

The logo for the news outlet 'Mirror', featuring the word 'Mirror' in white, bold, sans-serif font on a red rectangular background.

# Explosion in RAT numbers in our homes as they learn to avoid traps and infestations shoot up 19%

March 28 2017, UK

Brits are being urged to keep rats and mice away by storing food like cereal, sugar and biscuits in sealed, plastic containers or jars

A plague of **rats** and **mice** is causing havoc across the country as infestations have shot up by a fifth.

Experts say perfect breeding conditions and increasingly cunning pests who are raiding food cupboards but dodging traps are behind booming numbers.

According to research by rat catchers **Rentokil**, last year's late summer combined with a mild autumn and winter extended the breeding season.

And recent severe weather like Storm Doris sent vermin scurrying indoors for food and shelter.

Combined with wily mice who are outwitting families by gathering morsels from up to 70 different sources a day, there has been a significant rise in call outs.

Infestations rose by 19% between December and February, compared with the previous year. David Cross, of Rentokil, said the pests are "becoming more resistant to traditional baiting methods"

And part of the problem has been caused by pesky critters avoiding or not nibbling enough poison pellets or blocks laid down by fed up householders.

For by feeding from dozens of different areas a day, they were not eating enough poison for it to have an effect, he said.

Mr Cross added: "It can be very traumatic finding rats and mice in your house, and for good reason. Rodents can carry bacteria and viruses which can pose a serious health risk to people and pets.

“These pathogens may be spread throughout an infested property via the rodent’s urine and faeces, as the pests forage for food and build nesting sites.

“If you think you have a problem in your home, it’s always best to seek professional advice.”

The firm is urging Brits to keep the pests away by storing food like cereal, sugar and biscuits in sealed, plastic containers or jars.

It said holes in walls or floors that are wide enough to slide a biro through should be sealed while areas under fridges, cookers and cupboards should be cleaned regularly.

There are an estimated 200 million rats in the UK and according to a recent study by the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) Birmingham was the rat capital of Britain with the most call outs over 12 months.