

A Closer Look at

Sugar Gliders



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BEFORE you purchase a sugar glider
please be sure to consider the following:

Sugar gliders live about 14 years. Can you make a lifelong commitment?

Can you handle being crabbed at, scratched and possibly bitten? Pooped and peed on?

Do you have time each evening to prepare their food?
Gliders do require a special diet that requires preparation each night.

Social interaction is extremely important. Will you have time to play with your glider on a daily basis?

Would you consider having two gliders? Single gliders do not do well without a cage mate. They can become depressed and actually die.

Will you be able to purchase a large cage, an approved wheel, toys and a cage set?

Are you willing to keep their cages clean by washing their fleece, toys, wheel and cage once a week?

Do you have a safe place to keep your glider away from other animals? A bedroom is not a wise choice if you are a light sleeper since gliders are nocturnal and make a lot of noise at night.

Where Can I Purchase a Sugar Glider?

Whatever you do PLEASE do not purchase a sugar glider from a flea market. These gliders come from glider mills where there is a high risk that they were raised in poor conditions, taken away from their parents at a young age, inbred and then sold to others without giving the new owner correct instructions on proper glider care.

There are many reputable glider breeders in the U.S.
You can search the internet for breeders in your area.

Be sure the glider you purchase has lineage!

Simply as the breeder if the glider you wish to purchase has lineage and if the glider is listed on The Pet Glider Online Pedigree Program at www.thepetglider.com. This insures the sugar glider has not been inbred.

A reputable breeder should help you in every aspect of your glider ownership and answer any questions you may have.
Their best interest should be for their gliders.

If a breeder has more than 3 breeding females they are required by law to be USDA licensed.

Also, I'd like to mention that there are some states where gliders are illegal to own. These states are:

Alaska
California
Hawaii
Pennsylvania
Massachusetts

Please be careful about traveling through these state with gliders as they may be taken from you.

Where Do Sugar Gliders Come From?

Sugar gliders are an exotic animal found in the wild in Australia and other islands in that region.

They can be found in any forest where there is an adequate amount of food, but they are most commonly found forests with eucalyptus trees.

Sugar gliders sleep during the day, in nests they make in hollow trees, and are very active during the night.

What Do I Need to Feed My Glider?

In the wild, during the summer, gliders eat mostly insects and in the winter, when insects are scarce, they eat acacia gum, eucalyptus sap, manna, honeydew or lerp. They will prey on lizards and small birds and many other foods when available, such as nectar, acacia seeds, bird eggs, pollen, fungi and fruits.

In captivity, gliders can suffer from calcium deficiencies if not fed an adequate diet. A lack of calcium in the diet causes the body to take calcium from the bones, with the hind legs being first to show noticeable dysfunction know as hind leg paralysis (HLP), which can be fatal.

Pellet based diets or cat food diets are not recommended. Sugar gliders are sap suckers and feeding large amounts of hard food can lead to an infection in the jaw known as "lumpy jaw".

What you feed you glider is VERY important to it's health and well being ! A poor diet can be fatal!

There are several approved diets on the market for sugar gliders. I personally use **Critter Love Plus**.

PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

1/4 C Critter Love® PLUS Powder

2 C Warm Water

1-1/2 C Honey Raw, Filtered Honey may be used

1T Bee Pollen

3 Scrambled Eggs (cooked)

Combine all ingredients in Blender.

Blend on High 2-3 Minutes

Pour into airtight freezer safe container

I love the tupperware ice trays with lids that you can find on ebay.

I use Fruitwood Orchards Wildflower Raw Honey from Monroeville, NJ

http://fruitwoodorchardshoney.com/category_1/Honey-Products.htm

I buy my bee pollen and yogurt chips on nuts.com

<https://nuts.com/cookingbaking/powders/beepollen/granules.html>

<http://www.critterlove.com/ingredients--prep.html> Another approved diet is HPW (High Protein Wambaroo) Complete Diet, available at www.hpwdietcenter.com,

Be sure to use BOTTLED WATER when mixing up food and make sure they always have bottled water available to drink! A large amount of chlorine in the water can be fatal to your glider!

Each evening you will need to feed your glider:

1 Tbs. Critter Love® Plus per glider

1 Tbs. Veggies

1 Tbs. Fruit

Fresh or frozen fruits and veggies are fine.

Do not feed canned fruits or veggies!

I buy the frozen veggie mix that has corn, peas, carrot and green beans. I also buy frozen fruits such as blueberries, black berries, raspberries and strawberries. I do feed fresh fruit such as apples, papaya, watermelon, mangos, raspberries, peaches and cantaloupe.

Personally, I find that keeping some frozen fruits and veggies work best for me. I don't have to worry about them ruining before they are eaten.

You many also choose to feed your gliders snacks. Yogurt chips (or **WHITE** chocolate drops) are always enjoyed by gliders. Dried fruit is also good, just make sure they do not contain any added sugar or preservatives. A good place to order dried fruit and yogurt chips online is <https://nuts.com/>



Mealies are another good snack. They are a little grub like worm that you can purchase online. They help to keep your gliders teeth clean. My gliders REALLY enjoy them. You can feed them by hand or leave them out in their cage for them to find. The mealies are kept in a container in the refrigerator. You need to take them out once a week, for about 16 hours, and let them eat. I usually put a few carrot sticks in their container. When in the refrigerator, they go into a hibernating state. I purchase my mealies from Camillies Vita-Mealies at www.vita-mealie.weebly.com.

Licky treats are good too. Especially when bonding with your glider. Simply put food on your finger and let them lick it off. Some suggestions are honey, unsweetened apple sauce or yogurt (**make sure it has NO artificial sweeteners in it**).

NEVER FEED YOUR GLIDER:

onions
lima beans
garlic
insects you find
artificial sweeteners
chocolate
caffeine

Some people believe that feeding grapes and raisins to to sugar gliders can cause kidney failure. Please be aware that there has been NO direct connection nor direct studies done with sugar gliders and grapes/raisins.

Safe Fruits

(this is not a complete list)

Acerola	Lime Peel
Apples	Longans
Apricots	Loquats
Asian Pear	Mammy Apple
Avocado	Mandarin Oranges
Bananas	Mango
Blackberries	Mulberries
Blueberries	Nectarine
Breadfruit	Oheloberries
Cantaloupe	Orange Peel
Carambola	Oranges
Carissa	Papaya
Casaba Melon	Passion Fruit
Cherimoya	Peaches
Cherries	Pears
Coconut	Persimmon
Concord Grapes	Pineapple
Crab Apples	Pitanga
Cranberries	Plantain
Currant	Plums
Custard Apples	Pomegranate
Dates	Prickly Pear
Elderberries	Prunes
Figs	Pummelo
Gooseberries	Quince
Grapefruit	Raisins
Grapes	Raspberries
Ground Cherries	Rose Apple
Guava	Roselle
Honeydew	Sapodilla
Jackfruit	Sapote
Java Plum	Soursop
Jujube	Strawberries
Kiwi	Sugar Apple
Kumquat	Tamarind
Lemon	Tangerine
Lemon Peel	Tomato
Lime	Watermelon

Safe Veggies

(this is not a complete list)

Acorn Squash	Kohlrabi
Alfalfa Sprouts	Lettuce (Butterhead)
Amaranth	Lettuce (dark green)
Artichoke	Lettuce (Red)
Asparagus	Lettuce (Romaine)
Bamboo Shoots	Lupines
Beet Greens	Mushrooms
Beets	Mustard Greens
Black-Eyed Peas	Mustard Spinach
Bok Choy	Nana Cabbage
Broccoli	Okra
Brussels Sprouts	Parsley
Burdock Roots	Parsnips
Butternut Squash	Peas
Cabbage	Potato
Carrots	Pumpkin
Cauliflower	Radish
Celery	Red Peppers
Chayote	Rutabagas
Chicory Greens	Snow Peas
Chinese Cabbage	Soy Bean
Collard Greens	Spaghetti Squash
Coriander	Spinach
Corn Cowpeas	Summer Squash
Cucumber	Sweet Peppers (Green)
Dandelion Greens	Sweet Peppers (Red)
Dock	Sweet Potatoes
Eggplant	Swiss Chard
Endive	Tofu
French Beans	Turnip
Ginger Root	Turnip Greens
Green Beans	Watercress
Green Pepper	Winter Squash
Jew's Ear	Yams
Jicama	Yellow Wax Beans
Jute	Zucchini
Kale	

What Kind of Cage Do I Need?

The minimum cage size for sugar gliders is 18" deep x 30" wide x 36" tall. I recommend a sturdy cage such as the HQ Brisbane or the Congo Cage. Many people buy bird cages and I don't think they hold up well. The cages I recommended are safe for sugar gliders and will hold up for a long time.

The HQ Brisbane is around \$150.00 shipped. This cage is my favorite. I keep two sugar gliders in each cage. One good thing about these cages is that you can stack them, one on top of the other, if needed. <http://www.exoticnutrition.com/ourcages.html> Sign-up for FREE newsletter and receive DISCOUNT COUPONS emailed to you!

Gliders are very smart little animals. They are escape artists. Make sure you zip tie any cage doors shut that you will not be using. It's a good idea to have a cage with locking doors. Most bird cages have slide up doors so be careful! Make sure bar spacing is ½" for any cage for gliders.

I would not purchase any cages with pvc coating as there have been issues with that type of coating being toxic.

Cages need to be wiped down frequently, so make sure you purchase a cage that will not rust.

Glider Wheels

I feel all gliders need a wheel. They are very active little animals and they need their exercise. You do not want them to be bored.

Do NOT purchase a wheel that is not recommended for gliders!

Small animal wheels purchased at the pet store can be **VERY DANGEROUS** for your glider! They can damage their tails!

I prefer to mount mine on the cage leaving more room at the bottom of the cages for toys and food bowls. Now, you need to make sure that if you mount a wheel on the side of your cage that your cage is sturdy. Also, make sure the wheel will fit through the door of your cage. You will need to remove it to wash it.

Raptor Mod side mount is my favorite and fits through the door of my huge Congo cage. <http://www.mygliderwheelsandmore.com/shop-for-wheels.html>

Spin Zone has the Apollo wheel that I use in my Brisbane cages. http://www.spinzoneglobal.com/Wheel-Apollo--Fast-Track-Original_p_13.html

What other items do I need?

Your glider will also need a cage set. Most cage sets are made of fleece. This is the safest fabric for gliders. Sometimes cotton and flannel are also used. Just make sure the cage set you purchase or make is seamless and made with tiny stitches.

Cage set will consist of a pouch, for them to sleep in, and other items for them to climb on or in. **Sugar glider's nails can get caught in fabrics with strings so BE CAREFUL what you put in their cages!**

Gliders LOVE toys! Plastic toys are a good choice. Just make sure they don't have holes too small that they can get stuck in.

Some favorite toys are:

- army men
- hard plastic bracelets
- plastic links
- ping pong, wiffle
- straws
- dangling fleece strips
- barrel of monkeys
- Little Tykes toys
- Rattles



You will also need some food dishes. I use baby plates with 3 sections found at the Dollar Tree make great food dishes. I put the veggies in the big section and fruits and Critter Love in other two.

I also keep a bird water silo in their cage and water bottle filled with bottled water.

Some people like to make a glider kitchen. This is just a plastic shoe container with holes on each side where you keep their food bowls. The reason for this is because gliders are messy eaters and they like to throw their food. This keeps the mess inside the container.

How Often Do I Need To Clean?

You should clean on a rotating basis. NEVER clean everything at one time. The reason for this is that gliders will start to over scent everything because they want it to smell like them.

Plan on cleaning three days per week:

One day wash all the fleece.

Another day wash all the toys and wheel (I wash mine in the tub or shower stall with Dawn dish soap and vinegar).

Then on another day wipe the cage down (I use a solution of 2/3 warm water and 1/3 white vinegar).

I also keep a spray bottle of 2/3 water and 1/3 white vinegar to keep the trays wiped out. You can wipe them out daily or every two to three days.

I use the **McCulloch MC1385 Deluxe Canister Steam System** to steam clean my cages once a week. It cost around \$150 to get a used one on Amazon warehouse deals which are usually new just the packaging has damage. It is worth the price because other ones that I bought just break after the 3rd or 4th time using them. I like to take the cages outside once a year for a good scrub with water and dawn but you must dry really well or any cage will rust.

NEVER use pine or cedar bedding!
These can cause respiratory problems!

As far as the trays go, I find leaving them empty and wiping them out is good. Gliders will reach and grab things down in the tray. I would NOT recommend using newspaper or cat litter either. If you need to line them, I would use just plain brown kraft paper that comes on the roll.

Another thing you may want to consider is a cage cover. I make my own sewing fleece for the top, back and sides. This keeps my walls clean! On the day that you wash your fleece just remove the cover and wash it too. The cover also protects your gliders from drafts and keeps some of the light out of their cage during the day when they are sleeping.

Food bowls should be washed every evening before feed

How Do I Bond With My Glider?

Bonding with your glider takes time. I have not had a glider yet that did not crab at me when I got him or her. I have gliders that still crab. Each glider is different. Older gliders may take longer to bond with. I feel it's important that gliders are handled regularly at a young age.

Take things slowly. Your new glider will need to feel safe in its new home. Treats will usually bring a glider around. A calm voice also assures them that you are not going to harm them.

Glider crabs because they are scared. They are trying to scare you so you will go away. They may also strike and bite. Just be patient with them and they will come around in time.

Do not chase your gliders. Let them come to you. I like to put my hand and arm in their cage and let them come to me. Soon they will be jumping to you and wanting to explore. They will climb onto your shoulder and back. Just make sure that where you are that it is glider safe. If your glider gets out of the cage, keep a big piece of fleece to try to catch rather than grabbing with your hands.

Many people use tents to play with their gliders in or take them to the bathroom where they can contain them in a small area. **Genji Sports Self Expanded Screen Tent** is an excellent tent if you have a big area to set it up and easy to store after use sold on Amazon.

Be Sure to keep the TOILET SEATS DOWN!

Glider CANNOT SWIM!

Sadly, gliders falling and drowning in toilets is one of the leading causes of accidental glider deaths.

Bonding bags or pouches can also be used. These pouches go around your neck and you put your glider inside and carry them around. Most bonding pouches have a mesh window and a zipper so your glider is safely contained. Gliders will be able to become accustomed to your smell and your voice while you carry them around.

One Glider or Two?

Glidens are very social animals. They do not do well if left alone. They can become depressed and actually die.

If you have one glider you need to make sure you spend a lot of time with it. Personally, I feel every animal needs a buddy and should not be alone.

Female gliders will do well together as well as two neutered males. A female and male will also do well together. If you are not planning on breeding, please be sure to get the male neutered. If you plan on breeding always make sure your male is younger than your female as an older male can injure a young female.

Having a second glider is not much more expense other than the cost of the glider and the food. You should have everything else you need.



Does My Glider Need Shots? And Nails Clipped?

Sugar gliders do not need vaccinations. They should have an annual check-up including a fecal test (BOTH a float and a smear test). Be sure to bring some droppings for the tests.

Glider do need their nails clipped or they will scratch your skin bad and get stuck in their fleece sets. I clip every couple of weeks but it depends on how fast they grow back and they may need them clipped more often. When clipping nails, you just want to clip the tip of the nail trying not to go below the bloodline. When trimming the back paws, two are fused together for grooming and you don't trim these nails and they have clawless opposable thumbs. I use revlon cuticle clippers and keep a small container of corn starch nearby if a nail starts bleeding. I like to weigh them once a month and I do this at nail clipping time as well. I take tons of paper towels because it is best to clip nails during the day when they are sleepy and they have to go potty a lot when you wake them up. I do have a video of me clipping my glider, Pearl's nails that you can watch.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zVYnD6EQWS4>



Do You Have Everything?

Large cage

Food dish, water bottle and water silo

Critter Love Plus (or other approved glider diet)

Fruits

Veggies

Treats

Glider wheel

Cage set

Toys

