

## Bearded Dragon



### Overview

- Ease of Care: Beginner
- Adult Size: 45cm+ (18"+)
- Life Span: Up to 15 years
- Diet: Insects & Greens
- Temperament: Friendly
- Background Temp: 25.5-30°C (78-86°F)
- HOT Spot: 35-37.8°C (95-100°F)

### Equipment Needed

- Housing: Wooden Vivarium
- Heating: Basking Bulb
- Lighting: UV Tube (Light Cycle: 12 hours of light)
- Substrate: Desert Sand, Walnut Sand or Calci-Sand
- Water: Water Dish

### Top Tips

- ✓ Provide a suitable hot spot
- ✓ They like to eat so maintain a good supply of food
- ✓ Vary the food items you offer to your dragon to keep it stimulated
- ✓ Soak your dragon weekly in lukewarm water to aid with rehydration
- ✓ Use a sand scoop to make spot cleaning easier

# Housing

A relevant sized Vivarium is the perfect housing solution for a Bearded Dragon (*Pogonavitticeps*) throughout its whole life.

Juvenile Bearded Dragon (2-6 months old):

L91 x D61 x H61cm (36 x 24 x 24")  
(DVF3624 / DVF3624B / DVF3624BL)  
L122 x D46 x H46cm (48 x 18 x 18")  
(DVF48 / DVF48B / DVF48BL)

Sub Adult/Adult Bearded Dragon (6 months and older):

L122 x D46 x H46cm (48 x 18 x 18")  
(DVF48 / DVF48B / DVF48BL)  
L122 x D61 x H61cm (48 x 24 x 24")  
(DVF4824 / DVF4824B / DVF4824BL)

# Environment

## Heating

Bearded Dragons are ectotherms taking all of their heat requirements from external sources. In the wild, Bearded Dragons are naturally exposed to high desert temperatures which help the dragon to function as normal and aid in the digestion of its food. To replicate these conditions, a basking site should be set-up at one end of the vivarium using a basking bulb, which is thermostatically controlled, to provide the heat required for all Bearded Dragons. This allows the Bearded Dragon to thermo regulate by providing a hot end for the dragon to bask and a cool end for cooling off!

The basking site can be set up using a batten lamp holder, which can be screwed into the roof of the vivarium, approximately 15-20cms from one side.

The basking lamp should be used in conjunction with a dimming thermostat.

Dimming thermostats are designed to regulate temperatures using a thermostat probe (also known as a sensor).

Correct placement of the probe is critical to avoid overheating and injury to the lizard.

The probe should be positioned on the floor in the basking area and the probe cable should be taped to the floor 2-8cm (1-3") back from the actual probe sensor. This will ensure an accurate temperature reading and prevent the probe becoming dislodged. Carefully place the substrate on top of the probe cable leaving just the probe above the surface.

## Temperature and Monitoring

As a rough guide, daytime temperatures should average between 23.8-37.8°C (75-100°F) with the hot spot being 35-37.8°C (95-100°F) going down to 25.5°C (78°F) at the cooler end of the vivarium.

Night-time temperatures should be 23.8-25.5°C (75-78°F).

Make sure temperatures are checked regularly to ensure that there are no extreme fluctuations.

A Spotlight Guard can be used to surround the basking bulb to prevent the animal coming into direct contact with the heat source. In our experience, some Bearded Dragons like to use the guard as a climbing frame, effectively taking them closer to the heat source and risk of injury. A guard should not be necessary if a distance of 25-30cm (10-12") is maintained between the basking bulb and the basking area of the animal.

## Lighting

In the wild, Bearded Dragons are exposed to high levels of light and UV.

In captivity, a UV light is essential for a Bearded Dragon's health and wellbeing. We recommend using a UV tube which has been specifically designed for desert dwelling reptiles. Ensure that the UV light is fitted correctly and securely to avoid the lizard becoming trapped behind the light tube or hurting itself unnecessarily.

## Substrates and Decoration

Personal choice will dictate how you decorate your vivarium but we recommend the following as a guide:

- 1) Substrates: A dry substrate such as Desert Sand, Walnut Sand or Calci-Sand that is easy to spot clean.
- 2) Wood for basking and climbing on.
- 3) Artificial or live plants for decoration and to provide darker areas for the Bearded Dragon to hide away in if he chooses to.

## Diet and Water

Hatchlings through to Adults should be offered appropriately sized insects. As a general rule, the distance between the lizard's eyes will give you the approximate size of live food to feed your lizard.

Most juvenile and older dragons will eat shredded leafy greens, such as cabbage, kale, dandelions and white dead nettles. Ensure that any food source gathered from the wild has been collected from an organic source. Do not worry if your dragon does not eat greens as it will be perfectly fine eating a diet of insects only although these must be dusted with appropriate vitamins and minerals.

Make sure fresh water is always available for the dragon to drink and soak in. Dragons will soak in their water source to help with rehydration.

## Supplementation

Bearded Dragons need additional supplementation to their diet to help them to flourish and maintain healthy and productive lives. We recommend using a calcium Magnesium mix and a multi-vitamin powder.

## Health and Hygiene

We recommend the following cleaning routine to keep your lizard healthy and happy:

|                | Water                            | Substrate  | Enclosure   |
|----------------|----------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Daily</b>   | Change old water for fresh water | Spot clean   | Check vents on enclosure are not blocked and allow air to pass through freely       |
| <b>Weekly</b>  | Disinfect water bowl or dish     | Agitate substrate to prevent any bacterial build up and to allow any dirty bedding to be removed | Wipe down glass with a reptile safe disinfectant                                    |
| <b>Monthly</b> |                                  | Take out old substrate and replace with new substrate  | Wipe down inside the enclosure and disinfect décor with a reptile safe disinfectant |

Always wash your hands, surfaces and equipment with warm water and disinfectant immediately before and after handling your lizard, their food, enclosure and any other equipment.

## Additional Information

Bearded Dragons shed their skin in patches and it can sometimes take up to 1 week for a Bearded Dragon to completely rid itself of its old skin – this process is called shedding.

A juvenile Bearded Dragon will shed its skin every few weeks and an adult will shed as little as 2-3 times a year.

You can usually tell if your Bearded Dragon is going to shed as its skin colour will appear duller than normal and may have a washed out look to it.