



pets in the classroom



CARE SHEET BEARDED DRAGONS

Housing

Select a terrarium that houses your reptile individually (if you have more than one) and is fitted safely with a screened lid. Dependent upon the size of your reptile, you will need to adjust the housing needs of your creature as it grows. For example, the Bearded Dragon typically needs a 40-gallon terrarium or larger.

Environment

It is important to know that reptiles are cold blooded, which means that they cannot internally regulate their body temperatures and are dependent upon their environment to keep them at optimal living conditions. Most reptiles require a temperature gradient in their habitat to appropriately regulate their body temperatures. For heating, equip the habitat with two thermometers on each side of the habit to monitor temperature and a hygrometer to monitor humidity levels. A high-wattage heating bulb should be placed in the center of the habitat to create a basking spot at the warmest point. During the night, this basking light should be turned off but a night heat lap or ceramic heat emitter should be used to maintain nighttime temperatures. To aid in night viewing and to decrease visible light seen by your reptile, light your terrarium with a night-specific bulb. During the most active period of the day, the day-time, use an ultraviolet fluorescent bulb for 12 hours a day.

When decorating your terrarium, place a base layer of substrate (calcium sand) or reptile carpet on the bottom of the habitat. Be sure to clean out waste weekly and change bedding at least once a month. Items to include are large decorating elements to provide hiding or climbing surfaces, artificial or live branches are good for this. Also, it is important to include an element of decor for your reptile to bask on close to the heat source.

Care

Bearded dragons are omnivores and their diet consists of a combination of insects, vegetables, and fruit. You should feed your reptile from a bowl only enough to be consumed by the end of each day. Water and food bowls should be cleaned daily. You can also mist your bearded dragon with warm water every day and it will lick moisture from its skin.