Environment & Society Portal

Multimedia Library Collection: Environment and History (journal)

"Bamboo, Rats and Famines: Famine Relief and Perceptions of British Paternalism in the Mizo Hills (India)"

Nag, Sajal

Nag, Sajal. "Bamboo, Rats and Famines: Famine Relief and Perceptions of British Paternalism in the Mizo Hills (India)." *Environment and History* 5, no. 2 (June, 1999): 245–52. doi:10.3197/096734099779568317 . As the British entered the Mizo hills (part of the Indo-Burmese range of hills, then known as the Lushai hills) to chase the headhunting tribal raiders and try to gain control over them by securing a foothold in the heart of the hills at Aizawl, they witnessed an amazing ecological phenomenon: a severe famine apparently caused by rats. The Mizo hills are covered extensively by various species of bamboo, which periodically rot, flower and seed. The bamboo seeds appeared to be a delicious food item for jungle rats, which emerged in massive numbers to devour them, and the consumption of bamboo seeds seemed to produce a vast increase in the rodent population. Once the millions of rats had exhausted the bamboo seed, they began to attack the standing crops in the fields. As they devoured the grains the resulting scarcity of food led to massive hardship, starvation and deaths.... All rights reserved. © 1999 The White Horse Press

Download:
PDF: https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key_docs/nag-5-2.pdf

Related links:

- *Environment and History* at The White Horse Press
  http://www.erica.demon.co.uk/EH.html

Websites linked in this text:

- http://dx.doi.org/10.3197/096734099779568317

Environment and History (journal) Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal
"Bamboo, Rats and Famines: Famine Relief and Perceptions of British Paternalism in the Mizo Hills (India)"
Source URL: http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/3015
Print date: 28 November 2026 09:50:55