

Norway Rat

(Rattus norvegicus)



This rat is also called the brown rat, sewer rat and dump rat. They are fairly husky, brownish rodents that weigh almost a pound and are 12 to 18 inches long, including the tail. They are larger than tree rats and prefer to live in groups, either in burrows or subsurface places, such as sewers and cellars.

Norway rats are nocturnal and most activity and feeding takes place after sunset and before sunrise. The biggest and strongest get the best food and harborage. They are excellent swimmers and can swim up to a mile. Their tail is shorter than their body and their ears are short.

Rats constantly gnaw and they are able to chew through wood, lead, aluminum, copper and cinder block. They like meats, fish, flour, cereal grains, fruits and vegetables. They eat a lot and drink a lot of water.

Signs of Norway rats include:

Sightings – usually just after dark

Droppings – the most obvious sign

Tracks – easily seen in dust or wet soil, and they leave a tail drag mark

Gnawing – marks on building, boxes, doors, etc.

Burrows – next to walls, along foundations or beneath debris and shrubbery.

Odors – well established nests smell musty

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