**Sugar Glider – Care Sheet**

**Sugar Glider:** *Petaurus breviceps*

A marsupial, sugar gliders are relatively new to the exotic pet scene in the United States. They continue to increase in popularity as more people realize the benefits of owning these pets that have a lot of personality. They are clean, quiet, and do not suffer from a great deal of health problems. However, since it is an exotic animal, there are important things you should know before deciding to adopt one.

**Basic Info**

Age: 10-12 years

Size: 4-6 oz.

Sexual maturity: 9-12 months

**Behavior**

Sugar gliders are extremely social animals, often living in the wild in colonies of up to 30! That is why we recommend that you adopt your sugar gliders in pairs. Solitary sugar gliders require a lot of attention to avoid developing behavior problems. While they are quiet for the most part, they do make some noises, known as “crabbing” when they are excited or upset, and barking noises made at night.

Additionally, sugar gliders got their name because of their ability to glide from tree to tree. They have a thin membrane between their wrists and ankles that helps them glide up to 150 feet, much like a flying squirrel.

**Diet**

Sugar gliders have a bit of a specific diet that is important to stick to in order to maintain health and happiness. In the wild, sugar gliders forage for saps, insects, pollen, and nectars; as such it is difficult to emulate that diet in captivity. There are several different diet options we recommend. The Modified Leadbeaters diet (BML) and the HPW diet (which can be found for sale online) are great options, with the following added in:

* 2-3 tablespoons per day of fresh fruits and vegetables
* A small amount of treats of live insects (mealworms, crickets, etc.)
* Other protein source such as yogurt, cottage cheese, cooked meats, or baby foods
* A calcium and multivitamin supplement sprinkled over fresh fruits and vegetables every other day. Powdered supplements made for reptiles are fine to use, but you can also crush Tums tablets (which are calcium carbonate) for calcium and human multivitamins into a powder.

Alternatively, the Pet Glider Fresh Diet (“Priscilla’s Mixture”) has

all of the necessary ingredients in one mixture. This can be found at <https://www.thepetglider.com/pages/the-glider-nutrition-system>.

Some owners will supplement with natural food items like bee pollen, eucalyptus branches, etc.

**Environment & Caging**

We recommend that you keep your sugar gliders in as large of a cage as possible. Sugar gliders rarely fight with each other, so it is fine to keep them in the same cage. The cage should be kept in a warm, preferably draft-free area, preferably between 70-85°F and out of direct sunlight. The cage should also contain:

* Apple, citrus, or manzanita branches that they can perch and jump from and chew on
* Pouches or “nesting boxes” near the top for security and resting
* Bedding made from fleece, or alternatively aspen shavings or recycled paper products
* A large exercise wheel

It is important to keep the cage as clean as possible, as this can help avoid health problems. It is also important that all fabric pouches and bedding are checked frequently for holes or loose strings that animals could become entangled in.

**Veterinary Care & Home Care**

At home, your sugar glider will benefit from regular nail trims. We can show you how! Additionally, providing proper nutrition is the most important thing you can do for your sugar glider. Malnutrition is one of the biggest causes of avoidable health problems in sugar gliders, and we can give you all the information you need.

We recommend a physical examination every 6-12 months, where we can perform a fecal examination and take blood samples if necessary. We also recommend neutering males, as this can prevent them from developing scent glands along with prevention of breeding.

**Bourbon’s Modified Leadbeaters Mixture (BML) Recipe**

½ cup honey (do not use honeycomb, raw or unfiltered honey)

1 hard boiled or scrambled egg with the shell

¼ cup apple juice (not frozen or for babies)

1 (4 oz) bottle premixed Gerber juice with yogurt (mixed fruit or banana)

1 teaspoon Rep-Cal Herptivite vitamin supplement

2 teaspoons Rep-Cal Calcium supplement (non-phosphorous with Vitamin D3)

2 (2 ½ oz) jars Stage 1 or 2 Heinz, Gerber, or Beechnut chicken baby food

¼ cup wheat germ

½ cup dry baby cereal (Heinz or Gerber, mixed or oatmeal)

Blend the first three ingredients together until well mixed. Add the remaining ingredients and blend well. Pour into ice cube trays and freeze (1 cube is approximately 2 tablespoons). Good for 1 month.

Recommend daily diet for one sugar glider:

1 tablespoon BML, 1 tablespoon chopped fruits, 1 tablespoon chopped vegetables, 3-5 insects