

African Softfur Rat – *Mastomys spec.*

Housing



Cage

- cabinet or aviary with a digging area
- fish tank + cage above
- fish tank -> should be wider than it is tall
- bar spacing: max. 8mm for horizontal and 12mm for mesh



Furniture

- houses made of wood, clay, cork, bark ceramic, etc. -> holes of min. 6cm Ø
- roots, branches, ropes, cork, coconuts, etc.
- Exercise: wheels min. 30cm Ø



Bedding

- wood bedding, hemp, linen, paper mulch etc.
- bedding depth 15-25cm
- must be dust-free
- no cat litter or pellets



Location

- access to (indirect) daylight
- sheltered with no draughts
- min. temperature 18°C
- if possible, no birds or predators in the same room

Nutrition



Seeds

- few grain
- all types of millet
- grass seeds
- weed seeds
- few fatty seeds
- few pulses



Dried goods

- herbs
- flowers
- dried vegetables
- not dried fruit



Fresh food

- vegetables daily
- fruit 1x a week
- flowers, herbs and plants
- grasses



Protein

- live insects (e.g. meal worms, crickets, cockroaches)
- dried insects
- cooked eggs or meat
- if there's nothing else: dry cat or dog food

Health & Behavior



Reproduction

- gestation is approx. 23d
- litter size is 15 - 25
- weaned approx. 21d
- sexual maturity at 40 days
- can breed continuously without break



Diseases

- Papiloma warts
- parasites (mites, lice, worms, (rarely) protozoa)
- obesity when fed a medium or high calory diet



Social behaviour

- must be housed groups of 6 +
- groups of females, neutered males or both possible + also male groups possible
- Do not house alone!



Handling

- scoop up with both hands
- use a small box or empty paper roll
- Do not hold them up by the tail!
- might bite -> treat with respect