

Rodents in the wild

Bush setting D-Rat Tips

Best areas for trap lines are along streams, tracks and ridges.

Place a trap every 30-40 metres depending on the type of ground and cover. At certain times of the year many of our native trees and plants produce huge amounts of food. This allows for higher than normal resident rodent numbers and increased breeding. A higher concentration of traps in these areas during these times may be required to stay on top of the predators.

Select smaller trees to attach your trap to. Rats love to climb and this is where rodents feel the most comfortable and will retreat to eat or escape from predators. The small branched trees offer escape routes through out-climbing a predator to the smallest of branches and often transferring to other trees where the heavier predator can't follow. Large trunked trees and ground based traps catch less in the bush due to the rodent feeling exposed with more distance to cover to get to safety.

Attach D-Rat to the tree at a comfortable height – normally around chest height, in a vertical position. If you attach your trap past vertical (forward leaning) you may need to push the small release trigger back in under the trigger plate – as you set it, for the trap to set. We tend to set our traps facing towards the evening sun where possible. This keeps the bait active for longer and scent stronger into the night.

Bait correctly to ensure optimal humane kill. See the separate D-Rat Baiting instruction sheet.

Use a waxy, thick and high nut content peanut butter. Rodents love it and the bait gets waxier over time which makes removing the old bait and rebaiting a breeze. The Terra-Don Multitool beak is designed to do this job.

Every 5 or so D-Rats put a Flipping Timmy. We often start with the possum traps to remove them from the area first. Again set your trap at a comfortable height on a vertical tree trunk. The size of tree doesn't matter for possums as they are not under the constant threat of attack like rodents.

It is important that you do not cluster your traps together. This creates trap anxiety which makes some animals less comfortable interacting with your trap. We need to catch them all!

We recommend new and young users to start using the D-Rat trap in standard rat mode – to get familiar with the traps. After setting the trap in Rat mode we tend to mostly put the fine setter into mouse mode to cover both pests.

Once you have caught the initial dominant male rats patrolling their domain, next will be the new dominant male and then females. Then once the resident rat population has been removed more mice will be taking the bait and you will need to set traps in mouse mode from then on.

After the trap has caught ensure you remove any traces of animal fur from the trap surface and kill bar as the presence of fur or physical remains puts off the same species.

It is best to remove or place the catch as far away from your trap as practical. Leaving the catch to be scavenged can create a highway for mustelids or cats getting an easy meal. These larger predators leave behind their scent which makes the rodents very wary. Scent is a rat's main sensor.

Mustelid and feral cat populations reduce with the decrease in rodent numbers, as long as rabbits are also under control. The reduction in food source makes them easier to catch. They are more hungry therefore less risk-averse. Increase your efforts to trap these animals at critical times such as early spring.

Hedgehogs must be hit hard at the end of summer/early autumn when they are hungry & feeding up for hibernation, this ensures their population is as low as possible for the spring and your traps remain clear and optimised to control the other predators at this critical time.

Do not overhandle your traps. Rodents in the wild have an instinctive wariness of human scent. It can take a week out in the weather for this to be reduced on a newly assembled/handled trap. From then on touching the trap when clearing and rebaiting will not be an issue.

Rats have evolved to live in the safety of darkness. See on our video how they can jump and climb on tiny thin branches in the dark. A full moon is too risky for all but the hungriest rat and best catches tend to be about a week after this – on a darker overcast evening

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Mice are less cautious about being out without the cover of darkness but feeding ranges and distance travelled tends to be less and more direct.

Ideally do your trapline on a weekly basis to start with then as the catch numbers reduce 2-3 weekly You will soon get a feel for what is going on and needed.

The D-Rat Trap has been designed and engineered in New Zealand to suit our unique conditions. It is 100% made in NZ using the highest quality polymers and metal components – which are all made from stainless steel. This ensures your trap is maintenance free and always performing at its full potential.

We hope you get as much enjoyment and satisfaction as we do using the D-Rat trap.

You can find more information on our website or contact us at info@envirottools.co.nz