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Trapping Rats & Mice

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trapping Rats & Mice

Developed cooperatively by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service.



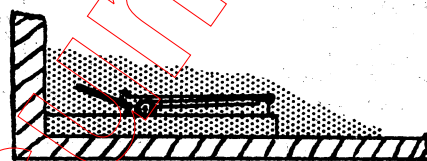
Trapping is a practical way to remove rats and mice. It is particularly useful where the exposure of poisons might be hazardous or where odors from dead rodents may result.

There are many types of rat and mouse traps. One of the most effective and versatile traps is the snap trap, which is generally available in stores.

BAITS

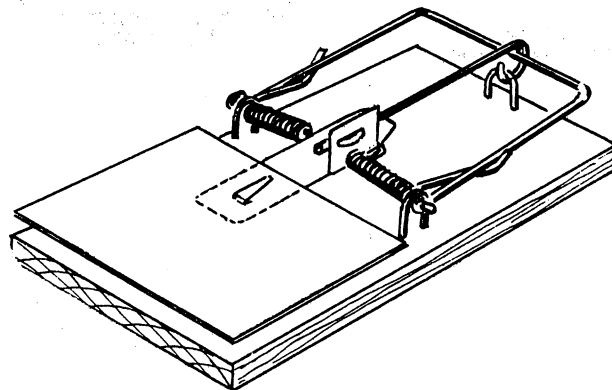
Many foods make good baits -- peanut butter, nut meats, doughnuts, cake, fresh crisp-fried bacon, cheese, raisins, strawberry jam, and soft candies, particularly milk chocolate and gumdrops. Traps may also be baited by sprinkling rolled oats over and around the bait trigger. If possible, baits should be fastened by winding a short piece of thread or string around the bait and trigger. Where food is plentiful and nesting material scarce, good results can sometimes be obtained with cotton tied to the trigger.

Trap-shy individuals may be caught by hiding the entire trap under a layer of flour, dirt, sawdust, fine shavings, or similar lightweight material.



ENLARGED BAIT PAN

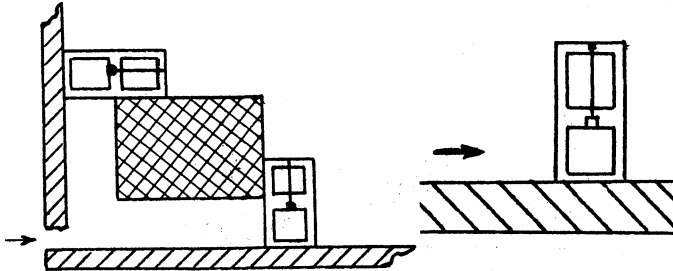
The common wooden-base snap trap can be made more effective by enlarging the bait pan with a piece of heavy cardboard or light screen wire. Cut the cardboard or screen in the shape of a square smaller than the limits of the guillotine wire and attach it firmly to the bait pan. Traps with expanded bait pans are commercially available. To bait the trap, smear a small dab of peanut butter in the center of the enlarged trigger or sprinkle rolled oats over the entire surface. This works well on both rat and mouse traps placed where the animals commonly run.



CONSULT STATE AND LOCAL LAWS BEFORE APPLYING CONTROLS

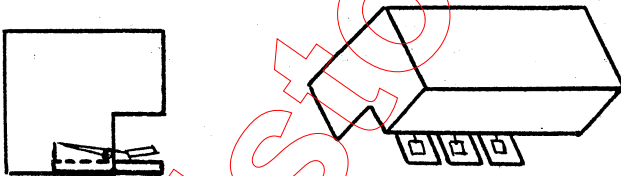
PLACEMENT OF TRAPS

It is very important to place traps across the paths normally used by rats and mice. If their runways cannot be readily determined, sprinkle a light layer of talcum powder, flour, or similar material in foot-square patches in likely places. Place traps in the areas where tracks appear. As rats and mice like to run close to walls, these spots should be checked first and traps set as shown.

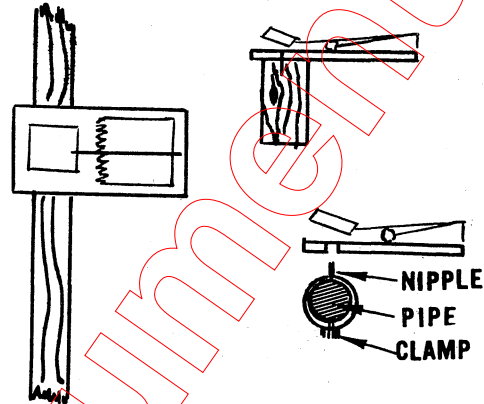


Use boxes or other obstacles to force the rat or mouse to pass over the trigger. Two or more traps set close together produce good results where many rats or mice are present or where trap-shy individuals are a problem. Use plenty of traps rather than rely on one or two to do the job. Due to the short distances normally traveled by mice, place traps within ten-foot intervals.

To protect other animals or small children a trap box can be built as shown below.



Where the animals travel on rafters or pipes, nail the traps in place or set them on small nipples clamped to pipes, as shown in the diagram below. Leave traps in place for a few days before moving them to other locations.



PREPARATION OF TRAPS

Rats and mice are accustomed to human odors. It is not necessary to boil traps or handle them with gloves. Neither does the scent of dead individuals warn others away. Traps should be checked regularly and adjusted to a fine setting.

REPEATING TRAPS

There are a number of mechanical repeating mouse traps on the market. Both wind-up and non-winding types are available. The major advantages of a repeating trap is that it can capture more than one mouse between settings and does not have to be checked or reset every day. The major disadvantages are higher initial and maintenance cost as compared to the wood based snap traps. The same guide lines for setting snap traps should be used for repeating traps.