



Jungle Bob's Care Sheet Bearded Dragons (*Pogona vitticeps*)

General Information

The world's most popular pet lizard, the Bearded Dragon is easy to keep, extremely docile, and makes a great companion.

The Bearded Dragon's range encompasses central Australia and the inland portions of eastern Australia, where it inhabits brushy grasslands, thorn scrub, and desert fringes.

Reaching 16-24 inches long and coming an increasingly spectacular array of colors, there's one out there for everybody!

Housing

Babies should be housed in no smaller than a 20 Gallon long (30"x12") terrarium, and at about 1 year old, should be moved to (at least) a 40 Gallon terrarium (36"x18") We highly recommend babies be kept on a solid substrate such as a cage liner, until they are at least 4 months old. After that, the only loose substrate we recommend is Calcium sand (specifically Reptillite by Carib-Sea). This is a soft, sand-like bedding that if swallowed, is digestible and won't cause impaction.

Bearded Dragons require a basking temperature of 100 -110 F. A nighttime reduction in temperature, to 70 F or so, is beneficial. If your home is cooler than these temperatures at night you will need a black light or ceramic heat emitter. Humidity should be kept low, and the substrate should remain dry.

Heating/Lighting

"Beardies" are a diurnal animal that requires at least 10-12 hours of "daylight" per day. This is optimally achieved by using a T5 linear fluorescent UVB bulb (10.0/Desert). However, compact fluorescent bulbs are also ok to use, especially in a starter tank.

The Heat bulb wattage can vary depending on tank size and ambient room temperature, but generally a 100w basking bulb is ideal.

Diet

Bearded Dragons are omnivorous animals. Meaning they need a balance of vegetables and protein (insects). The insects they eat will change a bit from when they're babies to when they are adults. Babies have a more fragile digestive system and that can make it harder to eat things like meal worms that have a hard exoskeleton. We recommend Black Soldier Fly Larvae, small Dubia Roaches, and small crickets. Adults are much less restricted in their diet, they can easily handle mealworms, superworms and larger roaches. Vegetables should always be close to 50% of their diet, with the best being collard greens, dandelion greens, and mustard greens.

(For more specifics, see our Bearded Dragon Feeding sheet)

Hydration is key, especially for baby dragons. Many dragons do not see or react to water that is standing in a bowl, but they still should have one in their terrarium. Babies will be even more reluctant to drink from a bowl, so we recommend spraying them at least once per day (this makes it easier for them to see it and they will drink the drops from the glass or even right off their nose!)

Cleaning and Handling

The terrarium should be cleaned as necessary, with fecal matter and left-over food being removed daily. The substrate should be completely changed once each month. The inside of the terrarium can be cleaned out with an appropriate reptile cage cleaner.

Bearded Dragons are the easiest lizards to handle, but like all reptiles will defend themselves by biting if stressed, be sure to handle them securely and make them feel comfortable. Always wash your hands after handling any animal.

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