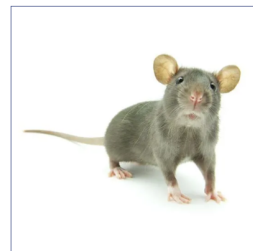# Rat

Scientific Name: Rattus Norvegicus

Brief Description:

Rats make for exceptional pets. They are highly intelligent, extremely social and really enjoy interaction and companionship of human beings. Rat's can also be kept in same-sex pairs and are relatively easy to maintain.

Average Size: The average size of a rat is approximately eight inches in length.

Average Life Span: Rats can live up to five years with proper care.

Feeding:

- Fresh food and water should always be available
- Small amounts of vegetables and fruits can be provided, daily.
    o Grapes, strawberries, raisins, sprouts, carrots
- Food items no eaten within twenty-hours hours should be removed, daily.
- Treats should not exceed ten percent of total food intake.
- Do not feed chocolate, alcohol or caffeine.
- Provide a constant supply of high-quality rat food.
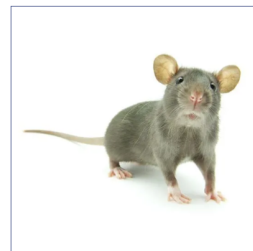
Housing:

- Rats acclimate quite well to average household temperatures.
- Extreme temperature fluctuations should be avoided.
- Don't keep your pet Rat in direct sunlight or drafty areas.
- Housing should be plastic, glass or metal in addition to being escape proof and have a solid bottom.
    - Fifteen gallon aquarium makes a good time for two rats.

Rat

Scientific Name: Rattus Norvegicus

Maintenance:

- Remove any wet-spots, daily.
- Change bedding weekly or more often as required.
- Wash and disinfect items in the habitat.
- Wash habitat with mild soap, rinse and allow to dry.

Temperatures: Stable room temperature is adequate. No special requirements.

Humidity: No special requirements.

Lighting: Rats are nocturnal, keep out of direct sunlight. Use room lighting as required.

Water and Accessories:

- Provide your pet Rat with a sipper bottle, hung from the side of the cage.
- Rats will require a running wheel for exercise and toys to play with.
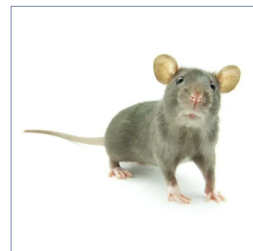- Keep a food bowl, chew stick and a nesting house as well.

Reproductive:

Breeding Rats isn't a difficult process. However, there are a several things you should regarding this process. Continue reading for more information.

Rat

Scientific Name: Rattus Norvegicus

Reproductive:

- Male and female rats should live and play separately and only meet for planned mating.
- After birth, female Rats immediately go into "post-partum estrus", and if a male is present, she can immediately get pregnant again, which is unhealthy for her and her unborn.
- Place both male and female Rats in the same cage with necessities (food, water, bedding, etc.), in the evening and make sure they are getting along.
- Remove the male in the morning.
- Signs of pregnancy include dominant behavior over other female rats, food hording, over-eating.
- Within fourteen days you should notice an increase in weight.
- Female Rats will give birth in twenty-one-to-twenty-three days.
- Female Rats will build a nest.
- Most have a liter of twelve-to-fifteen babies.
- Signs of approaching labor include licking of private parts, stretching, and repositioning for comfort.
- Its important to leave the female rat alone during all steps of the reproductive process.

Notes and Comments:

Rats are active during the night and sleep during the day (nocturnal). They are easy to handle once trust is established between you and your mice; they may become irritable and nip if suddenly awakened from a nap or startled.

Rats have inherently poor eyesight. You will notice that they "sway" to detect objects around them.

Rat

Scientific Name: Rattus Norvegicus

Notes and Comments: (con't)

Rats have inherently poor eyesight. You will notice that they "sway" to detect objects around them.

Male and female rats housed together will have offspring, unless spayed or neutered.

Rats have incisor teeth, which grow continuously. As a result, they chew on everything to help maintain their teeth. They also use check pouches to transfer food from one location to another. Rat's self-groom and no need baths. You can be spot cleaned with a damp washcloth or un-scented baby-wipes.