

WHAT IS A DOUGLAS SQUIRREL?



The Douglas Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus douglasii*) lives in Oregon and other areas of the Pacific Northwest. Some Native Americans called it the "Pillilooeet," in imitation of its high-pitched call.

In the summer, this species is a grayish or almost greenish brown on its back and pale orange on the chest and belly, while legs and feet are brown. In the winter the coat is browner, the underside is grayer and its ears look even tuftier than they do in summer.

Douglas Squirrels live in coniferous forests, from the Sierra Nevada mountains of California north to coastal British Columbia and Southeast Alaska. They like to live in old-growth or mature second-growth forests.

They are active during the day, often chattering noisily at intruders. On summer nights, they sleep in ball-shaped nests they make in trees, but in the winter they use holes in trees as nests.

Douglas Squirrels eat seeds of coniferous trees like the Douglas-fir, Sitka Spruce and Shore Pine, though they also like acorns, berries, mushrooms, the eggs of birds and some fruit, including strawberries and plums.

These native squirrels are named in honor of David Douglas, the Scottish naturalist and explorer who traveled along the Columbia and Willamette Rivers in search of new and unusual plants and animals in the late 1800s.

Learn more about native plants and animals at www.DavidDouglasSociety.org.