

DIURNAL BEHAVIOR OF THE CRETAN WILD GOAT

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ABSTRACT

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The Cretan wild goat (Capra aegagrus cretensis Lydekker) is the highly endangered subspecies of wild goat that lives in extremely reduced numbers in the White Mountains of Crete and on two smaller Greek Islands. I investigated the behavior of the agrimi on Theodorou Island Wildlife Preserve prior to and during the rut. I recorded observational data from June to December 1986 in order to construct time budgets, quantify group dynamics, examine dominance hierarchies, and describe breeding season behaviors. Agrimi have seasonal and daily activity patterns that minimize their exposure to high ambient temperatures. I found significant differences in time spent lying, standing, feeding, and moving between subsets of the population classified by sex, season, and time of day. Agrimi were usually solitary; however, they often formed small groups which varied in both age and sex composition. I observed an age- and sex-specific dominance hierarchy with older, and consequently larger, males being most dominant. I observed breeding behaviors previously unreported for agrimi. These

included stomping, kicking, gobbling, tongue wagging, and mounting. Recommendations for management are discussed.