

# 'Zombie' Squirrels Spotted In the US: Are These Pestilences a Biblical Warning?

Grotesque-looking gray squirrels covered in wart-like tumors have been spotted skulking through backyards across the United States, sparking alarm among residents and fascination among wildlife experts.

Photographs shared online show the animals with oozing sores and hairless patches on their heads and limbs, leading some to dub them "zombie squirrels." Sightings have been reported in Maine and parts of Canada, with cases dating back to mid-2023 but surging again this summer, according to the Daily Mail.



Evelyns Wildlife Refuge

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"At first I thought it was eating something from my front beds, but then I realized it was on its face," one Reddit user posted July 31 after spotting a gray squirrel with a large tumor on its mouth.

Wildlife experts say the squirrels are most likely suffering from squirrel fibromatosis, a viral skin disease caused by leporipoxvirus. The virus spreads through direct contact with infected saliva or lesions and can resemble herpes transmission in humans.

The disease is often mistaken for squirrelpox, which is more common in the UK and often fatal to red squirrels. Fibromatosis, however, typically runs its course in four to eight weeks. In severe cases, the growths can spread internally and lead to death.



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Despite their frightening appearance, experts insist the squirrels are no danger to people, pets or birds.

"It's like when you get a large concentration of people. If someone is sick and it's something that spreads easily, others are going to catch it," Shevenell Webb of Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife told the Bangor Daily News. Webb said backyard bird feeders often act as transmission points because infected squirrels leave saliva or fluid behind on seeds.

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The unusual squirrel sightings come as Colorado officials warned of a separate outbreak, the so-called "bunny blight." Cottontail rabbits have been spotted with black, tentacle-like growths sprouting from their heads, caused by the Shope papilloma virus.

## **The Biblical Perspective**

While wildlife officials view these outbreaks as naturally occurring diseases, we as Christians can see them as reminders of a deeper spiritual truth. In the Gospels, Jesus warned that before His return there would be "pestilences" affecting the earth (Luke 21:11, Matt. 24:7). These warnings were not limited to human sickness but speak to a broken creation groaning under the curse of sin.

From the moment Adam and Eve fell in the Garden of Eden, the entire earth was subjected to corruption (Rom. 8:22). That curse has touched every part of creation, from humanity to the

animal kingdom. Outbreaks like squirrel fibromatosis and rabbit papilloma remind us of that fallen state.

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Though unsettling, these events can point believers to the hope that one day Jesus will return and restore creation, wiping away disease and death forever (Rev. 21:4). Until then, they stand as warnings and signs, reminders that the world is not as it was meant to be and that the day of the Lord draws nearer.

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