

Rat Makes Strange Sound

Learn to recognize the different sounds a rat can make.

By Carol Lawton

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Q: My fancy rat is about 1-year-old. Lately he's making rather a strange noise, not a squeaking or wheezy noise, it's a proper sound. I think it could possibly be a mating call or something similar, but would like to make sure it's nothing to be concerned about. My rat seems healthy and happy. He has a good appetite and is very friendly.

A: Rats are usually silent creatures, but there are a few occasions when you may hear noises from your pet. When baby rats are nursing they can be quite loud, but this stops completely once they are weaned. Rats may also make noises when they are playing, fighting or in pain, but these are very recognizable, high-pitched squeaks. And rats make a very unique but enjoyable sound when they grind their teeth together to keep them sharp. This behavior, called bruxing, looks and sounds like your rat is chewing something very quickly. It not only serves a practical purpose, it's also a sign that they are happy. If your rat is making noises other than these, it is cause for concern.

Rats are susceptible to respiratory infections, and even a rat that appears healthy could be developing a serious health problem. A precautionary visit to a veterinarian who is experienced with rodents will either confirm that your rat is healthy or will provide him with the medical treatment he needs so he will live a long and full life.