



Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare
Ringmer, East Sussex, BN8 5AJ
Tel: 01825 840252 www.raystede.org
admin@raystede.org

DEGU'S

- Degu's originate from Chile; they are for the most part confined to one area in Chile where they are abundant. They inhabit the west coast area from the plains up to the Andes Mountains.
- Degu's are very sociable and live in large colonies in the wild. Always house Degu's in pairs or small groups. They are extremely vocal with sounds ranging from a soft happy warble to a loud angry / frightened squeak (which can be repeated for quite some time).
- The average life span is between 5 – 8 years. (Diet appears to be the leading factor in their longevity).

ACCOMMODATION

- Degu's are very active so their accommodation should ideally be a large cage at least 90 x 90 x 90cm (3x3x3ft) with plenty of things to climb on such as branches (willow Or apple wood, from edible fruit trees), also rocks, wooden blocks, terracotta pots etc. The bottom of the cage should be solid and covered with a shredded paper substrate or peat and hay and they should be cleaned out at least once if not twice a week.
- A dust bath (chinchilla dust/sand) should be provided to ensure the coat stays clean and free from grease, the dust can be sieved on a daily basis, as Degu's do have a habit of sometimes using their baths as a toilet.

DIET

Degu's in the wild live on a very bland and dry diet consisting of dried plant materials such as, dried grass, roots, bark and seeds, all of which require greater digestion. Degu's are unable to digest sugar, and if fed sugary foods, health problems such as diabetes and cataracts can occur.

- The main diet for a pet Degu should consist of a mix of Chinchilla Grass Pellets with a small amount of Guinea Pig food added, this should not contain molasses.
- Always provide good quality hay and forage (dried grass).
- Occasional low sugar treats, such as, washed dandelion leaves, grass, broccoli and herbs make a tempting treat for the Degu. It is advisable to feed only a small amount on each occasion, for example the size of a thumbnail, and this should be only once or twice a week.
- Degu's teeth are usually orange in colour this is because of their diet reacting to an enzyme in their body which produces an orange organic fluid in their saliva. This is usually a sign of a healthy Degu.