

## Introduced Rodents

Roof Rat (*Rattus rattus*), Norway Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*),  
House Mouse (*Mus musculus*)



Norway Rat

### Identification:

Size: Roof Rat avg. wt. = 0.5 lbs., Norway Rat avg. wt. = 1 lb.

House Mouse avg. wt. = less than 1 oz.

Coloration: Roof rat and Norway rat = uniformly blackish or brownish, House mouse = uniformly gray.

Other distinguishing features: Each species has a long, furless tail.

### Habitat:

These species have been accidentally introduced from Europe and are now thriving all over the U.S. They are commensal, meaning they prefer to live in close association with humans. They are often found in and around suburban dwellings, shopping malls and grocery stores. They feed on garbage, spilled birdseed, pet food, etc.

### Benefits:

These species provide no ecological benefit.

### Problems / Concerns:

These species are prolific breeders. As a result, they can reach high population densities quite rapidly. They are known to carry disease and damage property. These things combined with their tendency to prefer human association make these species a problem.

### City Management Policy:

Eradication of these species is not possible. However, the city will not actively manage for their success. The city will maintain secure trash containers to help eliminate artificial food sources.

Note: Natural habitats are not the source of these problem rodents. They come from human dominated areas where there is plenty of trash to feed on. Management of linear parks will neither positively nor negatively impact the presence or density of these species.

### Citizen's Responsibility:

These introduced rodents are not a natural part of our local ecosystems. Practices and conditions found in urban and suburban commercial sites and neighborhoods are the primary reasons they flourish in urban areas. Citizens are encouraged to do the following.

1. Secure all trash can lids.
2. Secure areas where birdseed and pet foods are stored.
3. Clean up spilled birdseed from around feeders and don't leave dog food, cat food, etc. out overnight.
4. Seal any openings in attics, chimneys, crawl spaces, etc. that could be used to enter your home.
5. Trap and destroy every one of these species that you can.

### Similar Species:

There are many native rodents that cause no problems. These species do not seek human association and safely remain in natural habitats. These include the Eastern Woodrat (*Neotoma floridana*), Deer Mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), and the Hispid Cotton Rat (*Sigmodon hispidus*).



Eastern Woodrat Photo: John Davis



Deer Mouse Photo: John Davis



Hispid Cotton Rat Photo: John Davis