

# SQUIRREL OBSERVATION DATA SHEET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Temperature: \_\_\_\_\_

Weather: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Squirrel Species Observed (Circle one):

Eastern Gray Squirrel

Red Squirrel

Eastern Chipmunk

Mark a tally for each time the squirrel exhibits the following behaviors:

Vocalizing	
Eating	
Powerline Use	
Tree Use	
Same Species Interaction* <small>*Record the number of individuals in the group for each interaction</small>	
Different Species Interaction* <small>*Record the number of individuals in the group for each interaction</small>	

List the different species with which the squirrel was interacting:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List the species of tree the squirrel was in, or draw one of its leaves on the back of this page to help you ID it later:

Make some sketches of the tree your squirrel was using to help identify the tree later. Leaf drawings are especially useful.

## **Observation Instructions:**

MIDDLE and HIGH SCHOOL

Ask students to fill out the environmental information on the top of their worksheets: date, time, temperature, and weather conditions.

Explain to students that they'll be tallying the behaviors exhibited by an individual squirrel. If they want to observe more than one squirrel, they'll need to fill out a new worksheet for each squirrel.

They should first identify the species of squirrel, and then spend 10-20 minutes observing that individual and tallying its behaviors. If possible, try to identify any different species the squirrel interacted with, as well as any trees that the squirrel used. The students should record observations for at least five days.

## **Data Analysis:**

*MIDDLE SCHOOL*

Ask students to create a few graphs depicting the number of squirrels they saw exhibiting a behavior (dependent variable) versus the temperature or weather conditions (independent variable). For example, they might graph the number of different-species interactions on sunny and cloudy days, or the number of squirrels using powerlines at different temperature ranges.

Ask students to look for correlations between the variables: Is there any pattern to squirrels' behavior in certain weather conditions or temperatures? Whether yes or no, ask students to think about why that might be, and write up a short paragraph or two describing their answer and evidence.

*HIGH SCHOOL*

Ask students to create a scatter plot showing two quantitative variables of their choice—for example, number of squirrels seen by group 1 versus the temperature on that day, or how many squirrels were in trees versus time of day the observations were made.

Ask students to present their graphs and describe their findings and the relationship between their chosen variables (including no relationship).