



25 ORMOND ROAD, EAST GEELONG, 3219



TEL: 5222 2424 FAX: 5222 2476

BEARDED DRAGONS

The bearded dragons are one of Australia's best known reptiles. They also happen to be an animal that makes a great pet. These active, intelligent lizards are very responsive and tame down well.

The things that are important to your bearded dragon are:

Food: Bearded dragons love hunting down live insects and small animals but this doesn't mean that this is all they eat. A bearded dragon needs to have a variety of foods to do well. A mixture of fruit and vegetables need to be offered to your animal, with things like lettuce mixes, dandelions, grated carrot, capsicum, banana, sprouts etc. usually being well accepted, just make sure the food size is appropriate for the animal. There is also a very good pellet food available from the Rep-Cal company in two sizes for adults and juvenile animals. **DO NOT feed meal worms to young dragons!** Mealworms are potentially hazardous to small animals.

Heat: Being a reptile, the dragons do not have inbuilt means to control their own body temperature, so therefore when they are being kept indoors they need to have a heat source that they can approach or avoid as the need arises. These animals love to bask in a hot area, soaking up the heat. This gives them the energy that they need to be able to digest their food, move around, and find more food. So it is essential that you use an enclosure that will cater to these needs. See the cage requirements caresheet for more information.

Ultra Violet Light: Reptiles, like us, need to have exposure to U.V. light to enable us to process vitamin D in their bodies. Without a good source of U.V. your animal will suffer from problems with it's skeleton and joints. Deformities are not uncommon in animals that are housed with an insufficient or no U.V.source, and this can result in paralysis and even death. A good flouro tube like a Repti-glo or Repti-sun is essential if your animal does not get regular exposure to natural sunlight. This exposure needs to be direct, not through glass. Glass cuts down the penetration of U.V. light almost totally.

Calcium: A juvenile bearded dragon can quadruple it's size in just a few months. To do this, large amounts of calcium are needed to build healthy bones. To ensure that your animal gets all the calcium that it requires, you should regularly supplement your animal's food with a good calcium powder like Repti Cal.

Water: Some juvenile dragons don't take very well to drinking from bowls. It is sometimes necessary to spray water on to the animal's face and surrounds to encourage them to drink. Pay attention to your animal, if you see your animal drinking from a bowl then that's fine, if not then "mist" the cage lightly with water. Dehydration is one of the big killers of very young dragons. It is in fact a good idea not to purchase very young animals. Reef and River Aquatics does not sell Beardededs until they are at least 5 weeks old.

Social structure: If you are keeping more than one animal then there will be a definite pecking order established. You will see that it is always the most dominant animal that gets the best basking spots etc. Always ensure that your animals which are lower on the pecking order get enough to eat or else you will see one animal very quickly outgrow it's mates.