CLAIMS

1. A liquid composition for killing a target verminous animal selected from the group consisting of rodents, marsupials, leporids and mustelids, the composition comprising:

(i) from about 0.001 to about 90% by weight of the composition of a toxicant component comprising one or more agents toxic to the target verminous animal; and

(ii) a carrier system for the toxicant component;

wherein the carrier system (ii) comprises:

(a) from about 10 to about 70% by weight of the carrier system of a liquid solvent or dispersant for the toxicant component, which solvent or dispersant is selected from one or more compounds from any of the following: alcohols, glycols, glycol ethers, glycerol formal, polyethylene glycols, liquid polyoxyethylene glycols, pyrrolidones, acetone, acetonitrile, amides, phthalic esters, and

(b) from about 30 to about 90% by weight of the carrier system of a dermal disruptant component for promoting or enhancing passage of the toxicant component into and/or through the skin of the target animal, wherein the dermal disruptant component comprises one or more sulfoxides.

2. A composition according to claim 1, wherein the one or more toxic agents is/are selected from toxicants that are specific to the said target verminous animal and substantially non-toxic to animals other than the said target verminous animal.

3. A composition according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the toxicant component (i) is substantially water-insoluble.

4. A composition according to any preceding claim, wherein the one or more toxic agents is/are selected from one or more of the following: cholecalciferol, 25-hydroxycholecalciferol, vitamin D_3, calciferol, ergocalciferol, anticoagulants, metal phosphides, alpha-naphthylthiourea, arsenic compounds, barium compounds, thallium compounds, bromethalin, chloralose, crimidine, 1,3-difluoro-2-propanol, endrin, fluoroacetamide, phosacetim, white phosphorus, pyrinuron, scilliroside, sodium fluoroacetate, strychnine, tetramethylenedisulfotetramine, hydrogen cyanide, sodium cyanide, potassium cyanide, and bacterial or viral toxins.

5. A composition according to any preceding claim, wherein the toxicant component (i) is present in the composition in an amount of from about 0.01% up to about 75% by weight of the composition, optionally in an amount of from about 0.1% up to about 70% by weight of the composition.

6. A composition according to claim 5, wherein the toxicant component (i) is present in the composition in an amount of from about 1% up to about 60% by weight of the composition.

7. A composition according to any preceding claim, wherein the dermal disruptant component (b) comprises dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO).

8. A composition according to any preceding claim, wherein the dermal disruptant component (b) is present in the composition in an amount of from about 30 to about 80%.

9. A composition according to claim 8, wherein the dermal disruptant component (b) is present in the composition in an amount of from about 40 to 70%, by weight of the carrier system (ii).

10. A composition according to any preceding claim, wherein the solvent or dispersant (a) of the carrier system (ii) is present in the composition in an amount of from about 25% to about 60% by weight of the carrier system (ii).

11. A composition according to any preceding claim, further comprising one or more pheromones or other attractant chemical compounds.

12. A composition according to any preceding claim, further comprising up to about 10% by weight of the total composition of one or more adjunct components selected from any of the following:

(i) Dermal penetration enhancers;

(ii) Wetting agents;

(iii) Viscosity modifiers;

(iv) Co-solvents;

(v) One or more emulsifiers, stabilisers, preservatives, emollients, perfumes, colourants or dyes, pH adjusting agents, gel-forming agents, foam-forming agents, pharmaceuticals;

(vi) Delivery-facilitating components selected from one or more aerosol propellants.

13. A method of killing a target verminous animal selected from the group consisting of rodents, marsupials, leporids and mustelids, the method comprising delivering to the skin of the target verminous animal a liquid composition according to any one of claims 1 to 12.

14. A method according to claim 13, wherein the composition comprises one or more toxic

agents selected from toxicants that are specific to the said target verminous animal and substantially non-toxic to animals other than the said target verminous animal, and further wherein the liquid composition is formulated such that a single dose of the composition delivered to the skin of the target verminous animal contains a sufficient amount of toxicant so as to be fatal to the said target verminous animal, but which amount is not substantially more than a minimum such fatal amount.

15. Use of a composition according to any one of claims 1 to 12 as a vermicidal agent or composition.

16. An apparatus for killing a target verminous animal selected from the group consisting of rodents, marsupials, leporids and mustelids, by delivering one or more toxic agents to the skin thereof, the apparatus comprising:

(i) an enclosure into which the target verminous animal can enter;

(ii) container means containing a supply of a liquid composition according to any one of claims 1 to 12; and

(iii) delivery means for delivering to the skin of the target verminous animal a said dose amount of the said composition.