

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Delmarva Fox Squirrel Translocation to Assawoman Wildlife Area

September 2020

### Why is the DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife doing this project?

Delmarva Fox Squirrels (DFS) are rare in Delaware, with only two known populations, and this project seeks to reestablish the species in Delaware to the point where it is secure. Recovery of the species in the state will increase the chances of the long-term survival of the species and provide future generations the ability to observe and enjoy them.

### What is a translocation?

Translocation (the moving of animals from robust populations to suitable and, typically, unoccupied habitats) has proven to be an important and effective tool for increasing the distribution of this species.

### Who is doing the translocation?

DNREC Fish and Wildlife is leading this project but the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture and a researcher from the California University of Pennsylvania are assisting.

### When will the translocation take place?

The first release is scheduled for September 2020, with the exact date dependent on weather conditions being mild enough for trapping and moving squirrels.

### Will you do more translocations?

Yes, we plan to do translocations to at least three locations in Delaware over the next five years.

### How will this effect landowners near the Assawoman Wildlife Area? What if the squirrels come on my land?

There will be no impacts to properties or what people can do with their land. On November 13, 2015, DFS were removed from the federal endangered list. As has been the case for over 50 years, hunting of DFS will continue to be illegal.

### Are there any laws regarding DFS in Delaware?

The hunting season for DFS remains closed so hunting is not permitted. It is illegal to import, move, possess or sell them or any part of them without a permit from the Division of Fish and Wildlife.

## Will this translocation affect my hunting?

No – but we ask you to be attentive to your target because the hunting season for DFS is closed.

If you are a gray squirrel hunter, please educate yourself on the differences between gray squirrels and DFS. Delmarva fox squirrels are larger, have a “silvery” coloration, shorter ears, and are more likely to run along the ground rather than jump tree to tree. Gray squirrels are smaller, have darker gray fur, almost always with some brown mixed in, and have longer ears. Please see below for help with distinguishing gray squirrels and DFS.

## What do I do if I accidentally harvest a DFS?

If while hunting you accidentally harvest a DFS, immediately contact DNREC’s Natural Resource Police to self-report the incident (1-800-523-3336). While you will not be allowed to keep the DFS, self-reporting an accidental harvest usually doesn’t lead to further penalization.

## What do I do if I see a DFS?

Record time and location and take a photo if you can. We would love to hear about it; 302-735-3600 or [holly.niederriter@delaware.gov](mailto:holly.niederriter@delaware.gov). Enjoy watching this special Delmarva-exclusive species!

## Why do some squirrels have collars?

The collars allow us to track their movements and see what they do after we release them into their new home. Initially, we hope they stay at or near the Assawoman Wildlife Area so they can find each other and reproduce but, ultimately, we hope they spread out into other suitable habitats. The collars do not harm them and will eventually be removed or replaced.

## What can I do to help?

Report any DFS you see and take photos when you see them! We expect them to show up on game cameras so please send those photos as well.

## Identification:

Eastern gray squirrel ( <i>Sciurus carolinensis</i> )	Delmarva fox squirrel ( <i>Sciurus niger cinereus</i> )
 A photograph of an Eastern gray squirrel standing on a bed of pine needles. It has a brownish-gray back and a lighter, yellowish-brown face.	 A photograph of a Delmarva fox squirrel standing on a bed of pine needles. It has a silver-gray back and a white face.
<p><b>Size:</b> Smaller <b>Fur:</b> Gray; usually with brown on back and tail <b>Tail:</b> Not as full <b>Ears:</b> Long, pointy <b>Neck:</b> Narrow</p>	<p><b>Size:</b> Larger <b>Fur:</b> Silver-gray sometimes with markings <b>Tail:</b> Fluffy, longer, fuller <b>Ears:</b> Short, stubby <b>Neck:</b> Short, stocky</p>