

Rodents

The Rodent word has been derived from Greek word "Rodeu" which means to gnaw that is animals belonging to Rodent have gnawing habit. Rodents include mostly rats, squirrels, porcupine etc.

Systematic Position.

Phylum - Vertebrate

Class - Mammalia

Mammalia -

Order - Rodentia

Family - Muridae.

Its order Rodentia includes a great number of animals ranging in size from the smallest mice to as large as porcupine. Rodents are easily distinguished from other mammals by the characteristics arrangement and form of their teeth.

The rodents commonly known as rat, is a major enemy of mankind. It is essentially a pest of food and fodder. Rats comprise a major group of pests, which are of great economic importance due to their destructive

role in problems of food, health of man and daily use articles.

The habit, nature, behaviour and ecological adaptation of rodents have become major factors for their wide distribution and enormous population. Literature shows that the war against rodents started as early 5000 years ago with the advent of Agriculture.

Rats are the most notorious pests of different commodities in the fields as well as when these commodities are stored. A number of crops like vegetables, oilseeds, cereals etc., at early stage in field, are eaten and contaminated by rats. They are also seen playing a vital role in transmission of public health diseases that is leptospirosis, plague etc. to humans and other animals.

Some common species of rats in India:
Basis of their shelter, rats can broadly be divided into two groups.

House rats Field rats Found in both field as well as houses. *Rattus rattus* (House rat)
Rattus norvegicus (Norway rat).

Rats are very clever & suspicious animals by nature and have distant ~~sta~~ reaction to the new objects called Neophobia. Water, is essentially required daily by the rodents, but mouse can survive without food water for many days. Rats can survive without food up to a week but it cannot survive without water continuously for more than 3 days. They not only feel shy of the baits but become wary as and when a single member of their family dies.

Control

- ② Effective rodent control methods are as follows:
- ① Sanitation → It's very important to maintain good hygiene outside your house. Abandoned items, such as wood piles or old tires, can serve as the perfect shelter for rodents. Make sure all pipes and drains are properly covered and that they are not leaking.

- ② Rodent-proofing → Seal every crack or opening that can serve as an entry point for rodents. Mice can get through even the tiniest hole. Mice can get through holes which are less than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide. Cover the holes with aluminium netting, heavy wire mesh etc.
- ③ Natural predators → We can successfully deal with rodents by keeping natural rodent predators such as cats or barn owls.
- ④ Ultrasonic rodent repellents → Another effective method for rodents control is placing a device that emits ultrasonic sound waves. Rodents can't stand these sound waves, so they run away from them.
- ⑤ Rodents traps → Traps are highly effective against rodents if you use them properly. If you go with this rodent control method, you'll need to place a large number of traps in areas where you detect high rodent activity.
- ⑥ Rodent poison baits → Poison baits, also known as rodenticides are made of chemicals which are lethal for rodents. This is the least humane option for rodent control.