

# Red Squirrel Walk – Brownsea Island, Dorset

**Short description:** Brownsea Island is dramatically located at the entrance to Poole Harbour, Dorset. This 1.1ml (1.8km) walk cuts through mixed and pine woodland in the centre of the island, offering an excellent opportunity to see red squirrels and red squirrel conservation in action.

## Getting there:

Ferries for Brownsea Island operate half hourly from Poole Quay and Sandbanks. There is also a limited service from Bournemouth and Swanage

**Road:** Poole Quay or Sandbanks are clearly signposted on roads approaching Poole

**Car parks:** Car parks in Poole and at Sandbanks. NT car park at Shell Bay

**Foot:** On foot from Poole Quay and Sandbanks or across chain ferry from Shell Bay (end of South West Coast Path)

**Bus:** Bus stops at Poole and Sandbanks for buses to and from Poole, Bournemouth and Swanage

**Rail:** Poole ½ml to Poole Quay; Bournemouth

For public transport information visit [www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk)

**Maps and start grid ref:** OS Landranger 195, Explorer OL15, gr SZ 022 876

**Facilities available:** NT Villano café, shop, visitor centre, toilets and baby changing facilities

**Terrain:** Gentle walking conditions

**Distance:** 1.1ml (1.8km)

**Accessibility:** Countryside paths are uneven in places

## Points of interest:

Start the walk from the church (point 1), looking out for the following features:

2. Plenty of suitable food for red squirrels, who feed in autumn on sweet chestnut and beech tree seeds, can be found here
3. There are no grey squirrels on Brownsea. Usually they are better adapted to survive in this type of mixed woodland than red squirrels
4. The trees to your left are mature Scot's pine, an ideal red squirrel habitat. One of the signs that squirrels are around are the pine cones which have been chewed to remove the pine seeds
5. Woodland on Brownsea must be managed carefully to conserve the red squirrel population. Here you can see new pine woodland regenerating
6. In this area rhododendron has been recently removed by volunteers

**Simon Lee, Property Manager on Brownsea Island, says:**

'We're very lucky to be looking after one of the few places in southern England where red squirrels survive.'

**Property contact details:** Tel 01202 707744

**National Trust properties nearby:** Corfe Castle, Kingston Lacy, Purbeck Coast and Studland Beach

