

**Rodent Repellers: Lack of Facts Stymies Judgement**

# Pest Control

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**Controlling vertebrate pests**

**Are They  
The Real  
Untouchables?**





small shallow burrows. Signs of their feeding generally go undetected in the wild, leaving little evidence of their presence.

Deer mice enter homes and other buildings which are not rodentproof. Considered only a minor pest because of their infrequency of occurrence, where they do gain access to mountain vacation or summer cabins they do considerable damage to upholstered furniture via shredding fabric and the padding in constructing nests. Likewise, they may damage or destroy paper by building nests in drawers and file cabinets.

Nests, droppings, and other signs found about structures are often attributed to house mice since they create very similar damage. Deer mice are most apt to take up residence in unoccupied cabins or outbuildings, i.e., garages, tool sheds, pump houses, barns, woodsheds, etc., in rural settings. Mice sometimes frequent rural homes built close to the ground that are not mouseproofed. Deer mice are rare in urban residential areas unless considerable open space, parks, etc., are nearby. The exception is generally just a single animal. Recently developed subdivisions on the outskirts of cities are prone to trouble to a greater extent, at least in the west. The problem is most evident during the first year or two following development.

Food-processing plants which maintain live multiple-catch traps outside will occasionally catch deer mice along with other species. Such is more likely in fall or spring, when populations on adjacent uncultivated land are on the increase. Some claim that deer mice will enter homes when the weather turns cold. Warmth may be the attraction, though that has not been proved.

These seed-eating mice will on occasion play havoc with seeded flower or vegetable gardens by digging up and eating the seed.

## B. Control

Deer mice in and about structures can be controlled with the same techniques used for house mice. Trapping with ordinary snap mouse traps is best where only one, and at most a few, deer mice are involved. Traps can be baited with peanut butter, sunflower seed, moistened rolled oats, and the like, for this species is a seed eater. For quick results, several traps should be used even if only a single mouse is believed present. Trap placement for this species is the same as used for house mice. Multiple-catch traps may be useful where mice may be entering buildings on a regular basis and where rodentproofing is inadequate. Deer mice, being very inquisitive, are easy to trap.

Anticoagulant rodenticides such as warfarin, Pival®, Prolin, Fumarin®, diphacinone, and chlorophacinone are all quite effective on deer mice; but, as with other species, death requires multiple feedings. Baiting for

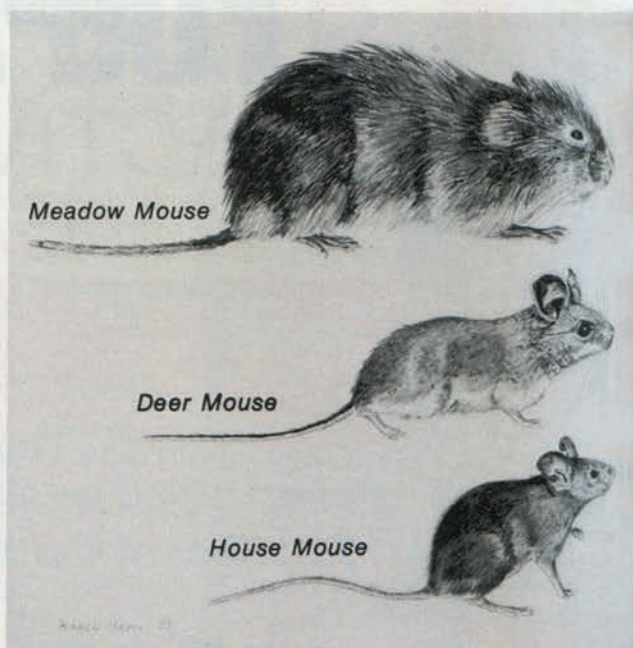


Figure 1. Meadow mouse, *Microtus californicus*, with stocky appearance, short tail and dense fur. Deer mouse, *Peromyscus maniculatus*, differentiated from the house mouse by its large ears and eyes and haired bicolored tail. House mouse, *Mus musculus*, is considerably smaller than the meadow mouse, but only slightly smaller than a deer mouse. The tail of the house mouse has almost no hair and is somewhat scaly in appearance.

house mice will normally control deer mice. Deer mice may carry more bait away from bait stations than do house mice.

Zinc phosphide and strychnine baits are also reasonably effective on deer mice. The new rodenticide Vacor® is also effective on deer mice. Although not registered for this rodent, its use by the PCO is possibly under conditions specified by PEPS No. 2.

Exclusion from buildings is the best solution to the deer mouse problem. Exclusion requires the same effort as with house mice. Openings should be closed with hardware cloth of ¼-inch mesh or with sheet metal. Coarse steel wool can be packed tightly in holes and around pipes where gaps permit entry. Any gap big enough to slip a pencil through will permit a deer mouse or house mouse to enter. Unfortunately, many summer cabins and vacation homes are not constructed rodent-tight or have lost that feature through the process of aging. Some may be beyond rodentproofing without major renovation. Then, some other permanent type of corrective measures may be warranted. Then, some other permanent type of corrective measures may be warranted. This involves the maintenance of set traps or relying on anticoagulant baits. Stations or containers

## Bats



of wall insulation which are injected as a foam through holes bored in the wall. Insulating can be done even after the bats have left to feed. If foam or loose-type insulations are used, be certain that a substantial amount of droppings are removed and not covered over, for objectionable odors may continue.

Quick-setting hard putty can be used for some openings. Oakum, weather stripping, caulking compound, or equivalent materials are effective for long narrow cracks. Steel wool or large stainless steel scouring pads (which do not cause rust stains) are useful for plugging openings in Spanish-type tile roofs.

When batproofing, pay particular attention to chimneys, louvers, vents, cornices, warped siding, and other locations where the roof joins the sides and in the eaves. Bats have also been known to take up roosting in some rather unusual places — in one instance

*Bats roost upside down. Where they roost differs by species, as does the number of bats roosting together.*

- Bats can be found:
- A - In subterranean caverns
  - B - Clinging to rafters
  - C - Inside chimneys
  - D - Behind shutters
  - E - Within walls

