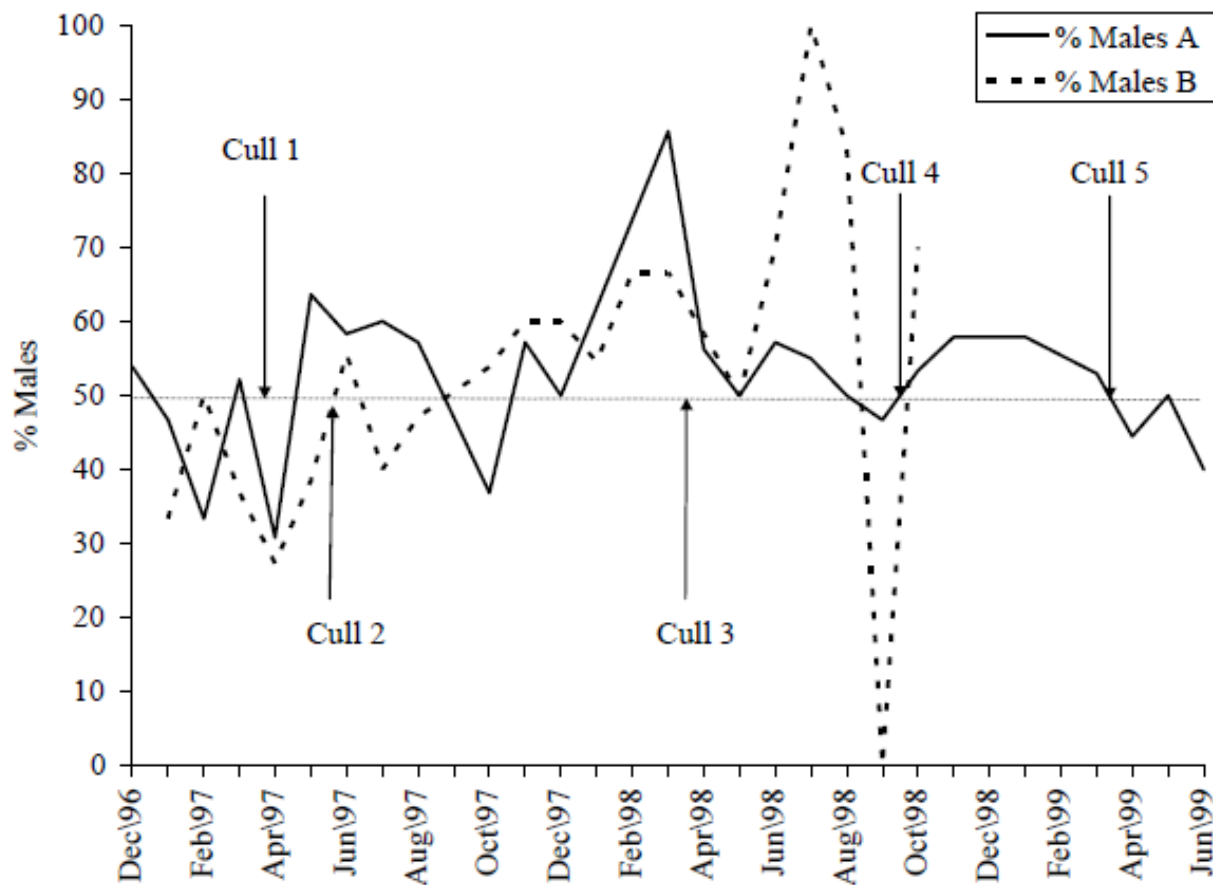
Mariella Marzano
mariella.marzano@forestry.gov.uk

Mike Dunn
michael.dunn@forestry.gov.uk

Northern Research Station, Roslin, Midlothian,
Scotland, EH25 9SY



GREY SQUIRREL POPULATION RECOVERY FOLLOWING CULLS

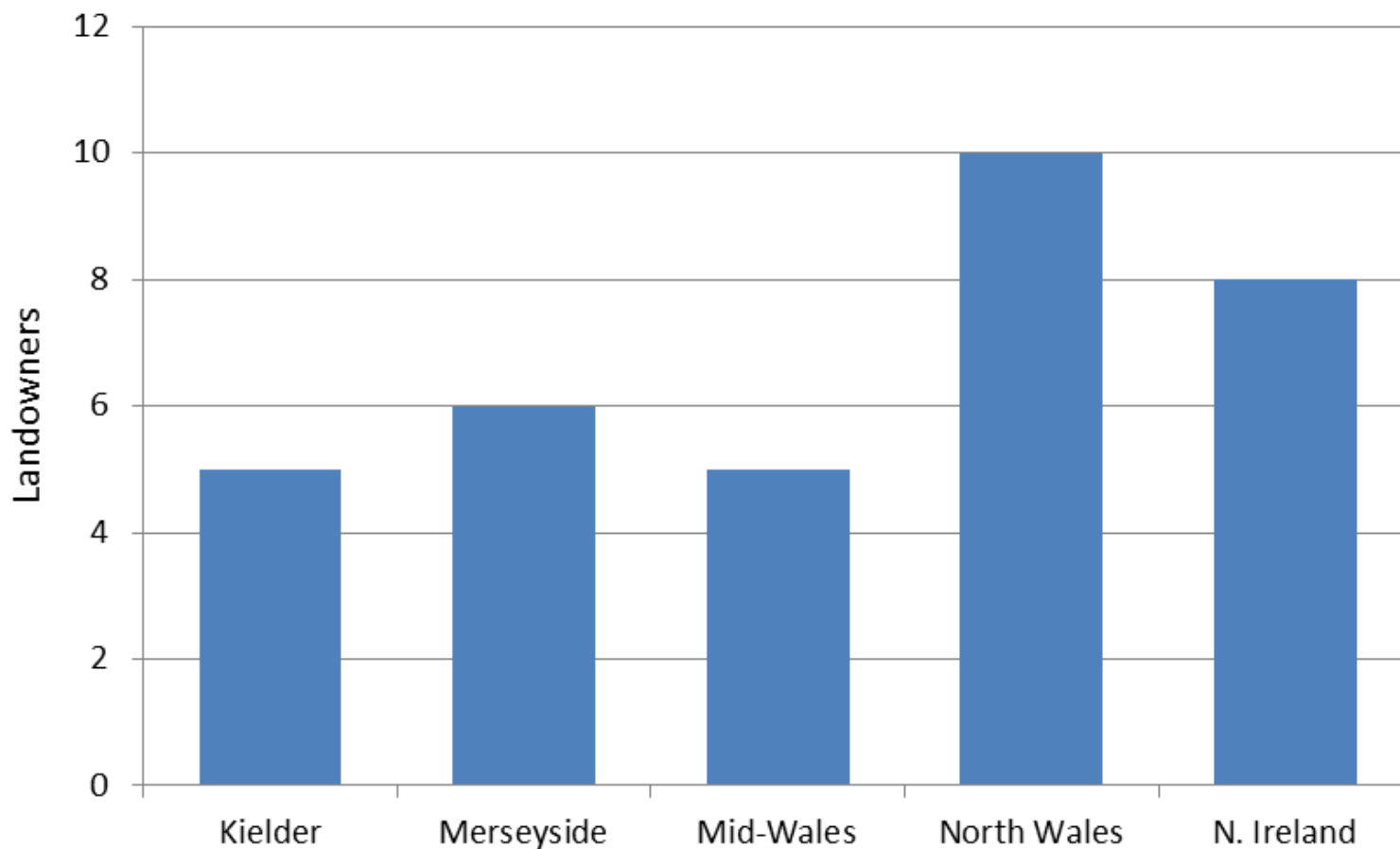


“the sources of recovering squirrels need to be identified and the squirrels therein controlled if the population is to be reduced for a longer period of time” (Lawton and Rochford, 2007)



- 1) How do landowners support squirrel conservation?
- 2) What motivates landowners to become engaged?
- 3) What are the barriers and challenges?
- 4) What factors/actions would encourage greater engagement?





Estates, Farmers, Charities, NGOs, Public bodies, Private woodland owners, Holiday parks, Botanic gardens, Schools, Scout camps...

"We've got a *feeding station at the hide*. We know people come specifically to see them and when it's National Red Squirrel Week we run a week of *walks and things*" - Charity

"The policy is not to replant with broadleaves but it's to *plant with conifers*, mainly pines, basically *for the red squirrels*" - Nature reserve

"We've obviously relied on [RSU partner] to provide *information about the picture of the squirrels throughout the whole area*, [...] that gives us a baseline, we can see where our sites sit within all that, we can see what their project is doing on an annual basis, we can see that it's working and *we see ourselves then as part of the jigsaw*" - Charity



*"They're a **native species** [...] they have their niche and their relationships with other plants and animals, which has been maintained for hundreds of years"*

– Private woodland owner

*"We're proud of the reds, we're glad they're here, we're managing for them, **it's something the public really likes**"*

- Nature reserve

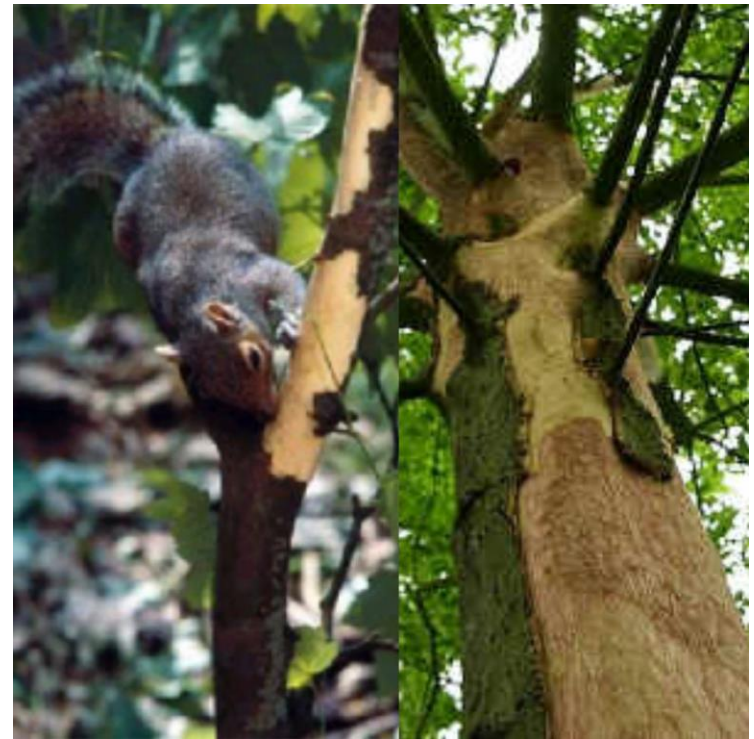


"We've had quite serious **damage to the trees** in recent years. [...] the tree from a commercial perspective, or a forester's perspective then becomes pretty useless"

- Private woodland owner

*"Birds have a lot of predators, but **stealing the eggs and stealing the chicks** and things like that. And the most important thing, they're **not native**"*

- Farmer



1. Trespassing and damage

*"There are people who would be quite happy if there was **no general public use**. There are others of us who would be perhaps more relaxed than we are at the moment if we knew that there was going to be no damage done"*

– Private woodland owner

2. Safety concerns (incl. insurance issues)

*"The **health and safety** is a little bit of a headache. [...] anybody that goes on to a site, has to have **public liability insurance** if they're working. So, I think that would be a possible stumbling block"*

– Woodland management company

3. Opposition to control/Fear of opposition from others

*"In an effort to try to stop any grey squirrel control, so some people can really take it to quite extreme measures whether that, be it legal or otherwise. So, I'm a little bit **wary about publicising** it too much"*

– Nature reserve

4. Apathy/Lack of awareness/No benefit to Landowner

"the broadleaves that we do have planted here, even if it does get hammered by the squirrels, once it's off and established and we don't plan to do anything with the majority of it, it's not even going to go for firewood, so it's plant it and leave it and **if the squirrels hammer it, the squirrels can hammer it**" - Private woodland owner

5. Time and resources/Perceptions of hopelessness

*"it doesn't matter how many you shoot, **there'll always be more** because they'll regenerate, won't they? The only way to get rid of the grey squirrels would be to completely eliminate them and that's not possible. Well, I suppose it's theoretically possible if you put enough effort in, but it's not in practice possible"* - Estate

6. Conflict with other objectives

*"We are trying to conserve woodland and red squirrels, alright yes they do very well in conifer areas but **we can't just keep conifers just because of the red squirrels** if you know what I mean, or rather we're not going to"* - Charity

1. Conforming to norms

"The last thing I want to happen is for my national nature reserve to be acting as a refuge then for grey squirrels in the wider area where so much grey squirrel control is taking place"

– Nature reserve

2. Financial incentives

*"All the trapping we were doing was Glastir-funded [Welsh grant scheme]. That's now stopped, so I think that's likely to be the end of our trapping programme, until we get **more funding**"*

– Private woodland owner

3. Greater awareness

*"Estates are really much more commercially minded [...] **hammering home the fact that grey squirrels will damage their crops** which actually then might make [control] worth their while [...] Sometimes they don't quite realise the extent" – Charity*

4. Instilling Trust in rangers/volunteers

*"You wouldn't want any Tom, Dick or Harry, [...] you're maybe not here, they're sitting there, they're on your property for however long. You have to have **a good relationship** and you have to **trust them and know them**" - Farmer*

5. New approaches

*"the **contraceptive** thing I think is possibly our only chance long term for the survival of the red squirrel because that's going to make it easier for land owners who haven't got the investment or the ability to put feet on the ground. That's **less labour intensive**. So I think that's very positive if it comes off" - Charity*

Casebook						
	A : Access ▼	B : Control ▼	C : Gender ▼	D : Land ▼	E : RSU area ▼	F : Squirrel pr... ▼
1 : Cases\Ki...	Open ▼	Allow control by others	Not Applicable	Public woodland	Kielder	Red and Grey
2 : Cases\Ki...	Open	Participate in control	Not Applicable	Estate	Kielder	Red and Grey
7 : Cases\M...	Open	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Nature reserve	Merseyside	Reds
9 : Cases\M...	Private	Allow control by others	Not Applicable	Private woodland	Mid Wales	Greys
10 : Cases\M...	Open	Allow control by others	Not Applicable	Nature reserve	Mid Wales	Greys
14 : Cases\N...	Open	No control	Not Applicable	Local Authority	N Ire	Greys
17 : Cases\N...	Private	Allow control by others	Female	Farm	N Ire	Greys
21 : Cases\N...	Controlled	Participate in control	Male	Private woodland	N Wales	Greys
27 : Cases\N...	Private	Participate in control	Male	Estate	N Wales	Red and Grey
31 : Cases\R...	Open	Allow control by others	Male	Estate	Merseyside	Red and Grey