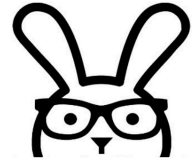


# Bearded Dragon Care

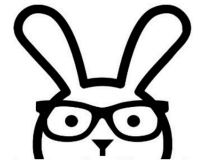


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- ***Pogona vitticeps*** (inland or central); ***P. barbata*** (eastern)
- Lifespan: 10-15 years
- Sexual maturity: 8-12 months old
- Diurnal
- Solitary
- New animals should be quarantined for minimum 3 months minimum to ensure they are healthy

## Housing:

- Minimum 1.2-1.8m long and 0.6-0.9m high
- Thermal gradient
  - Basking area 35-42°C
  - Cool end 24-26°C
  - No less than 20°C at night
    - Temperature is best monitored through a temperature gun
    - Do not rely on thermostats, manual measurement is important
    - If using a thermometer there should be one at the warm end and one at the cold end. They should be at the level the dragon would be in the enclosure.
    - Do not use hot rocks as they can cause burns
- Radiant heat is best (not rocks or mats) as they are a basking species
- 20-30min unfiltered sunlight 2-3 times per week is beneficial
- Humidity: 25-40%
  - A hygrometer should be in the enclosure at dragon height to measure this
- Avoid substrates that they can ingest
  - But need to be able to dig as this is a natural behaviour for them
  - Sand-soil can be good
- Hides, rocks and branches
  - Avoid anything too porous as can be hard to clean
- Arcadia T5 light for UVB (12% tube bulb)
  - Follow manufacturer instructions as to how far the bulb should be from the dragon
  - Change every 6-9months
  - 12hr light and 12 hour dark (in winter, in summer 14 hours light, 10 hours dark)
  - Bulb should cover as much of the vivarium length as possible
  - No solid barrier between UV source and dragon (i.e. can't be on top of glass/ behind plastic), UV does not penetrate through windows so sunlight through a window is NOT sufficient source of UV



# Diet

- Hatchlings
  - Small number of insects 2-3 times a day + some chopped up greens
  - 25% greens + 75% insects
- Adults (from 4 months of age)
  - Shift towards more of a herbivorous diet as they get older
  - Daily plants/salads
    - This can include:
      - Leafy salad greens, lettuce (not iceberg), kale, rocket, cabbage, collard greens, mustard greens, Asian greens
      - Dandelion, clover, chicory, watercress
      - Parsley, basil
      - Squash, kumara, carrots
        - Fibrous foods can be helpful in preventing dental disease
    - Can have a SMALL amount of fruit
      - Apple, banana, blueberries, raspberries
  - Insects 2-3 times a week (8-10 max per feed)
    - Crickets, roaches, moths,
    - Do not just feed mealworms as these are high in calories which can lead to obesity and liver disease
    - Feeding hard bodied insects such as crickets will help with tartar prevention
  - Multivitamin on vegetables once every 2 weeks
    - Spray water onto food to make multivitamin stick
    - E.g. Repashy Calcium Plus or Flukers Reptile Liquid
  - Gut load insects 12-24 hours before feeding them to the dragon and dust with Ca immediately before feeding
    - Ensure no vit D3 or phosphorus in dust
    - Gut loading examples are:
      - Arcadia Insect Fuel or Repashy superload
  - Remove uneaten insects as they may harm your dragon
  - Offer food in mornings so digest in warmest part of the day
- Water
  - Small bowl at cool end shallow enough for them to enter and exit
    - If put too close to heat source will increase the humidity of the enclosure
  - Some dragons will drink water dropped onto face
  - Some will only drink when bathed

## Preventative care:

- A yearly health check is recommended with a reptile savvy vet
- Yearly faecal and blood tests +/- x-rays as a minimum can ensure problems are detected early
- Many dragons brumate from March/April-Aug/Sept
  - Only healthy dragons should be allowed to brumate
  - It is recommended to have a health check a couple of weeks before this to ensure it is safe for your dragon to brumate



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