



# THE RAT



## FACT FILE

There are two main rat species in the UK, the most common is *Rattus Norvegicus* also known as the brown rat. The other is *Rattus Rattus* which is commonly known as the black rat or ship rat although these are now rarely seen in the UK. Rats are disease carriers and spreaders and so considered a public health risk.

### DID YOU KNOW

If you own a property, you have a legal obligation to keep premises rodent free, or if there is a threat to health or property, to report it to the local authority.



## SCORES

### Breeding / Life-cycle

10

A female rat can reproduce every 6 weeks and her litters can produce 6-8 babies. Each part of the cycle takes an average of 21 days. A rat can become pregnant very quickly after giving birth so a rat infestation can very rapidly grow out of control.

### Strength

9

The rat's greatest strength is in their teeth. They can gnaw through just about anything – wood, glass, metal, bone – you name it they can chew it! This means they can cause significant damage to property with their gnawing which can result in structural damage.

### Agility

9

They shimmy up drainpipes and scurry through sewers and squeeze through small holes, good swimmers too. If the rat was entering the Olympics, it would be up for a silver medal in the triathlon!

### Environmental

2

Rats are an important part of balancing our ecosystem. They provide a food source for other predatory animals. Also, they are opportunistic scavengers and will happily clear up the food we throw away.

### Nuisance Factor

10

More than being a nuisance, rats carry and spread serious disease to humans such as Weil's disease, Salmonella and Listeria. They can also cause significant structural damage to property.

## PGM Pest Trumps Rating 2/10

Superpower ~ Highly Advanced.

The rat scores impressively in pretty much every category and we must give them credit for that. But we've given them an overall low rating due to their risk to public health. The rat is widely regarded as the UK's most problematic pest, most often described as vermin and has been seen as this throughout history. Even going back to the 14th and 17th centuries rats were blamed for the Black Death plague that swept Europe although recent studies suggest that they might not have been responsible.

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