

BOOK REVIEW

Mammals as pests

Mammals as pests. R. J. Putman, ed. Chapman and Hall, London and New York, 1989. 271 pp. ISBN 0-412-32590-x.

The book is an edited selection of papers presented at a symposium organised by the Mammal Society in London in November 1987. The leading idea of the book is the combination of (1) an ecological explanation of the mechanisms of conflict between man and mammal pests and (2) practical indications how to avoid damage or how to manage and fight the pests. Chapters written by 38 authors consider voles, mice, moles, deer, squirrels, coypus, rabbits, badgers, fox, mink, seals, and feral cats. The species chosen for description are analysed in respect of their real noxiousness to man. The papers concentrate on the specific problems of their ecology and management.

A reader learns that the damage caused by American mink, badger, and seals has practically no economical importance and occurs locally. Moles do some damage in recreation gardens. Rodents may be serious pests and their noxiousness depends on their outbreaks. Among them, rats and domestic mouse *Mus musculus* are considered serious and continuous problems because they transmit diseases infectious to man. The book gives the review of chemicals used against rodents and indications for their application. Red foxes inhabiting cities may transfer rabies. Squirrels, rabbits and deer cause serious damage in forest and agricultural plantations. The book presents the ecological and historical determinants of their noxiousness. It also suggests the methods of reducing the number of deer and the methods of silviculture that would minimize the damage from mammalian pests.

The book is of interest to biologists studying the mechanisms of animal population regulation, feeding conditions, as well as to practitioners (farmers, foresters, conservationists), who face the problems of animal pests.

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