

NEW WORLD RODENTS

Common Name: New World rodents

Other Names: numerous, depending on species

Scientific Name: 12 species of New World rats, mice and voles may be found in Florida

Appearance:

size	- head and body 2 to 10 inches (5 to 25 centimeters) - tail 2/5 to 8 inches (1 to 20 centimeters)
color	- various shades of brown and gray - whitish, tawny, golden and cinnamon
other	- mice and rats have large ears and eyes and long tails - voles have short tails, small ears and eyes

Range: - some species are found statewide while others occur in only one county

Habitat: - fields, marshes, mangroves, forests, coastal dunes and lakeshores

Diet: - seeds, berries, nuts, fruits, plants, snails, insects, eggs, decaying animal remains, water plants, crayfish

Reproduction: - most species produce several litters yearly

Behavior:

- active mostly at night
- not usually found in buildings

Problems:

- may damage horticultural and agricultural crops
- may damage stored feed and grain
- rarely cause destruction in homes

Solutions:

- "rodentproofing" structures to block all possible entry points, including gaps as small as 1/4 inch (6 millimeters)
- use of rodent-resistant materials, such as sheet metal (26 gauge or heavier), perforated metal (24 gauge or heavier), hardware cloth (19 gauge or heavier), brick with mortared joints, cement mortar and concrete
- removal of dense vegetation to reduce habitat and prevent large population increases
- use of crop barriers such as sheet metal 18 inches (46 centimeters) tall extending into the ground 6 inches (15 centimeters) to prevent burrowing

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- placement of feed bins on concrete foundation
- as a last resort, property owners can kill non-protected species with snap traps in the immediate locality where damage is occurring. Care must be taken that the rodents are properly identified so endangered species and those of special concern are not harmed.
- the use of poison is prohibited without a permit

Legal Aspects: - the Key Largo cotton mouse (Peromyscus gossypinus allapaticola), Key Largo woodrat (Neotoma floridana smalli) and the silver rice rat (Oryzomys argentatus), all found in Monroe County, are endangered species. The Florida mouse (Podomys floridanus), found in peninsular Florida, and Sanibel island rice rat (Oryzomys palustris sanibelli), found in Lee County, are considered species of special concern by the state.