

Rat kings: Multiple rats tied together by their tails

- Since 16th century: approx. 50 rat kings found, consisting of up to 36 black rats (*rattus rattus* long tail)
- Most findings in Central/Eastern Europe, most of them consist of young animals.
- Rat kings can live for a while, allegedly fed by other rats.
- Little scientific reception, some doubts - but good evidence for existence

Explanation Attempts (M. Hart, *Rats*, 1982):

- glue/ice hypothesis (supported by Estonian found: A. Miljutin, 2007)
- spontaneous knot formation

Scientific Work

- Experiment glueing rat tails together at some points → rat kings developed in some cases (Becker, Kemper 1964; Wiertz 1965)
- Topological knot theory (mathematics), knot formation in self avoiding random walks (theoretical physics), spontaneous knot formation (experimental physics, e.g. Raymer/Smith, PNAS 2007)

