

# Bearded Dragon Care

## *About your new Baby Dragon*

Your new baby Bearded Dragon was bred by a local breeder outside of Monroe, OH. We normally breed giant Bearded Dragons, most of which are bought by collectors. However, even with Giant parents, most of the babies in our clutches develop only to the size of a normal Beardies. These are sold to families as pets. Some babies have tail or toe nips because of fights with siblings. We try to arrange cages so this doesn't happen, but we sometimes miss one. Tails and toes do not grow back, but they will be less noticeable as the baby grows. Your baby has received the same great care as their larger siblings. She has been socialized and loved so that she will be a great pet. She needs love and attention and daily exercise outside her cage to be happy and healthy. Bearded Dragons are NOT pets that you should leave sitting in the cage all the time. They are highly intelligent, and will bond with their owners like a dog does.

The parents of this baby are German Giant Bearded Dragons. Mom is named Styx and is nearly 2 pounds and 23" long. She is gold in color and we think most of her babies will turn this color as they age. Dad is named Montrose, and is 22" long and still growing. He is a white "snow" dragon. Mom has the sweetest personality, loves to cuddle, and is very laid back. Dad is an alpha male who also loves to cuddle and likes to tell us what to do, LOL. There are pictures of the parents on our Facebook page. Please be aware that while your baby is normal sized now, with these parents, your baby could later in life develop to the larger size and will need a larger cage and more food. Your baby was hatched between July 23 and July 30, 2017. They are old enough to make a good guess of their sex. However, some dragons have genitals that can look like one sex when they are actually another, so we do not guarantee sex.

## *Housing*

Bearded Dragons are cold blooded and need to THERMOREGULATE. This means that have to be able to move from a warm side of their cage to a cooler size to keep their temperature steady. The cage has to be wide enough for this. The MINIMUM size cage is a 40 gallon Breeder aquarium (not a 40 gallon long). However, we recommend that adult dragons be housed in a 75 gallon aquarium, especially if your baby grows to a Giant size. Never use a 10 gallon, 20 gallon, 30 or 55 gallon tank, they are too narrow.

Aquarium set ups can be expensive. There are several websites that give instructions on how to build cheaper cages from Melamine. This is a less expensive option as these cages use cheaper

materials and lower wattage bulbs. Cages should be at least 48" x 18" x 20"h for a normal dragon and 48" x 24" x 20"h for a Giant. We have several examples of these cages on our Facebook page. If you aren't handy, you can also order a custom cage from us by messaging us through our Facebook page, or by giving us a call. Bearded Dragons should always be housed separately. Two dragons housed together will always fight sooner or later, resulting in serious injury or even death. It does not matter what sex they are, they will fight.

All our babies are used to having their own hammock to bask in. A hammock appropriate for your cage size is included with every purchase. They will be very uncomfortable without one. We recommend command hooks to hang them because they hold better than suction cups. We offer replacement hammocks on our website, but if you can sew, you can easily make one. There are several great hammock makers on Etsy, too. Contact info below.

Sand substrate in the cage is not recommended for Bearded Dragons because they can ingest it and get impacted. If you do decide to use a substrate, only use the "sand" that is made from ground up Walnuts and only for a dragon that is more than one year old. We use newspaper, reptile carpet or nothing in our baby tanks. Tanks should be disinfected weekly with a bleach solution that is 1 part bleach to 9 parts water. Be sure to rinse all the bleach out before you put baby back into the cage.

### *Lighting*

Captive lizards need to have a hot basking bulb on one side of their cage. They spend hours basking in their hammocks. They also **MUST** have a UVB **strip light** in their cage. The basking area should have a constant temperature between 90 and 100 degrees. We keep ours in the 90s. Do not use the coil UVB light bulbs, they do not put out enough UVB rays to keep the dragon healthy. Beardies have to have UVB rays to metabolize calcium for proper bone development. Dragons who do not have a UVB bulbs and calcium supplements develop Metabolic Bone Disease. This is a horrible, painful disease. The dragon's bones twist and soften and the baby dies painfully and slowly. If you are not prepared to pay for UVB lighting live insects, and calcium, you should not own a Bearded Dragon. If you have trouble choosing the right light fixture, feel free to shoot us a message or give us a call.

### *Food and Water*

Bearded Dragons eat live crickets, Dubia roaches, superworms, wax worms and hornworms. Your baby has been fed all of these by the breeder. We do not recommend freeze dried insects. Petco has live superworms and crickets in stock. Ask your sales associate for help if you are not sure what size insect to feed. Dubias and other insects come mail order or you can get smaller quantities at the CinCity Reptile Show every month. Cleveland. Columbus, and Toledo

also have reptile shows every month. Check their websites for show dates. A-List animals in Blue Ash also has all sorts of feeder insects. Insects should be dusted with **calcium plus D powder** every time you feed to avoid Metabolic Bone Disease.

Bearded Dragons also should be fed a salad of dark greens and veggies every other day. Your babies have been eating Collard Greens, Turnip Greens, Mustard Greens, kale, yellow and zucchini squash, carrots, apples, etc. Do not feed regular lettuce as it doesn't have any nutrition. These veggies are very inexpensive; the Middletown Kroger sells Collard Greens for 69 cents for a huge bunch. These websites give a great list of healthy veggies for your pet:

<http://www.drsfostersmith.com/pic/article.cfm?articleid=824> AND  
<http://www.thebeardeddragon.org/what-do-bearded-dragons-eat.php>

We also post feeding tips on our Facebook page regularly.

You should keep a shallow water bowl in the cage that the dragon can actually sit in. Dragons don't drink a lot but absorb water through their cloaca (anus). You need to bathe baby dragons 2-3 times a week for 20 minutes in warm, but not hot water. (Same temperature as a baby bottle you would feed). Adults need a bath 1-2 times a week. We get a toddler pool in the summer and let our dragons swim outside with supervision. They love it!

**IMPORTANT:** A dragon who has not pooped after several day should be bathed several times a day to get him pooping. If he still has not passed anything after a week, he needs IMMEDIATE veterinary care because he could have an impacted digestive system. Impaction will kill your dragon.

### *Parasites and Vet Care*

Bearded Dragons get parasites from the insects they eat. It doesn't mean the insect supplier is bad, it is just a fact of life. Your baby has been checked for parasites before they were delivered to Petco or sold to you. We offer a two-week parasite-free guarantee and a two-week health guarantee. If you have mushy poo, or poo with blood in it, let us know and we will get you the medicine to clear it up. If your baby becomes ill or dies within two weeks of your adoption date, please let us know that as well. You must have your receipt from Petco and you must return the Beardie to us dead or alive, to receive a replacement. Replacements are at our discretion. If you bought the dragon from us directly, we may elect to return your purchase price instead of giving you a replacement animal. If we suspect that the Dragon has been abused or neglected, we will not replace it. We are not liable for any fees you paid to Petco.

If left unchecked, parasites will make a dragon very ill or even kill it. You should have a fecal check done by a qualified exotic vet every six months. We use Avian and Exotic Medicine in Milford, OH. It is much cheaper to catch parasites when they first appear than to get rid of them when the infection has spread. Remember, your dragon may live 10 years and will need vet care just like a dog.

### *Hides, Hibernation and Eggs*

All Bearded Dragons should have a hide in their cage big enough for them to fit in comfortably. You can spend a lot of money on hides, but we use the inexpensive black plastic box hides. They are easy to disinfect.

([https://www.amazon.com/Reptile-Hide-Box-F-X-Large/dp/B00UCDIBLO/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1516733918&sr=8-1&keywords=black+reptile+hide+large](https://www.amazon.com/Reptile-Hide-Box-F-X-Large/dp/B00UCDIBLO/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1516733918&sr=8-1&keywords=black+reptile+hide+large) )

After a year of age, Bearded Dragons will hibernate during the winter in their hides. In the Fall, make sure they are well hydrated by increasing the number of baths per week and make sure their hide is big enough to sleep in comfortably. Some dragons will sleep for several months straight through the winter while others wake up after several weeks to eat and then go back to sleep. I try to give them a bath if they wake up

If you have a female dragon, she can start laying infertile at any time after a year of age. A few female dragons will never lay eggs, but that is uncommon. Most females start producing a clutch of eggs in Spring and may lay several clutches through the summer. You may notice that your dragon is eating more and looks fatter. Be sure to give calcium powder with each feeding. A dragon who is about to lay her eggs will stop eating a few days before she lays and will start digging in her cage and try to get out. Place her in a large container with 6" of damp (not soaking) clean play sand. She will dig a hole to lay her eggs in and then cover them when she is done. Place a basking lamp on the container with a thermometer. Keep the temperature on the dragon around 95 degrees. There are many great online resources that can give you more info about egg laying in Bearded Dragons. A dragon who tries to lay and cannot pass the eggs or who passes bloody eggs needs IMMEDIATE veterinary care.

If you have a male Beardie, they can become very agitated for several weeks in the Spring, or after they wake up from hibernation. This because their bodies know it's breeding season. The males' beards will turn black, they will claw to get out of their cages and they may run around "head bobbing" other lizards, other pets, and even their humans. This is a display of dominance. It will pass, but some males become so obsessed with finding a mate, they may not eat. You may need to supplement with "Carnivore Care" which you feed with a syringe.

## *Contact*

If you love your dragon, please like us on our Facebook page and please post pics of you and your new baby. We love to see our guys in their new homes. Our external site should be up and going soon as well. Feel free to message us with any questions. If you decided you want to try a Giant Dragon, come visit us and see our really BIG babies.

**Devonshire Dragons**  
**Monroe, OH**  
**[www.DevonshireDragons.com](http://www.DevonshireDragons.com)**