

Southern California Squirrel Survey

Los Angeles Field Guide

Help the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County track the changes in squirrel distribution in our region! Use this field guide to help identify the squirrels you find, then follow the easy steps on the back to send us your data.



Eastern Fox Squirrel

Sciurus niger

- Tree squirrel commonly seen in city parks and neighborhoods
- Fur ranges from brown to reddish brown; belly is a yellowish rust color
- Eats a wide variety of food ranging from acorns to human leftovers
- Most active during the morning and afternoon
- Often observed chasing other squirrels, caching food, basking in the sun, or traveling overhead on power lines
- Females give birth during both the fall and spring



Western Gray Squirrel

Sciurus griseus

- The only tree squirrel native to Southern California
- Found in less urbanized areas of the local foothills and mountains
- Coat is gray with a white belly and white frosted hairs on the tail
- Larger body and bushier tail than a fox squirrel
- Requires native woodland habitat for food and shelter
- Eats native plants; plays a key role in spreading acorns for new growth



California Ground Squirrel *Otospermophilus beecheyi*

- Common ground squirrel in developed areas and most of California
- Coat is brown on the head fading into brown with whitish flecks on the body
- Large white patches on the shoulders
- Ears smaller, head and tail narrower than in tree squirrels; adapted to burrows
- Prefers open habitats like grasslands, orchards and rocky ridges so predators are easier to spot
- Has a flexible diet; prefers acorns, green vegetation, fruits and vegetables

How to Participate

1. Look for squirrels!

Go out and find squirrels in your schoolyard, neighborhood (or anywhere in Southern California!) year round. There are more than just the top three listed here, including a species of flying squirrel you might spot only at night!

2. Take pictures

Photograph the squirrel and document when and where you found it (GPS or cross streets), what kind of habitat it is in, and what it was doing. The more detailed the observation, the better!

3. Submit your observation.

Go to the iNaturalist project page [inaturalist.org/projects/southern-california-squirrel-survey](https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/southern-california-squirrel-survey) to upload your data; or e-mail the photo and supporting data to squirrelsurvey@nhm.org.



**NATURAL
HISTORY
MUSEUM**
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

900 Exposition Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 9007
213.763.DINO
www.nhm.org