

Ready? Steady? Degu Action!

Dr. Chloe Long

As the temperature is getting warmer over summer, you might have noticed a change in your pet degus' activity levels from normal. Degus are normally active during the day, and sleep through the night- they are 'diurnal' (compared to nocturnal animals like chinchillas that sleep during the day and play at night).

Once summer arrives, your pet degu should start to wake up earlier, be busy for a few hours, then go back to bed again during the middle part of the day. They will then get up again in the evening, before finally going to bed as night falls.



So why do degus sleep more in the day in the summer?

The answer lies in how degus are adapted to live in their wild habitat, which is the hot desert-like areas of Chile in south America. During the summer months in Chile, it gets really hot, and temperatures can reach over 40 degrees Celcius during the day (phew!). Degus are normally out and about looking for food during the day, but high temperatures mean it's not possible for them to be out during the hottest part of the day, around mid-day (remember, degus can't sweat like us!). In the middle of the day in summer, all the wild degus retreat into the cool of their burrows to have a 'siesta', conserving energy and keeping them cool. They then come out again during the evening to forage before the sun goes down, when it is much less warm.

Although pet degus shouldn't be exposed to temperatures as high as they are in a Chilean summer, they still respond to the change in day length during the summer months, and also to the rise in temperature. This is why your degus start to nap during the day at this time of the year, and their wild brothers and sisters will be doing just the same!

How 'cool' is that?

To learn more about degu activity levels in the wild, visit the following page of Degutopia's

website:

www.degutopia.co.uk/degulife.htm

Find out more about degus by visiting Degutopia's website:

<http://www.degutopia.co.uk>



~Dedicated to the health and well-being of degus everywhere~