

## The rats are laughing

Norway rats have been eating their way through our wildlife ever since they sneaked off the sailing ships bringing explorers, sealers, whalers and settlers to New Zealand.

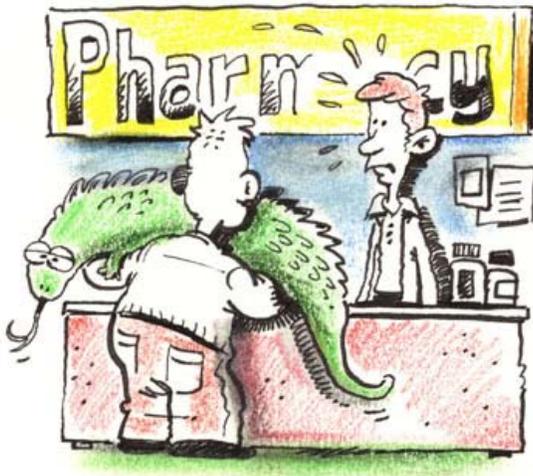
They've helped native mammals, birds, reptiles and invertebrates to extinction or limited them to very few places like rat free islands. They'll eat anything smaller than themselves.

They eat the seeds of many plant species and slow the growth of new plants. Norway rats also eat human food crops. And they spoil them with their wee and poo. Now that's disgusting!



People in Finland call these rats "rotta".

That seems like a good name.



Cats catch chevron skinks every year but sometimes the lizards can be saved!  
Phone DOC on 094290044 if you find an injured chevron skink.

Great and Little Barrier Islands are free of stoats, weasels, ferrets and Norway rats. If one of these villains did become established on these islands it would be a disaster for the chevron skink.

The Norway rat likes living along banks of streams and rivers and in other in wet places... just like the chevron skinks!

Norway rats are like all other rodents in New Zealand. They eat lizards. If they settled on Great or Little Barrier Islands the chevron skink would face a great threat. New Zealand's biggest lizard could easily become extinct!

## Not welcome on the island!

Pests are not welcome on Great or Little Barrier Islands but Norway rats can swim one kilometre quite easily. That means boats moored near the island could accidentally introduce these pests.

Boaties need poisonous bait stations onboard to minimise the risk. And, if they take freight, containers or buildings, to the islands they need to check for stowaways like possums, rats and stoats.

**Design a poster or pamphlet for boaties that uses text and pictures to get the "no pests near" message across. Work out a plan for getting your message out there!**

