

Comparison of the selected reproductive behaviour of the Mongolian Gerbil (*Meriones unguiculatus*, Milne-Edwards 1867) and the Spiny Mouse (*Acomys cahirinus*, Desmarest 1819)

S u m m a r y

The study compared selected reproductive behaviour patterns in two species of exotic rodents bred in our laboratory. In both species 7 pairs were studied, respectively mating behaviour was observed in all individuals, whereas parental behaviour only in 5 pairs of each species. The behaviours studied included chasing after female before the actual mating, mating duration and number of mounting during the first three hours, nest building and developing, time between first noticeable labour and beginning of delivery, and the actual parental behaviours in both sexes. We found considerable differences between two species. Only Gerbils were building and developing their nests. Males of this species tend to perform more mountings of longer duration. Spiny mice displayed labour earlier and delivery took significantly more time than in Gerbils. Both species displayed differences in parental behaviours; Gerbil females fed their young longer, while Spiny mice females spent more time in their nests, grooming and retrieving the young. Spiny mice males spent more time with the young and grooming them, but Gerbils males were more often retrieving their progeny.