

Norway Rat

Scientific Name: *Rattus norvegicus*



Identification Tips:

Color	Fur is coarse, shaggy, with mainly brown hair and some scattered black hairs
Legs	4
Size	Adults measure 7 to 9 inches in length, with a 6 to 8 inch tail
Identifying Characteristics	Possess small eyes and ears; blunt muzzle

Characteristics of this rodent:

- Droppings average 3/4 inch in size, capsule-shaped and have 1 blunt end. Fresh droppings are black or nearly black. They may look wet and have the texture of putty. Older droppings may become dry, hard, and appear dull. Can average about 30-180 droppings per day and 3 oz. of urine
- Prolific breeders. Under ideal conditions, the each female rat may produce as many as 3 to 6 litters (about 20 young) in a year. They are sexually mature in 2 to 5 months. The female rat lives longer than the male rat, with the average life span between 6 and 12 months
- Rats are social animals and live in colonies. They are territorial and have a “pecking order” of dominance. Rats are aggressive and will vigorously defend territory and young. Rats commonly travel 100 to 150 feet from their nests looking for food and water and patrolling their territory. They are neophobic, as they are wary of anything new in their territory. New objects will be avoided until they become familiar with them
- Have poor vision. They have keen sense of smell, taste, touch and hearing, as well as a great sense of balance
- Rats prefer protein-based foods. This includes meat, fish, insects, pet foods, nuts, grain, and household garbage. Rats need water every day. Rats need 1/2 to 1 fluid ounce per day, although this amount will vary depending on the moisture content of their food
- Other attributes: can jump 3 ft. straight up or 4 ft. horizontally; climb inside pipes 1 1/2 to 4 inches in diameter; gnaw constantly; swim 1/2 mile in open water, tread water for three days, swim against a strong current in a sewer line, and dive through a sewer trap to come up inside your toilet; can fall 50 feet and survive
- It is estimated that rats destroy 20% of the world’s food supply every year by direct feeding or indirect contamination

Is this rodent harmful to me?

ABSOLUTELY! Rats are responsible for the spread of many diseases. They can transmit disease directly by contaminating food with their urine or feces and they can indirectly spread disease through fleas that first bite an infected rat then a person. They have been implicated in the following diseases: plague; murine typhus fever; rat-bite fever; salmonella food poisoning; Weil’s disease; trichinosis; rabies.



Why are they in my structure?

Unfortunately, if rats want to enter your structure, they will find a ½ inch or better gap and enter or gnaw their way inside. More commonly however, they will enter the structure via open sewer lines, loose concrete, or dirt crawl spaces to name a few as they prefer the lower floors of buildings. Outside, they usually nest in burrows dug into the ground. The burrows are shallow (less than 18 inches) and usually short (less than 3 feet) with a central nest. Extra “bolt holes” are used for emergency

escapes.

Can I treat the problem myself?

Due to the complexity of this rodent and the medical concerns of disease or virus transmission, it has been our experience that most homeowners are unwilling and unsuccessful at properly eliminating this problem. Also, homeowners often utilize products that are ineffective or apply them not in accordance with labeling and state laws. Please remember that products may be harmful to you and your family if they are misused or misapplied.

What can Apex do for me?

An Apex representative will spend time interviewing the homeowner in order to ascertain where the presence of rats is located. That being said, Apex can provide you with a one-time application or a preventative maintenance plan.

One-Time Treatment: An interview with the homeowner is conducted along with a detailed inspection of both the inside and outside of the structure. Time is spent determining the most effective application and then a targeted application of product is made to rid your home or surroundings of these unwanted guests. Repair work may be required to the structure and will be discussed by your technician. A 30-day guarantee is provided.

Pest Prevention Plan: Due to the difficulty in controlling this rodent, Apex recommends monthly inspections and treatments to be performed to keep your dwelling pest and rodent free year around. Free service calls are provided whenever a pest or rodent outbreak occurs. Being that a variety of other general insect problems are covered, this is a cost effective way to maintain the integrity of your home and is the **recommended treatment of Apex.**

Is the treatment safe for my children and pets?

Since 1969, Apex has always operated with one goal in mind: “*The safety of people, pets, places, and the environment is our first concern.*” Therefore, we will utilize crack and crevice and spot applications, baits, monitors, habitat modification recommendations, and natural products as a method of treatment when possible. When conventional treatments are required, our licensed technicians are trained to apply the products so as to not pose a problem to people or their pets. All conventional products are EPA registered and our technician will advise you of any necessary precautions.



What should I do now?

Call our office at 1-800-MUG-A-BUG (1-800-684-2284) to discuss your problem with a knowledgeable customer service representative. Otherwise, sign up for a free online quote today!

Top image courtesy of University of Nebraska-Lincoln (<http://lancaster.unl.edu/>)

Middle image courtesy of NPMA ([National Pest Management Association: Pest, Rodent, Bug and Insect Guide](#))

<http://www.apexpestcontrol.net/> 1-800-MUG-A-BUG