

More than 300 semi-wild house cats have been killed in Southern Butte County by an expert hunter for the Feather River Rod and Gun Club in California, according to reports coming to this office. Stomachs of 100 of these cats were opened and in 99 of them was found bird meat, principally duck and quail. Only one cat was found to have fed on mice.

This gives some idea of the importance of eliminating these clever creature from our game lands.—*“California Fish and Game.”*

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### RED SQUILL FOR RATS.

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Red squill was brought into prominence during the war, when it was desired to produce a poison for rats which would prove harmless to everything else. The plant bearing this name grows in Sardinia and the islands and coast in the vicinity. In appearance it is a handsome plant terminating at the base in a large onion-like formation the size often of a coconut. The plants grow on rocky soil in small communities.

Mr. B. C. Aston, our Government Chemist, to whom we are indebted for much information on this matter, brought out a number of plants and one or two survived.

Recently, the United States Department of Agriculture instituted exhaustive experiments as to the effect of the poison on domestic animals. Dogs, cats, poultry, etc., generally refused the baits, and upon it being forcibly given, vomited it up. Doses were also taken by one gentleman without very evil effects.

The Native Bird Protection Society will shortly be able to supply Red Squill, believing it may be of great value in lessening the rat plague so much in evidence as a menace to bird life and which takes such a heavy annual toll of our food supply, besides being a prolific agent in spreading disease.

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### DUCK CRISIS.

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Following on two dry seasons, a great duck crisis has occurred in Canada and America. The birds have failed to compete against the modern gun, modern transport, baiting for the gun, poaching, etc. Shorter seasons, lessened bag limits have been of no avail. All the time the excessive destruction by man has been going on many hunters' organisations have stated that ducks are holding their own, etc., just as is done in New Zealand, where it only needs a similar combination of adverse circumstances to bring about like results. The remedy lies in more rigorously protected duck havens, where the birds should be fed as a set-off against cowardly baiting for the gun.