

Alien Enemies

CHIEF of the first class are three domesticated followers of man, the cat, sparrow and rat. The cat is sometimes useful to man and often ornamental, but to birds in any country a creeping cat spells danger. Cats should be licensed; this would eliminate the homeless or wild cat that is so destructive to bird-life. There is no doubt about the friendless rat; the question is how to get rid of it. As to the sparrow it is undoubtedly undesirable—gregarious and pugnacious in habits, it monopolizes well-settled districts and makes life difficult for native birds—the same can be said of most aliens; even our alien plants or weeds are inimical as they crowd out native plants and force the birds further afield in search of accustomed food.

In Canada, the sparrow is kept in check to some extent by severe winters. In the United States it is a greater nuisance and many methods of extermination have been tried, with little success.

Wherever there is waste food, there you will find the domestic mouse, the rat, and the sparrow. If it were practical to eliminate the waste, these creatures would disappear.