

# Fuzzy Wuzzy

| care guide |

## SUGAR GLIDERS

- Sugar gliders make endearing, playful, and entertaining pets.
- Sugar gliders are marsupials; that is their young start life off in a pouch (like a kangaroo).
- If they are deprived of social interaction they will not thrive well. You need to provide the attention or they should be kept as a same-sex pair.
- Sugar gliders are nocturnal so they will be most active at night, which is also when they should be fed.
- They have sharp nails and teeth, which they will use if they feel threatened or frightened. However, they can be tamed and even hang out and sleep in your pocket for the day.
- Males develop a bald spot on their head as they mature.
- A sugar glider's average life expectancy is 10-14 years.



### Diet

A potential problem in sugar gliders is paralysis stemming from an imbalance of calcium to phosphorus in the diet. Therefore, it is crucial to feed your sugar glider a variety of foods. A quality daily sample diet should be 75% fruits and vegetables and 25% protein. A good diet includes crickets and mealworms (brushed with a vitamins supplement once a week), fortified nectar mix or Leadbeater's Mix, and fresh fruits or vegetables. Remember to discard the uneaten food within 24 hours. Acceptable treats include bee pollen, cooked chicken, a few gut-loaded insects such as crickets, papaya, pineapple and raisins. Treats should be limited to 5% of daily intake. Additionally, always keep water in the bottle/dish and change it once a day.

### Housing

Even though the bigger the better, a cage of 36 by 36 inches, by 36 inches high is a good size for a pair. The cage wire should be no more than 1/2 inch wide, and horizontal cage bars allow climbing. Make sure you have two dishes (preferably fastened high on the cage) and a water bottle. The interior of the cage should provide lots of interest with wooden toys, branches, ropes an exercise wheel with a solid surface, nest box and/or glider pouch. Toys placed high in the cage will be most appreciated as gliders like to spend their time high up in the cage. The latch on the cage should be secure, as gliders will sometimes learn how to open latches and let themselves out! Sugar gliders should be kept in a draft-free area between 70-90°F, with low humidity and out of direct sunlight. Provide a layer of good soft bedding that is clean, non-toxic, absorbent, and relatively dust free. Recycled newspaper or wood shavings (aspen is best) are preferred bedding. Do not use cedar or pine shavings which can lead to respiratory problem. Change the bedding once or twice a week.

### Handling & Care

Taming sugar gliders is simply a matter of gaining their confidence. Always be patient, gentle, and move slowly. Making friends with your pet and getting him accustomed to you can often be accomplished by offering treats. Gliders adore being near their owners, inside a shirt (hint: wear two shirts and let the glider hang out between them) or in a loose pocket.

### Grooming

Sugar gliders do not need to be groomed or bathed since they are very clean animals and will do their own grooming. However, clean with a damp washcloth or unscented baby wipes, if necessary. Trim nails as needed.

### Health

Sugar gliders are healthy when they have bright eyes, has well-formed droppings and is active. Contact your veterinarian if you notice weight loss or any of these symptoms:

- Refusal to eat or drink
- Labored breathing, wheezing, sneezing
- Diarrhea/ Change in droppings
- Dull and/or receding eyes
- Inactive / Lethargic
- Head tilt
- Excessive hair loss / scratching
- Rough hair

### SUGAR GLIDER CHECKLIST

- Bedding
- Crickets & Mealworms
- Fresh Fruits and Veggies
- Two Food Dishes
- Water Bottle/Dish
- Cage with Solid Bottom
- Branches & Ropes
- Exercise Wheel
- Nest Box or Glider Pouch
- Toys
- Book
- Treats



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