

# Rats

Rats are some of the most troublesome and damaging rodents. They eat and contaminate food, garden produce, and fruit and transmit diseases to humans and pets. Manage rats by removing food and shelter, eliminating entryways into buildings, and trapping.

## Indications of a rat infestation:

- ◆ Rat droppings in garages, storage buildings, attics, or around pet food containers.
- ◆ Rodent feeding damage on fruit/nuts in or falling from trees in your yard.
- ◆ Rat nests behind boxes, in drawers in the garage, or in woodpiles.
- ◆ Burrows beneath the garbage can, compost pile, or among garden plants.
- ◆ Rats travelling along utility lines or on fence tops at dusk.

## Identify the rat: Is it a roof rat or a Norway rat?

- ◆ The stocky Norway rat builds burrows along building foundations, beneath rubbish, or in woodpiles. Indoors they tend to remain in basements or on the ground floor.
- ◆ Roof rats are agile climbers with a tail longer than their head and body. They usually live and nest above ground in shrubs, trees, or dense vegetation. Indoors they favor attic spaces, walls, false ceilings, and cabinets.

## To get rid of rats, remove food, water, and shelter and seal entryways!

- ◆ Feed pets only the amount of food they will eat at a single feeding.
- ◆ Keep garbage, trash, and garden debris in receptacles with tight-fitting lids.
- ◆ Thin dense vegetation and create at least a 2-foot space between shrubs and between shrubs and buildings.
- ◆ Thin/remove climbing hedges from buildings.
- ◆ Remove tree limbs that are within 3 feet of a roof.
- ◆ Seal all cracks and openings in the house's foundation that are larger than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch.
- ◆ Make sure doors, windows, and screens fit tightly.



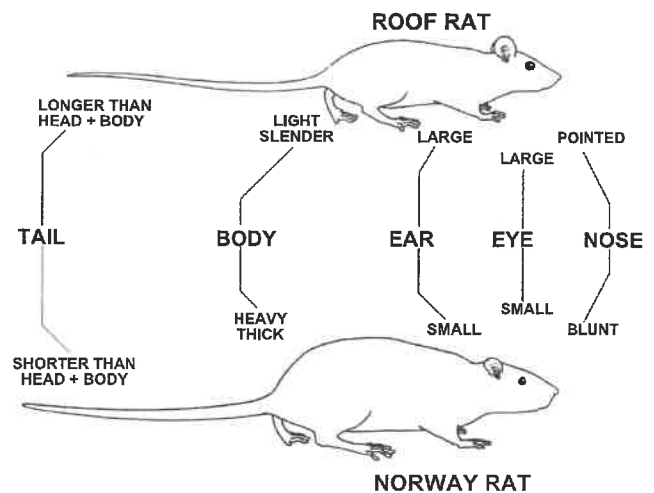
## Remove rats from the home by trapping.

- ◆ Snap traps are the safest, most effective, and economical way to trap rats.
- ◆ For Norway rats, place traps close to walls, behind objects, in dark corners, and in places where rat droppings have been found.
- ◆ For roof rats, place traps in off-the-ground locations such as ledges, shelves, branches, fences, pipes, or overhead beams.

## What about baits?

- ◆ Avoid using baits indoors, because dead rats create bad odors.
- ◆ Seal buildings before baiting outside to prevent poisoned rats from coming inside to die.
- ◆ Place baits in tamper-proof bait stations and secure them from children and pets.
- ◆ All rodent baits are toxic to pets.

Refer to *Pest Notes: Rats* at [www.ipm.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu) for more details on rat management.



Minimize the use of pesticides that pollute our waterways. Use nonchemical alternatives or less toxic pesticide products whenever possible. Read product labels carefully and follow instructions on proper use, storage, and disposal.

For more information about managing pests, contact your local Cooperative Extension office listed in your phone book or at [www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/index.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/index.html). If you have a question about choosing a pesticide, contact the National Pesticide Information Center at 1-800-858-7378 or via e-mail at [npic@ace.orst.edu](mailto:npic@ace.orst.edu).

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[www.StopPests.org](http://www.StopPests.org)

**What you use in your home affects the health of those around you!**