



# The Rat Trappers Guide.

Not many of us probably love rats, and neither do our native birds! Rats are introduced pests to New Zealand and threaten the survival of many native species.

Ship and Norway rats have a major impact because they are omnivores – eating birds, seeds, snails, lizards, fruit, birds, eggs, chicks, larvae and flowers. Ground based invertebrates and birds are easy prey and often defenceless against rats. Ship rats are a significant threat to wildlife because they are good climbers and can reach nests in trees, attacking tree-dwelling birds such as kererū, pīwakawaka and tūi. They are rife in our outdoor environment and are as important as any other pest to remove.

Following are some basics to help you understand a little more about rats, along with some tips and tricks. But be patient, as like all things, it takes time to become a cunning rat trapper!

Contact Lawrence Smith with any questions or if you are having trouble catching these dirty old rats! Email [Lawrence@rewildwainui.nz](mailto:Lawrence@rewildwainui.nz) or phone 021 346 486.

Make sure you visit our website for more information on the project, including pest facts and the best traps! Visit [www.rewildwainui.nz](http://www.rewildwainui.nz).

**And please join our project on [Trap.nz](https://trap.nz), add your traps, then register your catches, <https://trap.nz/project/3124039/info>**

Happy Trapping!



Image: <https://ngamanu.org.nz>

# The 4 P's of Rat Trapping!

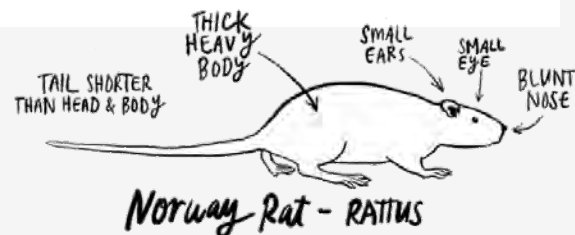
## 1. PESTS. Know thy enemy!

Which ones do you have, and where?

- Rats are nocturnal. You may not be able to see them, **but they are there!**
- Rats are neophobic - they're afraid of new foods or situations. Be persistent.
- Fruits and seeds can make up most of a ship rat's diet, look for chewed holes or distinctive tooth marks left by the parallel incisors.
- Look for droppings. [Pestdetective.org.nz](http://Pestdetective.org.nz) is an excellent resource to help identify them.
- Better yet, [buy a camera](#). See what is lurking in the dark and watch what they are up to. It's addictive!
- Remember that rodents are primarily motivated by an instinct to find food, but they also have instincts guiding them to avoid dangerous situations.



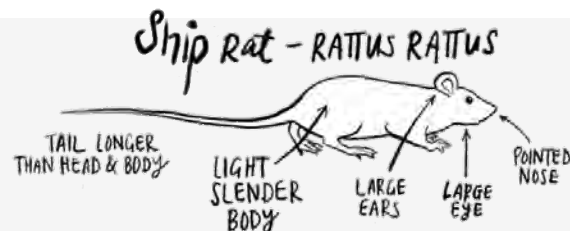
For more information on rats, visit [www.rewildwainui.nz/help-and-guides/rats](http://www.rewildwainui.nz/help-and-guides/rats)



## 2. PLACEMENT.

Put the right trap, in the right place.

- Trap placement is very important. As they say, "fish where the fish are"!
- Rats can often be found near water and food sources e.g fruit and nut trees or compost bins. If other food sources are plentiful, your trapping may be less successful.
- In urban environments rats like "runways" along walls, hedges etc. In rural areas this includes natural features such as waterways or fence lines.
- Place traps on a flat solid surface and make sure that the entrance and exit are clear of obstructions, including long grass.
- Rats like "cover". Placing a trap under a bush that provides cover can be effective.
- As ship rats like to climb, try mounting traps or bait stations partway up desirable trees or objects.
- **Be patient - rats take time to get used to new things!**



## 3. PERSUASION.

Use the right lure to attract your rats.

- Rats are food-driven, with preferences often passed on socially. "Pre-feed" by adding food, but not setting the trap; this helps build trust and scent trails.
- After a few days, set the trap and try different bait types. Start with peanut butter, the standard, or Nutella (our favourite lure!)
- Or give variations a go, including chocolate, bacon, lard, dried fruit or nuts.
- Add a blob of lure at the trap entrance or make a lure trail. Change lure if no success.

## 4. PERSISTENCE.

Regularly check and rebait your traps.

- Check your trap as often as you can and refresh your lure every 1 - 2 weeks.
- The reality is, some trap locations will perform better than others. If you've not had results after several weeks, try a new location.
- Once you've caught a few it may take a week or two for new populations to replace them, don't be afraid to occasionally take a break, especially if using poison.

