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MOOTIT BUSH RAT



SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Rattus fuscipes*

IDENTIFICATION: A native rodent, the Mootit or Bush Rat has dense soft fur that is grey to grey-brown or reddish above and grey or cream below. It has conspicuous rounded ears, a pointed head and a short scaly tail. The front teeth have one pair of distinctive chisel-shaped incisors with hard yellow enamel on front surfaces. It may sometimes be confused with other rodents, such as the introduced Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*) and the Brown Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*). The differences are that the Black Rat has a tail longer than its body and is not as shy around humans as the Bush Rat, and the Brown Rat has small ears and a thick tail. Body length 11-21 cm, tail 10-19 cm, weight 65 – 225 gm.

HABITAT: Forests and woodlands, heath. The Mootit prefers dense forest understorey, and shelters in short burrows under logs or rocks. It lines nests with grass. It is not often found in urban areas.

DIET: The Mootit is an omnivore and eats fungi, grasses, fruits, seeds and insects.

STATUS: Common

