

# The Good Rats and the Bad Rats of the Mornington Peninsula

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## Good Rats

Swamp Rats are a numerous species in bushland reserves and Creek lines, a shy animal that stays in the thick undergrowth. It lives on the ground, digging burrows and often turning up significant areas in search of tubers and roots. The swamp rat is a vegetarian and does not carry the diseases that the introduced Black Rat carries. It has a very docile nature.

By keeping your cats at home after dark and your dogs on a leash while walking you will help to protect this delightful animal.

**Swamp Rat** *Rattus lutreolus*

**Black Rat** *Rattus rattus*

\*Note the long scaly tail



## Bad Rats

The introduced Black Rat is a feral species. It carries diseases that effect people and pets. The black rat **kills baby swamp skinks** invades hollows that the Agile Antechinus lives in, a native marsupial. It also raids bird nests stealing eggs, killing young chicks and competes with the swamp rat for territory and some foods.

**Black rats** move from the housing zone into the bushland reserves. They breed up due to rubbish and pet food left out or discarded. Shedding and rubbish piles will also give these animals shelter. Help protect the indigenous species of the Mornington Peninsula and the health and the wellbeing of your family by carrying out good backyard cleanliness practices.