



### JREED AND HIS MONGROL HOARD

#### THE NORWAY RAT

Rats. The word alone can bring chills to the skin and a cringe to one's stomach. Most often when someone sees a rat in North America, they are staring into the face of the Norway rat. Ewww!

The Norway rat is also referred to as the brown rat, house rat, barn rat, sewer rat, gray rat, or wharf rat. The word 'rat' is generally used to describe these medium sized rodents with long thin tails, beady eyes, and odious looking teeth that send shivers down the spine.

The Norway rat, a stocky burrowing rodent who weighs an average of 1 pound and can grow up to 21 inches long, was unintentionally introduced into North America by settlers who arrived on ships from Europe around 1775. The Norway rat has abundantly spread throughout the lower 48 states. Norway rats live in close proximity to people in both rural and urban areas. They tend to find and make homes in and around residences, in

basements, storage areas, stores, docks, and in sewers. On farms they may inhabit barns, granaries, livestock buildings/pens, silos, and kennels. They often burrow to make nests under structures on properties, beneath concrete slabs, along stream or pond banks, in garbage dumps, underneath animal pens/manure piles and at other locations where suitable food, water, and shelter is present.

Norway rats have physical capabilities that enable them to gain entry to structures by gnawing and chewing (their teeth grow on average 4.5-5.5 inches per year), climbing, jumping, swimming, and other tactics. They can fall 50 feet without being injured. They can tread water for days and even survive a flush down the toilet.

Norway rats will eat nearly any type of food; they will even eat their own feces, purely for the nutritional value. Food and waste items found in everyday household garbage offer a

# Rat Killing: The Terrier Way

By Amanda J. Truitt

balanced diet also satisfying moisture needs.

Norway rats usually construct nests in underground burrows. Females may come into heat every 4 or 5 days, having live litters of 6 to 12 which are born 21 to 23 days after conception. They begin the cycle again within a day or two after a litter is born. The average female rat has 4 to 6 litters per year. Thus a pair of brown rats can produce as many as 2,000 descendants in one year's time if left to breed unchecked. Rats mature sexually at 3 to 4 months, and have an average life span of two to three years. [Do the math, that's a lot of rats!]

So in review: Rats are smart, cunning, easy to attract, reproducing demigods, and like Steven Segal hard to kill.

#### HISTORY OF RATTING

Rats and mice plagued Great Britain during the centuries terriers were developing. The growth of cities with open drains and no sanitation caused rats and

mice to thrive. People would often hire a “terrier man” to rid buildings or properties of rats and be paid for the number of dead rats supplied to his employer. Thus terriers capable of killing vermin quickly could earn sufficient income, enough to support an entire family.

In actuality, any dog can be a ‘rat dog’; but none can compare to the infamous Rat Terrier. Rat dogs had to be quick and agile with powerful jaws so the rat was killed before the dog himself was bitten. They also needed to have a ‘nose’ for sniffing out vermin. It was these ratting dogs who travelled the globe in the holds of the early merchant ships that gave rise to the various breeds of terriers we have in existence today.

In the United States, Rat Terriers were cherished as loyal hunting companions and efficient killers of vermin on 20th century American farms. As a result of this killer instinct, Rat Terriers were one of the most popular dog types from the 1920s to the 1940s. However the widespread use of chemical pesticides and the growth of commercial farming led to a sharp decline in the breed from the 1950s onwards. Breed loyalists maintained the bloodline, leading to the modern Rat Terrier.

Due to the use of modern ingenuity, poison, and exterminators, the need for a good ratting dog gradually faded away. Today, rat hunting is rare but not unheard of.

### CATS VS TERRIERS

There is difference between a cat and a terrier when you’re talking rodent control. When it comes to cats, even the best mousers only go after one victim at a time. Cats also pause to play with their prey and/or eat it. Generally it can take cats days, sometimes weeks, to

deal with an infestation. (That’s even when the cat itself really like killing.) If property owners find themselves with a rat infestation, they may need multiple cats, as rats have been known to gang up on the cats and predators. A good Rat Terrier will often take care of any rat issues in a matter of hours.

They don’t stop to eat. They kill and then move on immediately to the next creature. They don’t play with their prey like cats do. They kill efficiently and quickly. One terrier will also be much harder for rats to overwhelm than a single cat. Terriers are larger bodied, their jaws are much bigger, and overall they are much stronger than cats. It’s all in the name: Rat Terrier. It’s what they were bred for, to kill rats.

### RAT POISON: IT’S NOT JUST FOR RATS

Rats are troublesome and destructive pests and are extremely hard to eliminate. Home and land owners may be tempted to use toxic rat poison to eradicate these destructive creatures. Those who have household pets or livestock, may want to reconsider. Rat poison is deadly not just to rats, but can kill dogs and cats, too. Traditional rat poisons consist of anticoagulant rodenticides, which are chemicals designed to eliminate Vitamin K in the blood. With no Vitamin K, blood does not clot, so any injury, whether it be external or internal, will cause the rat to bleed to death.

Unfortunately, anticoagulant rodenticides have the same effect on dogs and cats if they ingest the poison. Symptoms of anticoagulant rodenticide



poisoning aren’t immediate, so by the time owners realize their pet has eaten rat poison, he or she may already be in danger. If diagnosed in time, anticoagulant rodenticide poisoning can be treated with Vitamin K replacement and blood transfusions. Without treatment, dogs and cats will likely bleed to death or become fatally anemic.

There is also a second, more lethal, type of rat poison called bromethalin. This chemical is very potent and toxic to rats and other animals who ingest the poison. Bromethalin causes cerebral edema (swelling) in the brain and spinal cord. This swelling exerts pressure on the central nervous system causing tremors, seizures, muscle failure and eventually death. There is no known antidote or treatment for bromethalin toxicity. The only possible method of treatment is to flush a pet’s digestive tract and wait to see if the toxins cause permanent or fatal damage.

### ENTER THE MONGROL HOARD

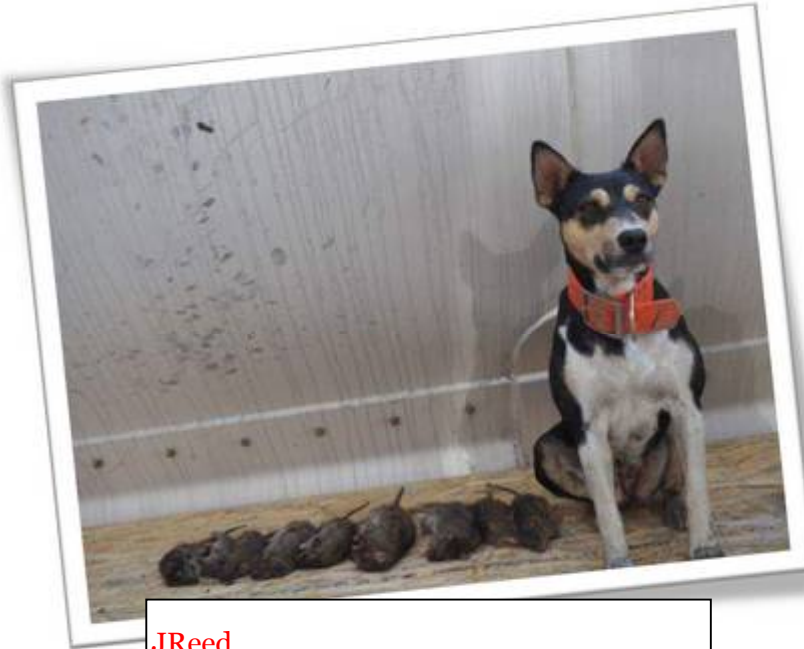
If property owners are looking for a safer way to rid their homes and building of rats; a terrier just may do the trick. Enter JReed and his Mongrol Hoard. Reed is one of the few out there who still use dogs to rat. By day, Reed

works as a production assistant/vineyard caretaker for Marimar Estate. By night he is rat killer extraordinaire. He's also a skilled farmer, avid hunter, and dog trainer. Reed loves to give his pack of terriers the chance to do what they do best: eradicate vermin. Reed has trained his terriers to kill, and kill they do. He and his team of Rat Terriers catch and dispatch rodents with precision and speed. Reed has aptly dubbed his kennel "Jreed and His Mongrol Hoard of Rascally Rat Wranglers". In the May 26, 2014 article for Press Democrat, Reed was quoted as saying "Terriers are the only class of dog bred to catch and dispatch prey. They have to have attitude because they have to want to kill. This makes them, in my opinion, unfit to be pets. But they are quite suited to killing rats."

Reed got into the art of rat hunting by working on a farm in Bodega Bay, where he moved to raise turkeys and chickens. He noticed when he was cleaning chicken coops, he would find rats under the straw/bedding. After attempting various methods of rodent eradication (poison, trapping, and the ever so trusty BB gun), Reed found he couldn't really make an impact on the rat population. His ridding via dog all began when he was given his first Rat Terrier pup, which he named Holy Mole. And so began the legacy.

Without training, Holy Mole began to catch and kill rats when Reed cleaned the coops out. "In

the May 26, 2014 article for Press Democrat, "We had a pretty severe rat problem. When Holy Mole first killed a rat, I thought 'Wow, that's amazing' and then I realized she was really, really good at it."



**JReed**

**"I hate rats. But I have a huge amount of respect for them. They are smart, adaptive animals. But they are extremely destructive and dirty. A rat bite could kill or maim or take out a dog's eye."**

It was after Reed got his second terrier that he started seeking out local farmers to hunt rats on their properties. He reported that over time he has truly begun to understand the behavior of rats and has perfected his dog training skills.

### **SO YOU WANT TO HOST A RAT HUNT?**

Very little equipment is needed for ridding. All you really need are five items: a shovel, a flashlight, a bucket, gloves, and a smoker. A shovel is used to lift boards, shake items, and beat on piles of junk. A

flashlight is helpful to check dark nooks and crannies to look for those long scaly tails and beady eyes. A plastic bucket (pretty self-explanatory) is used for collecting dead rats. Gloves are needed, for the ratter's safety, as rats carry disease. The most useful piece of equipment is the smoker (like the bee man uses). The smoker will help drive rats from their dens.

Reed told Press Democrat, that ridding is a "mixture of art and skill". Reed and his dogs start a rat hunt by identifying where the rodents are located. Then, Reed flushes the rats out of their nests, using water or smoke. As the rats scatter, Reed and his dogs quickly catch and efficiently eliminate them one

by one. Some rats are killed by the terriers, others are killed by Reed and his trusty human assistants.

Besides being efficient, death-by-dog is more humane for the rat and better for the environment than poison. Using poison, rats die slow deaths, and pass the poison on to anything that eats them, from wildlife to farm animals. For farmers, the Mongrol Hoard is a chemical-free solution to their pest problems. Reed believes his form of rat catching is humane: rat deaths are quick, they are either dispatched with a boot or a shovel, or by the dogs, who shake them to death or crush them in their powerful jaws.

In a June 09, 2014 interview with Modern Farmer Magazine, Reed says rats are "dangerous animals that carry disease and disrupt and kill farm animals. Not to mention

the toxins in rat poison, which are ingested by rats and cause them to bleed to death, have long been blamed for the deaths of wildlife and domestic animals that eat the dead rats.”

Want to get on Reed’s rat killing agenda? Reed obtains most of his referrals by word of mouth; although he also uses social media and Craigslist. Reed does have a few rat rules: He only works small farms and on the condition the farmer(s) provide labor. He also refuses to do a job on a farm if the owner doesn’t take proactive measures to make their property as unfriendly to rats as possible.

Reed told Farm Show Magazine (August, 15, 2015) “no place is rat proof.” He will turn down clients who have filthy farms and poor animal husbandry practices or refuse to clean up their property. He won’t take on clients who won’t make proper improvements. Some suggestions he makes include animal coops be 18 inches off the ground, single walled, store food in metal cans overnight, and don’t store kitchen compost near housing.

Reed told Press Democrat, "It's a waste of time for me to go out to farms where the rats will just repopulate as soon as I leave. I've been at some pretty disgusting places."

Some may say that using dogs to hunt and kill rats is unethical. Reed has a different view. In an article for Modern Farmer, June 9, 2014, Reed was quoted as saying he is an environmentalist who does not kill for fun. “They [people] think you love suffering. I care a lot more about how an animal dies than you might think. There’s a bond of trust between you and the dog that you can’t describe, other than to say it exists.”

Rat hunts typically last 3 to 4 hours. If you’re the farm owner be prepared to lend a hand during the hunt. Reed usually enlists help to move around objects rats may be hiding under. His record is 121 rats in three hours. Dead rats are collected and then left out for scavengers to feast upon.

Rat concerns are real. Reed stated in an article for Farm Show Magazine (August, 15, 2015) that rats “destroy feed, chew wiring and defecate in living spaces, spread diseases, steal eggs and kill chicks and other small animals.

Look for Jordan Reed and his Mongrol Hoard on Facebook for more ratting and contact information.



From the ripe young age of 3 months, Luna has been keeping her farm free of mice, rats, moles, chipmunks, and the occasional lazy squirrel.

If you find yourself, like many dog enthusiasts out there, owning a Rat Terrier, be prepared! Whether you sought out the Rat Terrier for the show ring, as a competitor in dog sports, to be the trusty family pet, or for actual vermin killing, rest assured that prey drive is in the blood. It’s instinctual. Rat Terriers are loyal, loving, cuddle buddies to many of their owners; however, not much is going to stop them from doing what they do best, which is killing vermin! So if you find yourself owning a prey driven machine, sit back, watch the show, and be prepared for a vermin free life.



JReed's rat eradication on August 8, 2015. Picture from Reed's Facebook page.

**SO WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU HAVE YOUR OWN RAT KILLING TERRIER?**



Even frogs and squirrels are not safe from the Rat Terrier. Prey drive is strong in some bloodlines and easy to cultivate.

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“I think I might be the luckiest guy in the world. I have a few good dogs and puppies . I have a few good shovels. I have a few good friends. I have a pretty girl who feeds and humors me and also takes fun pictures. Please don't let me forget that I have an able body and locations for my favorite dog-tivity. Supporting organics and knocking them dead around Northern California. Prolific and regular we are putting dog caught, dog dispatched, dead rats in buckets. Jreed and his furry friends of the Mongrol Hoard”

ˆ JORDAN REED [July 18 at 11:47pm](#) via Facebook

