

Sugar Glider

Petaurus breviceps



Adult Size	12", including 6" of tail, 3 to 5.3 oz	Life Span	10 to 15 Years
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Male/Female Differences	Sexing sugar gliders is easy: males have a scent gland on their head that has no hair. Females have a pouch.
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Compatibility	In the wild, sugar gliders live in groups 15 to 30 strong. In the home, sugar gliders are most compatible when raised together. Older animals may not accept new members into their group.
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Origin	Australia and Indonesia
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Climate	70's to the mid 90's, temperatures found in tropical forests.
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Day Cycle	Nocturnal.
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Temperature	Average household temperature is fine. Sugar gliders like it warm, so several may pile into their sleeping box together.
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Lighting	Being nocturnal, these animals need to avoid bright lights. Low light situations may help them come out during the day.
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Humidity	Household humidity suits sugar gliders well.
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Habitat/Territory	Sugar gliders climb and glide in the tops of trees searching for food at night. They sleep the day away in the hollows of trees. Males will mark their sleeping area with their scent glands.
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Substrate/Bedding	Use recycled or pelleted paper products or pelleted aspen. Use cloth or mesh bags for their sleeping areas, without any bedding.
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Hiding Place/Den	Their hiding place is their sleeping hole. Place it high in the cage to imitate their natural habitat. Use fleece or marble bags, as they are easy to clean.
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Cage Type	Large bird cages work very well for sugar gliders. It must give them space to climb and jump around. The addition of branches and ropes will meet their need to explore and play, and a safe running wheel will provide more exercise. Screen vivariums do not make good housing as sugar gliders can chew through them.
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Diet	In the wild, their diet consists of various saps, pollens, and insects. In the home, their basic dietary needs are met with specially formulated pellet food. Sugar gliders need proteins like superworms and boiled eggs. Yoghurt is a favorite treat and gives them both protein and calcium. Fruits, such as melons, apples, oranges and peaches, add vitamins and fiber. Vegetable or fruit baby food also makes a nice treat. Give variety; sugar gliders, just like people, need different foods.
Supplements	Sugar gliders most often have deficiencies in vitamin A and calcium - lizard or bird vitamin/calcium supplements work well. It's best to dust insects with the supplement – a pinch in a bag with the insect works well. Dietary enzymes help sugar gliders get more nutrition and prevent hair impactions. Honey seed bars are favorite treats.
Diet Precautions	Limit nuts; they'll eat them and ignore other foods. Avoid chocolate and other foods with caffeine.
Feeding	Give fresh food in the evening; being nocturnal, feeding during the day will let it spoil. Feed 1/3 to ½ cup food.
Water Source	Water bottles, cleaned and changed daily, offer a cleaner option than a water dish – it'll soon be tipped over, splashed out, or soiled.
Grooming	Sugar gliders groom each other as part of their social interaction. Gentle brushing with a soft bristle brush will keep their fur looking good and help with bonding. Weekly rub downs with pet wipes will keep them smelling clean.
Oral and Foot Care	Sugar gliders may need to have their nails carefully clipped. This can be done at home with proper instruction, or your vet or Wilmette Pet can do this. Use safe running wheels to prevent injury to their feet. Offer fruit tree branches for them to chew on.
Proper Handling	Handle daily to help them bond to you. Since they sleep during the day, you can carry them with you in a shirt pocket or a pouch. Spend some time with them in the evening.
Habitat Maintenance	Clean soiled areas of the cage daily. Remove food daily to prevent spoilage. Clean cage weekly, and wash any pouches or hammocks they are using.
Health Concerns	Diarrhea from unclean habitat or poor diet. A limited diet can also cause constipation. Obesity is possible from a lack of the chances for exercise.
