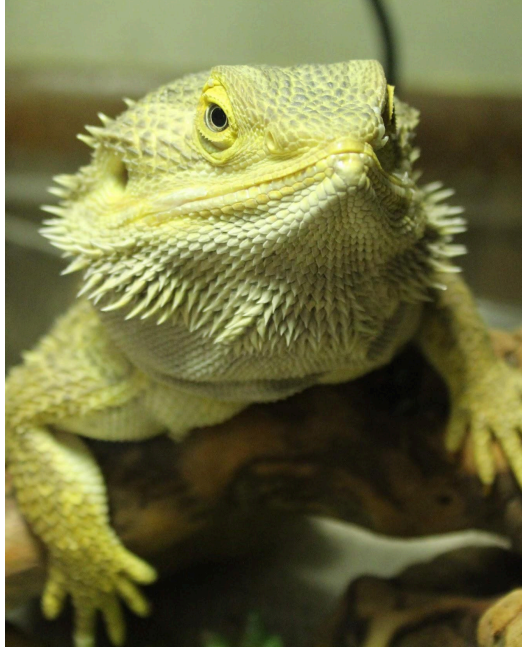


Bearded Dragon

Pagona vitticeps



Approximate life span: 6-10 years
Estimated adult size: 400-500 grams
Difficulty Level: Beginner
Hot side temp range: 95-100°F
Cool side temp range: 80-90°F
Humidity level: 35-40%

RECOMMENDED VETERINARY CARE

- Annual exam
- Common medical conditions: metabolic bone disease, parasites, impaction, dysecdysis, stomatitis



Bearded dragons, frequently known as beardies, are native to Australia. Beardies make a great beginner lizard due to their calm temperament and entertaining personalities. They are docile and usually more amenable to handling than other lizards. The beard that gives them their name can puff out and turn black (known as blackbearding) when a dragon is stressed or scared, and they have a number of other behaviors that make them an interesting lizard to own.

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS

A 40-75 gallon desert cage setup is suitable for an adult bearded dragon. Substrate should not consist of sand or other materials that can be ingested, due to the increased risk of impaction. Reptile carpet, tile, or newspaper is recommended. Decorative items like artificial plants, rock hides, and caves can also be added. Lighting and temperature are key to healthy reptiles. Bearded dragons should have a hot side and a cool side for maintaining appropriate temperatures as they cannot regulate body temps on their own. They also require special UVB lighting to aid in synthesizing vitamin D and a basking spot such as a rock or branch to allow them to get close to their heat source. Night temperatures can be as low as 65°F.

DIETARY NEEDS

Bearded dragons are omnivores and should be provided with daily vegetables and fruit as well as regular insects. They are typically not picky eaters and can have most healthy produce. Choose foods rich in vitamins and sprinkle with calcium supplement. Crickets, mealworms, superworms, and dubia roaches should be gut loaded and dusted with supplement as well. Feed as many as your dragon will eat in 10 minutes. Pinky mice can also be offered on occasion. Offer water in a dish large enough for them to soak but not large enough to affect humidity.