

Bearded Dragon

Pogona vitticeps



CARE SHEET

Developed with and approved by a Qualified Veterinarian

Bearded dragons are a type of ancient lizard, originally from the deserts of central Australia. "Bearded" refers to a flap of skin under the chin they extend when disturbed. They are usually very even-tempered, and seem to tolerate human interaction.



Is a bearded dragon the right companion animal for you?

Yes	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Check "Yes" or "No" after reading the following statements:

- I can accommodate a habitat requiring an electrical heat source.
- I want a pet that doesn't need to be cuddled or touched.
- I can feed and clean up after a bearded dragon daily.
- I feel comfortable providing live food to a bearded dragon.
- I can commit to providing proper care for this bearded dragon.
- A mature person will provide responsible and primary care for this companion animal.

If you answered "Yes" to these statements, a bearded dragon may be the right choice for you! Continue reading about how to care for a bearded dragon and consult with a PETCO associate to learn more. PETCO is committed to responsible companion animal care.

Average Size 12 to 18 inches long (half of this being its tail) **Life Span** 3 to 10 years with proper care

Diet Beardies require 30% mixed vegetables and fruits, 70% gut-loaded (recently fed) insects, provide a multiple vitamin/mineral supplement once or twice a week and calcium daily

Feeding Feed adult dragons 3–5 times a week; feed juveniles every day and provide mealworms 24-hours a day (for multiple dragons) In general, juveniles will eat more live food; adults mostly vegetation

Housing Due to the varied sizes and growth rates of reptiles, and their individualized needs, we recommend you consult your qualified reptile veterinarian and a book on this species to determine it's specific housing requirements

Size – Appropriate size and shape habitat to accommodate normal behaviors and exercise

Substrate – Calcium based sand is recommended; Silica based sand may be ingested and cause impaction; repti-carpet or unbleached paper towels are also recommended substrates for bearded dragons.

Habitat – Use a basking light at one end of the tank, another end should be kept as a cooling area; a hide area of branches and potted non-toxic plants, or a hide box in the tank is also necessary; a rock or log for basking

Temperature – Temperature gradient (100° F. for the warm end and 70° F. for the cool end); recommend radiant heat; use an incandescent light or ceramic heater as primary heat source

Lighting – Provide needed UVB rays with full spectrum fluorescent light for 10 to 12 hours a day; incandescent light is needed for basking area

Water – Provide a constant supply of clean, fresh, filtered, chlorine-free water in a shallow bowl that cannot be tipped over

Do not house different species of reptiles together



Habitattitude™

Recommended Supplies

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat with secure lid | <input type="checkbox"/> Substrate | <input type="checkbox"/> Full spectrum fluorescent light |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basking rock or log | <input type="checkbox"/> Heat source | <input type="checkbox"/> Incandescent basking light |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shallow water dish | <input type="checkbox"/> Thermometer | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin/mineral supplement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book about arid lizards | <input type="checkbox"/> Humidity gauge | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-toxic plants, branches |

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Normal Behavior and Interaction

Will spend part of the day in a hiding spot in their habitat; Male dragons are territorial and should be housed separately

Habitat Maintenance

Change water in the bowl daily; remove feces daily
Thoroughly clean the tank at least once a week: set bearded dragon aside in a secure habitat; scrub the tank and furnishings with a 3% bleach solution; rinse thoroughly with water, removing all smell of bleach; add clean substrate

Grooming and Hygiene

Give dragon a light misting shower every other week to keep skin humidified and easy to shed; the tank, however, should never be damp
Carefully clip toenails when too long

Because all bearded dragons are potential carriers of infectious diseases and salmonella, always wash your hands before and after handling your bearded dragon and/or the habitat contents to help prevent the potential of spread of diseases. Pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems should contact their physician before purchasing and/or caring for a bearded dragon and should consider not having a bearded dragon as a pet. For more information regarding bearded dragons and disease, contact the Center for Disease Control at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/> and PETCO at <http://www.petco.com/pet care info/animal care sheets>.

Signs of a Healthy Animal

- Eats regularly
- Active and alert
- Full tail
- Does not hide for a long time
- Clear, alert eyes
- Droppings are firm, not runny

Common Health Issues

Health Issue (alpha)	Symptoms or Causes	Suggested Action
Gastro-intestinal Disease	Runny stools, caked or smeared stool around the vent area, and loss of appetite caused by bacterial or parasitic infection.	Consult your exotic animal veterinarian.
Metabolic Bone/Vitamin Deficiency	Inability to absorb calcium due to insufficient UVB light. If untreated, can lead to a disorder characterized by deformities and softened bones. Swollen limbs and lethargy.	Provide ample UVB lighting and consult your exotic animal veterinarian.
Respiratory Disease	Labored breathing, runny nose, swollen eyes. Can be caused by temperatures that are too cold.	Ensure proper lighting, water, and basking conditions. If condition persists, consult your exotic animal veterinarian.

Red Flags

- Weight loss or decreased appetite
- Swelling
- Bumps, sores, or abrasions on skin
- Paralysis of limbs or tail
- Mucus in mouth or nose
- Lethargy
- Labored breathing
- Abnormal feces

If you notice any of these signs, please contact your exotic animal veterinarian.

Sources

The General Care and Maintenance of Bearded Dragons by Phillippe de Vosjoli & R. Mailloux
Your Bearded Dragon's Life by Liz Palika and Richard Pauli

Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please refer to the above sources or contact your veterinarian as appropriate.