

Squirrel Appreciation Day, 21 January 2022, by Walt Anderson

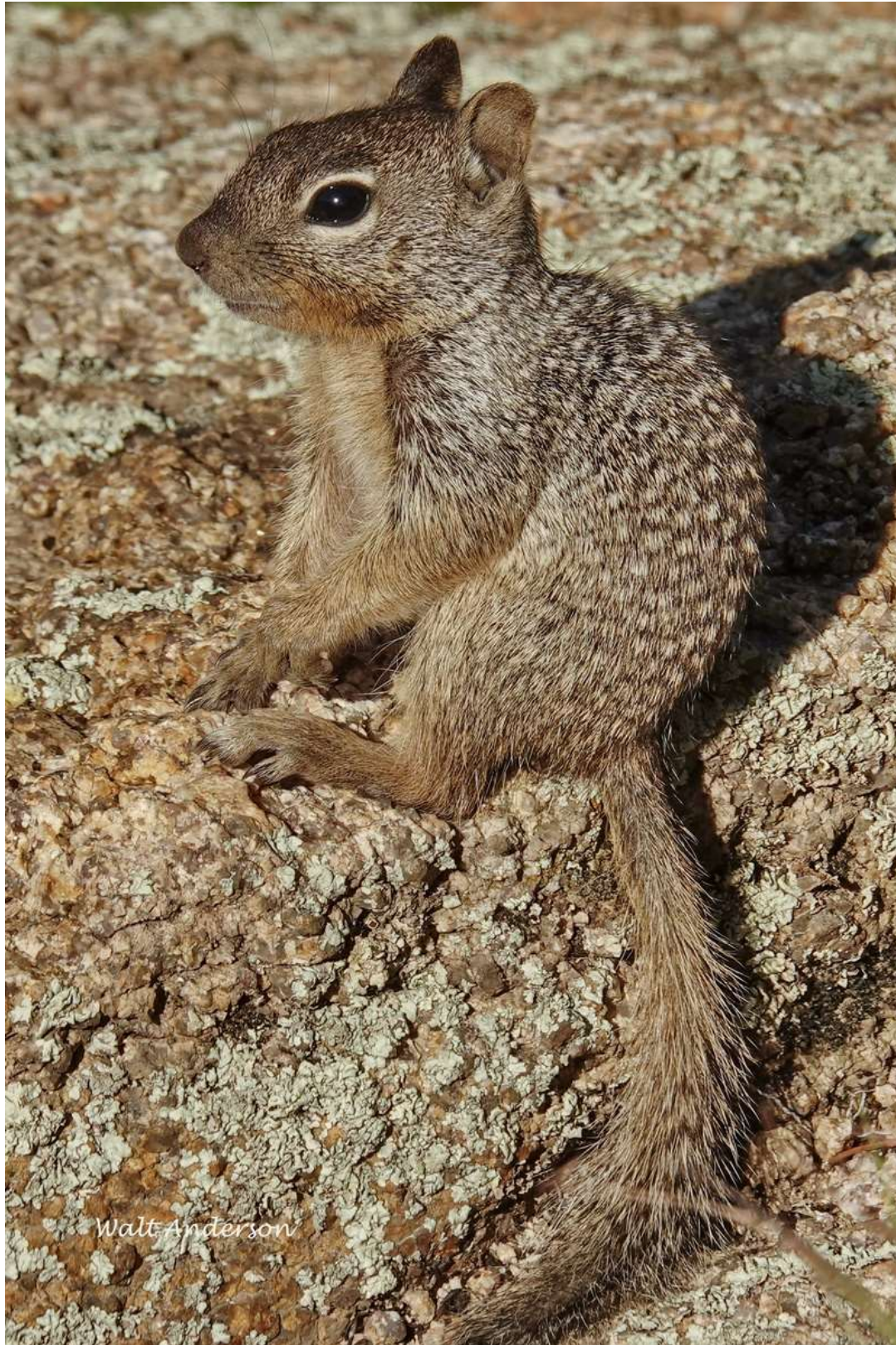
Groundhog's Day on February 2 is the only well-known holiday focused solely on an animal (the Easter Bunny, Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer, black cats, and the like are bit players on some other major holidays). There are, however, lesser-known days that have been designated to celebrate various critters, and Squirrel Appreciation Day is one of them. Here are a few of the members of this charming family that I hope you will honor with a smile or two.



An Ochre Bush Squirrel in Tanzania demonstrates the natural charm that so many squirrels have. The way they sit up and use their hands makes them seem like furry little people, and though they are not, our instincts kick in and we feel some affinity. This is a healthy mama.



And here is a healthy papa Unstriped Ground Squirrel from Tanzania. How do I know it's male? Check out the short eyelashes.



I have hundreds of photos of Rock Squirrels in Arizona, but here I will just share one of this young one. Too cute!



The closely related California Ground squirrel is eating the rather salty ice plant. I suppose it's a bit like a potato chip to us.



Round-tailed ground Squirrels are common in Sonoran and Mohave Desert habitats.



The Arizona Gray Squirrel has a very limited range for one of our tree squirrels. It mostly is restricted to this one state.



The Abert's or Tassel-eared Squirrel is a Ponderosa Pine specialist. Look at those ear tufts and bushy tail!



Chipmunks are just hyper little squirrels. This Cliff Chipmunk in Arizona has its cheek pouches packed with seeds.



Walt Anderson

An Eastern Chipmunk from Vermont is curious to see if I might be carrying treats. I'm not.



Prairie Dogs are among the most social of the squirrels. They have fairly large vocabularies and are good communicators to their colony mates.



Yellow-bellied Marmots in their rocky retreat in the Rocky Mountains. These cousins of the Groundhog are among the largest squirrels.



With the majority of small mammals being nocturnal, it's a pleasure to see squirrels out in the light of day. I hope these few images add a little light to your day. Happy Squirrel Appreciation Day!