

# STUDY QUESTIONS

## TO “SUPER SQUIRRELS!”

Study and learn facts and ideas based on this Young Naturalists nonfiction story in *Minnesota Conservation Volunteer*, March-April 2019, [www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine](http://www.mndnr.gov/mcvmagazine).

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*Minnesota Conservation Volunteer* magazine is your guide to wild things. Every other month, six times a year, the magazine arrives in your school library. Each one has a story for Young Naturalists like you. **Are you curious about wild things?** Young Naturalists tells true stories that can answer all kinds of questions such as these—

**Have you ever heard of a purple wartyback?** How about a pink heelsplitter, pimple-back, or monkeyface? All are Minnesota freshwater mussels. Read Young Naturalists stories to learn which species (kinds) of critters live in Minnesota—frogs, salamanders, snakes, wild cats, wild dogs, weasels, mice, and rabbits.

Want to **peek inside the den of a red fox** and see how the kits grow up? Are you a rock hound searching for agates? Have you ever wondered what’s alive under snow? How animals see? Why is a bluebird blue? How birds fly?

Would you like to hear the true story of **giants of the ice age**? Young Naturalists also tells you about the underground universe. You can read the story of a tiny owl that went to a hospital with an injured wing. Find out about a boy who worked in a logging camp. Read the story of Ojibwe children today hunting and gathering like their ancestors did.

Learn how to get started **camping, snowshoeing, ice fishing, or canoeing**.

**Find these stories and more online** at [www.mndnr.gov/young\\_naturalists](http://www.mndnr.gov/young_naturalists).

*Your knowledge of wild things helps you explore and enjoy the outdoors. Have fun!*

## “SUPER SQUIRRELS” STUDY QUESTIONS

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### 1. HOW DOES BEING NOCTURNAL BENEFIT A FLYING SQUIRREL?

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### 2. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE TRAITS OF A NORTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL? WHICH ARE TRAITS OF A SOUTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL? WHICH ARE TRAITS OF BOTH? MARK EACH: N = NORTHERN, S = SOUTHERN, B = BOTH

- Has a gray belly
- Can soar between trees
- Has a white belly
- Nests in a hole in a tree
- Found in Alaska and Canada
- Has slender bones on its feet that help it spread its patagia
- Likes coniferous trees
- Likes deciduous trees
- Found in Mexico and Central America
- More likely to live in Minnesota's Arrowhead region
- More likely to live in eastern Minnesota
- Found from Mille Lacs Lake to Wild River State Park
- Builds a nest in tree branches

### 3. True or false: Northern tree squirrels are larger than southern tree squirrels.

**4. HOW DOES A FLYING SQUIRREL CHANGE DIRECTION WHEN IT'S IN THE AIR?** \_\_\_\_\_

**5. THE LONGEST OBSERVED FLIGHT OF A FLYING SQUIRREL WAS ALMOST 300 FEET. A FOOTBALL FIELD IS 100 YARDS LONG. WHAT PROPORTION OF A FOOTBALL FIELD WAS THAT FLIGHT?** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. WHAT ARE TWO PLACES WHERE A FLYING SQUIRREL MIGHT BUILD ITS NEST?** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. THE PICTURE OF A FLYING SQUIRREL'S SKULL SHOWS THAT IT HAS LARGE EYES AND LARGE EAR OPENINGS. HOW MIGHT THESE TRAITS BE USEFUL TO AN ANIMAL THAT IS ACTIVE MAINLY AT NIGHT?** \_\_\_\_\_

**8. ACCORDING TO THE STORY, WHY MIGHT A NORTHERN FLYING SQUIRREL DIG IN THE SNOW?**

- a. to find mushrooms to eat
- b. to make a snow fort to sleep in
- c. to find baby mice to eat
- d. to make a place to go to the bathroom

**9. NAME THREE WAYS FLYING SQUIRRELS HELP FORESTS STAY HEALTHY.**

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

**10.** True or false: Flying squirrels hibernate in holes in trees.

**11. NAME TWO WAYS FLYING SQUIRRELS SAVE ENERGY IN WINTER.** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**12. MATCH THE NUMBERS WITH THE EVENT IN A YOUNG FLYING SQUIRREL'S LIFE:**

- 40 Number of weeks a baby squirrel is inside its mother before it is born
- 5 Number of babies born at a time
- 2 Number of grams a newborn flying squirrel weighs
- 1 Number of months before a baby flying squirrel's eyes open
- 2-4 Age in days when a baby flying squirrels starts to eat solid food
- 6 Number of months until a baby flying squirrel is as big as its mother

**13. WHAT KIND OF CALL DOES A FLYING SQUIRREL MAKE?**

- a. nothing
- b. a clucking sound
- c. a high-pitched call
- d. a chatter
- e. b and c

**MINNESOTA COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **PERIOD** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. HOW MANY FLYING SQUIRREL SPECIES ARE THERE IN THE WORLD? HOW MANY IN MINNESOTA?** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. WHAT IS A DREY?**

- a. a baby flying squirrel
- b. a type of mushroom
- c. a state similar to hibernation
- d. a nest made of twigs and leaves

**3. NAME THREE THINGS FLYING SQUIRRELS EAT.** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. WHAT IS TORPOR?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. HOW DOES A FLYING SQUIRREL USE MOSS?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. WHY DO MOTHER SQUIRRELS LEAVE THEIR BABIES AT NIGHT?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. HOW DOES A FLYING SQUIRREL FRIGHTEN OTHER SQUIRRELS AWAY FROM ITS NEST?**

- a. by biting them
- b. by stamping its feet
- c. by growling
- d. by throwing things at them

## STUDENT STUDY GUIDE: VOCABULARY CARDS

Cut along horizontal lines, fold in the middle and tape or staple. Blanks are provided to allow you or your students to add new words or phrases

**A PLACE WHERE SOMETHING  
IS STORED OR HIDDEN**

is called a

A  
**CACHE**  
is

FOLD

**CARRION** is

**A DEAD, ROTTING ANIMAL  
OR ANIMAL PART**

is known as

FOLD

When flying squirrels  
**DESCEND**  
they

When flying squirrels  
**MOVE TO A LOWER LEVEL**  
they

FOLD

**LICHEN**  
is the name for a type of  
living thing that

A type of living thing that  
**GROWS OVER ROCKS AND  
OTHER SURFACES** is called a

FOLD

People who  
**STUDY NATURE**  
are

**NATURALISTS**  
are people who

FOLD

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An animal that is  
**NOCTURNAL**  
is

FOLD

An animal that is  
**ACTIVE AT NIGHT**  
is

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If you want  
**TO STEER SOMETHING,**  
you might use a

FOLD

A **RUDDER**  
is a device used

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Something that is  
**SUITABLE**  
is

FOLD

Something that is  
**APPROPRIATE**  
is

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A  
**TERRITORY**  
is an area that

FOLD

An area that  
**AN ANIMAL DEFENDS**  
is called its

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**A SWING USED TO PERFORM  
ACROBATIC TRICKS**  
is known as a

FOLD

**A TRAPEZE**  
is

FOLD

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