

Wild dogs were reported on the Macquaries in 1820, but they later died out. They would be taken there by sealers as were those seen by Captain Musgrave when he was wrecked on the Aucklands in 1864. Here, too, they appear to have quickly died out.

Cats, also, were seen on the Macquaries in 1820 and there arose in later years a mysterious story of "cat-rabbits" on the island, the peculiar animal supposedly resulting from a cross between a rabbit and a cat! Although biologically impossible and utterly absurd, the story persisted for some time. Needless to say no specimens were ever obtained.

To-day wild cats are plentiful on the Aucklands and take a heavy toll of bush birds and the smaller burrowing petrels. They are in lesser numbers on the Campbells but do little damage there because there are now no native land birds and few small petrels. They certainly take large numbers of rats and probably do a certain amount of good in this respect.

#### Rabbits, Rats, and Mice

There are no written records of when rabbits were liberated on the sub-antarctic islands but presumably this took place early in their history. On Enderby and Rose Islands, both in Port Ross of the Aucklands, rabbits are found. Those on Enderby are known, at least recently, as "French blues." Certainly they are not a grey nor does blue quite fit as a description of them. The fact remains they are very handsome and the possessors of beautiful coats of a rich blue-grey shade. They are quite plentiful and have reduced much of the island to a short turf. Despite over-crowding they are quite healthy, but those on Rose Island, a different race, are suffering from various rabbit diseases.

I have a single record that rabbits were once liberated on the Campbells. Fortunately they failed to survive there. But rats are plentiful—only too numerous—on the Campbells. Their introduction was probably accidental just as it has been to most parts of the world. Strangely enough the rat is not found on the Aucklands although there are numerous mice there. The mouse was recorded from the Campbells but apparently died out.

Rats on the Campbells are a decided nuisance, to put it mildly. They eat everything one would expect them to eat and many things one would not expect they would touch. Whilst we were coast-watching there, they ate our boots, our parkas and oilskins, they hollowed out onions and even ate the putty out of the boat! Only repeated trapping and poisoning kept them down in the vicinity of the camp. Elsewhere they ranged from seashore to mountain-top, moving in and burrowing all round a dead sheep or seal and subsisting on grass roots, seeds and berries as well as shellfish at other times. All the rats killed seemed healthy and in good condition.

"THE English have a habit of always criticising all things English," said a BBC speaker recently.

"They run down the English climate, farming, skill at games, education, church, social system, and English roads. I have been very careful to use the word 'English' because to say 'British' would be absolutely wrong. There is none of this self-depreciation with the Irish, none in Wales, and there is its exact opposite in Scotland."

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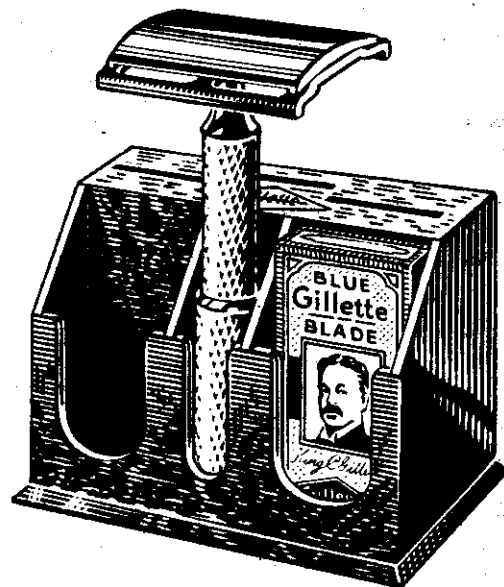


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