

Flying Squirrels

By Joan Mish

The other day someone told me that there were flying squirrels in Colorado; probably in Wisconsin also. But I have never known about them. So I did a little research and this is what I have found:

They do not fly like birds or bats but only glide from one tree to another. But it has been recorded that they have flown the length of a football field.

I understand their ability to fly is because of a parachute-like membrane that stretches from wrist to ankle. The longer tail of this squirrel provides stability in flight. Their leg bones are longer and their hand and foot bones are shorter. Most of them are nocturnal and omnivorous, eating fruit seeds, buds, flowers insects, spiders, birds' eggs and tree sap. They are born in a nest and are cared for by their mother. By five weeks they are able to practice gliding skills and by ten weeks they are ready to leave the nest.

Once they leave their homes they have been responsible for starting forest fires by chewing on electric wires. Other damage they can do to nature is denude bark on trees and shrubs, dig holes in turf and raid gardens.

All this information I found on the internet, mainly Wikipedia. But I will be looking for them around our community since there are so many squirrels everywhere in Windsor Gardens. Has anyone ever seen one? Or did you know there were these kinds of squirrels?