

# TOP 12 THINGS TO STOP ATTRACTING RATS TO YOUR YARD!



- **FECES CLEAN-UP:** Clean-up any dog feces in the yard. Don't just hose it down with water. Most dog food is grain based. It is a fact that grains are an attractant to rats. Grains go undigested therefore pass through to the feces for the most part, completely intact.
- **STORAGE CONTAINERS:** If you are repurposing storage containers for random items, make sure it wasn't previously used for food. Rats love to chew as it is, but if the container makes them think there is food inside, it becomes an attractant.
- **OUTDOOR KITCHENS:** This is always the #1 attractant in our professional opinion. There is NO way to get rid of food particulates or odors. You can be the cleanest person on the planet and odors will remain behind. So, what you need to do is to take away hiding places. We would either make it to where the rodents cannot get under the hood by securing the gaps or the opening on the sides with metal (even if just temporary blocks while not in use) or leave the hood up – EXPOSE WHAT WOULD BE A PERFECT HIDING SPOT.

It would be a good idea to protect the grid or cooking racks. Consider critter-proof storage for the grates or [cleaning & storing the grill](#).

- **TRIM SHRUBS:** Trim all shrubbery up about 6 – 10” from the ground. Take away nesting or hiding spots.
- **PINE STRAW:** If your HOA allows you to have mulch instead of pine straw, we highly recommend replacing the straw. The straw usually is applied too thick and creates a cover or LID. Not only do snakes live hiding under the pine straw but rats do too. So, ditch the pine straw and go for chunky mulch instead. Always remember when it comes to harboring wildlife, less is best.
- **KEEP THE PERIMETER OF THE HOME FREE OF DEBRIS AND PLANTS:** Don’t plant shrubs to close to the house. Don’t stack stuff against the walls on the outside. Leave a visual path around the entire perimeter. Again, it is all about exposure. Give them nowhere to hide.
- **GROUND COVER:** Snakes and rodents love ground cover. Like ivy, monkey grass, creeping jenny, etc. Get rid of the cover. Plant other type of plants.
- **FRUIT BEARING TREES & BUSHES:** You do not have to make a choice between fruit bushes & trees or rats. You can have the luxury of having fruit producing plants just do not plant them too close to the house. Try to keep fallen fruit off the ground.
- **BIRD FEEDERS:** In my humble opinion, I think the bird feeding needs to stop if you have a rodent population explosion. But, if you are not willing to take down the feeder, then you should take measures to prevent the rodents from gaining access to the seed. You might consider baffles to block the rats from gaining access and ways to prevent the seeds from dropping to the ground. It is about limiting the food sources. I found another good article on [“How to Keep Mice, Rats, and Squirrels Away from Bird Feeders”](#) that was right on point.
- **GARBAGE CONTAINERS:** Nothing is better than steel cans, however, most of us have those huge rubber/plastic wheeled containers these days. Don’t make it easy for them. A simple way to secure the lid by using a bungie cord may be enough to keep them from the buffet.
- **INSTALL HAWK & OWL NESTING BOXES.** Self-explanatory since the birds of prey love rats. You can get some guidance [here](#) & also purchase some nesting boxes - <http://hawkandowl.org/sculthorpe/nest-boxes-for-sale/>
- **SEALING THE HOME:** Of course, our answer to all wildlife problems is to seal the home. Who cares what is on the outside as long as they can’t get in... right? NOT true, even if you have had your home sealed by a [Professional Wildlife Trapping Company](#) (Like us at [Southern Wildlife Management dba Southern Pest Management](#)) you still want to do everything you can to control the population outside. Some warranty’s require habitat modifications to be maintained.