

## HOW CAN I CONTROL RATS WITHOUT POISONING OUR WILDLIFE?

Most mouse and rat poisons contain one or two anticoagulant poisons which causes internal bleeding which over a period of days causes death from internal bleeding.

In general, there are two main types of poison, commonly referred to as 1st generation and 2nd generation rodenticides. The 1st generation require the rodent to take several meals of the bait to receive a lethal dose. The 2nd generation, and now most readily available, only takes one meal for a lethal dose. In reality, though, as it takes a few days to die, the mouse will take several meals and therefore have several times the lethal dose in its system.

A predator such as an owl will receive a dose of poison far in excess of that necessary to kill that rodent, and after eating several animals will receive sufficient poison to be severely impaired or directly killed.

Many of the Boobooks tested by Mike Lohr contained high levels of a range of poisons acquired from eating many animals containing a variety of poison products. The 1st generation poisons require the rodent to eat several meals to consume a lethal dose, and these poisons are weaker to begin with and more quickly eliminated from the body. Therefore, our owls and other wildlife which help control rodents will receive a much lower dose and have a better chance of surviving.

**To help reduce the incidence of secondary poisoning, look for products with warfarin or coumatetralyl as the active ingredients.**

Generally, stores only carry a few products containing these 1st generation poisons, which are vastly outnumbered by 2nd generation products. You need to read the labels as some brands use different ingredients in different products.

Better still, go the old-fashioned way and use a trap. Another option is baits containing cholecalciferol, which in effect delivers a massive overdose of vitamin D which most research indicates has a relatively low risk of causing secondary poisoning.