Mouse

Rat

Gerbils

Mice and rats live wild in Ireland. They have cousins in Africa called **gerbils**. These furry, little animals live wild in the deserts of Africa. They like warm, dry places. They have become a favourite pet for people all over the world.
They do not eat or drink very much. They are very friendly with children and they like to be petted. Of course, you need to be nice and gentle with them. Most gerbils will come to watch you if you go near their cage. It is best to keep two gerbils. They will be happy together because they like company. A gerbil that is well-looked after can live for three years or more. ■

CHECK-UP

1 What continent do gerbils come from?
2 Do they like to be held by people?
3 Are they shy?
4 Do gerbils like to live alone?
5 For how long can a well-looked after gerbil live?

Gerbil