



FIRE and ICE DRAGONS

Specializing in **HIGH COLOR MORPH**
BEARDED DRAGONS
and Crested Geckos



Produced by the Management and Staff of Fire and Ice Dragons

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Brumation: When Dragons Sleep



"Katherine" Hypomelanistic
Redflame Female

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This is the time of year when our adult and some subadult Beardies enter the chill down phase known as Brumation.

Preparing

In preparation for Brumation, we give each dragon a thorough once-over, checking the color of gums and tongues, the health of eyes, skin, everything. Then we administer a semi-annual preventative treatment for pinworms and coccidian to adults. We treat once a week for 6 weeks with Panacure for pinworms and once every day for three days and then every other day thereafter for 2 weeks with Albon to guard against coccidia outbreaks while the dragons are asleep. Dosage of each medication depends on the strength of the solution. We use 100 mg/ml Panacure for adults. The Albon strength is 50 mg/ml. Dosage depends on the dragon's weight so there is no one ratio. Go to a reputable reptile vet.

Habits

Each Beardie seems to handle the Brumation period differently. Some shut down entirely, not eating or drinking for extended periods of time. Others are moderately sleepy but still wake up once or twice a week to drink or eat, but appear to be sleepy despite these activities. How we handle our Beardie's Brumation cycle depends on

the dragon. If the dragon is not eating at all, sleeps for days on end, hasn't eaten or drank for two weeks and is not defecating but maintaining weight, we turn lights off, offer a brumation box of slightly damp substrate and drop the temps down to 65 degrees for 8 weeks. We weigh the dragons prior to this process and again every three weeks to make sure it is maintaining body weight.

For dragons that slow down but don't completely stop eating or drinking, we cut lights back to 8 hours a day and drop temps at night. Younger dragons generally do not brumate, so we set individual cages by the individual dragon. We do provide a sleeping box for each cage allowing a moist comfortable place to sleep should they decide to do so.

Wake Up Time

After 8 weeks, we turn lights back up to 14 hours, weigh each dragon, soak each dragon in warm water to rehydrate the animal and get body systems going again. We start feeding lightly, feeling for any kind of impaction or hard lump until the animal defecates. After this point, we begin fattening the dragons in preparation for breeding season.

Next issue: Breeding Beardies. 

DRAGONS FOR SALE:

We have completed our 2003 breeding pairings. If you are looking to upgrade your breeding stock, we can now offer a few juvvies, subadults and hold backs from the following bloodlines:

- ❖ **Orange Glows** – 2 female subadults for sale.
- ❖ **Citrus x Orange Glow** – A few special juvvies.
- ❖ **Blood Dragons** – One subadult pair.
- ❖ **Citrus x Citrus** – Juvvies and a few hold backs. Particularly awesome males!
- ❖ **Blood x Redflame** – Juvvies and hold backs available. Gorgeous reds!
- ❖ We ship nationwide; accept money orders, Visa, Amex, MC, Discover and PayPal. Email terri@fireandicedragons.com for details on individual dragons or call 410-252-6687. 🐉

DRAGON SPOTLIGHT:

Name: “Lucy”

Color Morph: Blood Dragon

Stats: 16” long and weighs 370 grams



Lucy has the best color of our Blood Dragons. She is a blue red, rather than the orange red of most reds. Her personality is fiery, too! When Lucy doesn't like something she'll let me know by turning a dull brown color almost instantly. We call her our mood dragon, reminiscent of the mood rings from the 70's. She is fairly spoiled as a result, since I can't stand to see her in anything less than brilliance.

Lucy is the Mother to our Blood x Blood and Blood x Redflame/SF cross. Her Redflame/SF mate is one

(cont.)

of the most beautiful in color and confirmation of all of our reds.

“Piemur” is also one of our most outgoing dragons. His humorous personality wins visitors over every time! We also like the fact that Piemur is *always* in color and his size (20 ½ ”) is a good match for Lucy's petite form.



Thankfully, both clutches this year produced the best of both parents. The cross has provided the color balance we wanted for Lucy's moody ways and the babies are vigorous growers on the higher side of our average for the age. Color-wise, they show red and red orange in full body color. We are still amazed by the beauty of these juveniles.

As a former champion dog breeder, we evaluate a dragon from every perspective when gauging its breeding potential. If we can put together a winning pair in color, yes, but also in size, personality, vigor, intelligence and stability, the dragons as well as the new owners all benefit. 🐉

DRAGON TIPS: ASSESSING HEALTH

How can you assess the health of your dragon? One way is to check the color inside the dragon's mouth. A pale tongue and mouth indicate that something is not right. A healthy Beardie's tongue and mouth are shades of pink and red. Many times, a pale tongue and mouth is indicative of parasites or other serious illness. If you notice these symptoms, see your vet immediately. This pale color is indicative of anemia.

PEDIGREE CERTIFICATES:

We get a lot of requests asking what dragons would be a good pair with a dragon already in the home. To assist you in developing a successful breeding program, we send Pedigree Certificates with the purchase of a Fire and Ice Dragon. The Certificate includes color photos of the parents, and useful stats on parents and your new dragon. 🐉

RECOMMENDED READING:

Dr. Roger Klingenberg's book, *Understanding Reptile Parasites*. 🐉

MINI CARE SHEET:

- ❖ **Veggies:** Romaine lettuce, Spinach, Mustard Greens, Collard Greens, Red lettuces, and Dandelion greens (you can get dandelion at Superfresh or in organic food stores) form the base of our daily Beardie salads.
- ❖ **Treats:** For adults and subadults we provide fresh cranberries, peas, cantaloupe, kiwi, yellow squash, red grapes, broccoli, radishes and other healthful foods. Babies get salads and dusted invertebrates only.
- ❖ **Crickets:** Feed babies 3 x a day about 10-15 dusted crickets of the same size as the space between the dragon's eyes when viewed from the top. We dust with Rep-cal (no D-3) and Herptivite. Take uneaten crickets out at night or they will bite the dragons especially babies. Throw crickets away. Do NOT recycle crickets! This spreads disease.
- ❖ **Water:** We mist dragons at 6pm with distilled water at room temp on the top of their heads until they start to drink and lap the water off their faces. Dragons look sleepy and eyes sunken when they are dehydrated. Skin pinched gently and released does not spring immediately back. Dehydration can be fatal.
- ❖ **Temps:** Place two high range thermometers in the cage: one on the basking spot (should read 110 degrees after 2-3 hours) and the other at the far cool end (should read 85 degrees or less). Do not guess! Dragons need to thermo-regulate to stay healthy.
- ❖ **Cages:** Glass tanks are OK but the right size is important. For babies 6-8" a 10-gallon tank is fine but the baby will rapidly outgrow this and need a 20-gallon long tank as soon as his body reaches 9" or so. This is because at that size, the dragon can no longer get away from the heat and it will cook and die! On the other hand, starting babies in too large a tank means they can't locate prey. We use a dome type heat lamp that sits on a screen lid. Regular clear light bulbs are used in the dome lamps. The wattage depends on what is needed to get the basking spot to 110 degrees while keeping the cool end at 80-85 degrees. We also use a UVB light (Repti-sun 5.0 Reptile bulb) in a fixture that runs the length of the tank.
- ❖ **Poops:** Baby dragons poop at least once per day. Adults usually poop once a day.

DRAGON FACTS: DIETS IN THE WILD

In one study on Bearded Dragons in the wild in Australia, the stomach contents of hatchlings were said to be comprised of 65% vegetable matter and 90% in adults.

It has been our experience that captive hatchlings eat 90% protein in the form of invertebrates yet adults are right on the mark at 90% vegetable matter.

What questions does this raise about the way in which we are rearing hatchling Bearded Dragons? Are we feeding too much protein? What ramifications might there be to a diet too rich in protein? Fire and Ice Dragons will continue to look into this issue and report our findings. 

DRAGON TIPS: STRESSED OUT DRAGONS

When dragons are placed in new homes, they are usually fairly stressed out. Especially if the dragon was shipped, it is normal to see your gorgeous color morph turn dark gray. You can tell if a dragon is stressed by the dark striations or markings on its side and belly. What can you do?

1. Leave it alone. Do not pick up the dragon until it has settled down.
2. Check temps to make sure you have everything exactly right.
3. Keep new dragons away from high traffic areas in your home.
4. Place new dragons by themselves rather than in with established dragons.
5. Make sure the new baby cannot see adult male dragons.

Within a week, your new dragon should be active, lively, eating well and colorful. If not, check the above list. It is *always* a husbandry issue. 

ADOPTION:

We volunteer for MARS Reptile Rescue and will coordinate the adoption of unwanted adult Beardies. They are always male and normal grey brown color phase. Call for adoption fee. 

Special thanks to Reptiles Magazine for publishing our article, "Beardie Basics" in the February 2003 issue!

