

White Squirrels ^[1]

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by Amy Kemp,
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A Brevard White Squirrel. Photo by flickr user Allen Forrest. ^[2]According to local legend, Brevard's famed white squirrel population can trace their lineage back to a single pair of white squirrels that arrived in the town when a carnival animal truck overturned in 1949. The pair began breeding in the wild and would periodically appear throughout town.

The white squirrel population grew and, by 1986, became so prized to the community that the Brevard City Council created an ordinance establishing a white squirrel sanctuary, making it "unlawful for any person to hunt, kill, trap, or otherwise take any protected squirrels within the city."

The Brevard white squirrels have dark eyes and white or grey streaked fur. They are not albino squirrels, as they have normal amounts of melanin and standard dark eyes. By 2011, an estimated 40.3% of Brevard's squirrels were white squirrels.

In honor of their famed animal mascot, Brevard holds an annual White Squirrel Festival. This three-day event takes place over Memorial Day weekend and features the White Squirrel Music Festival, the White Squirrel Photo Contest, the White Squirrel 5 & 10k's, and the Squirrel Box Derby. A Veterans Memorial parade is also held during the festival, as well as plenty of food and local arts & crafts for sale. During the festival you can also find out more about the region's squirrel rehabilitation projects and even adopt a white squirrel.

References:

City of Brevard: <https://cityofbrevard.com/481/White-Squirrels> ^[3]

White Squirrel Festival: <http://whitesquirrelfestival.com/> ^[4]

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[Brevard White Squirrel](#) ^[2]. Photo by Allen Forrest on Flickr.

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