

# What is a Glider & Information

## What Are Some Basic Characteristics Of Sugar Gliders?

A Sugar Glider is a small marsupial possum found in Australia, Tasmania, Indonesia, and Papua-New Guinea. The terms possum and opossum are not the same. To refer to an American opossum as a possum, is shortening its real name. To refer to an Australian possum as an opossum is incorrect. The o has been dropped from the Australian possum's name to make a distinction between two very different groups of marsupials.

Sugar gliders are marsupials. Marsupials include kangaroos, koalas, sugar gliders, wallabies, and wombats. Each has its own niche in the environment. Mammals are described as warm blooded, fur bearing animals that nurse their young. Mammals gestate their young placentally. Marsupials differ in that there is little or no placental gestation.

Marsupial offspring are born shortly after gestation. Therefore, newborn marsupials are poorly developed and extremely tiny. Once inside the pouch, the baby marsupial, or "joey", finds a mammary gland. By the time the joey is ready to emerge from the pouch, it is at a stage similar to that of some mammals at birth.

An adult Sugar glider is about 5 to 6 inches including head and body with a tail equally that long. Sugar gliders are gray with a cream belly. They have a black stripe from between the ears to the tip of the tail.

The tail is not prehensile, it is not used for grasping. It is used for balancing and as a rudder to control direction in flight.

The ears are fairly large and are constantly in motion, moving independently of each other like a radar picking up sounds. Since Sugar Gliders are nocturnal, their eyes are large and protruding and are set on the side of the face to get a wider scope of vision.

Sugar Gliders have five digits on each forefoot, ending in a sharp claw that is used for gripping when landing. The hind feet also have five digits, including an enlarged, clawless big toe.

Gliders have a patagium, which is a furry membrane of skin that stretches from their wrists to their ankles. The patagium will look like a rippled piece of skin when the glider is resting. When gliding, the patagium will spread out into a rectangular shape. Gliders can glide easily because they only weigh 4-5 ounces as adults.

## Do I Need To Get 2 Sugar Gliders Or Is 1 Ok?

Sugar Gliders are definitely group animals. While one can survive without a companion, he typically won't thrive. Gliders crave companionship and you may not have the necessary time to socialize and play with him EVERY DAY. They love to cuddle while sleeping, and they love to groom each other, as well as play together. It takes 2 to cuddle, and 2 can keep each other entertained when you don't have the time. If you can afford 2... then get 2. If you work at home and can hang out with them for at least 4-6 hours per day for the next 12-15 years, then maybe one will be ok. If not, you definitely need to get 2.

## Should I Buy A Male Or A Female Sugar Glider?

## Should I Neuter My Sugar Glider?

It is the general consensus that the male Sugar Gliders are a little more sweet and docile than the females. This doesn't mean that the females are meaner, but that the males tend to not be as afraid of people at first, and they tend to not be so skittish around new people. The only drawback to a male for some people however, is that the male develops a bald spot on his head and a spot on his chest, which are scent glands. The females do not develop these glands. If a male glider is being fed properly, and is being kept warm and clean, odor is not a problem, even with the males. If you are not planning on breeding your Sugar, the best solution is to get your male Sugar Glider neutered. When a male is neutered at a young age, they never develop their scent glands, and they stay even more docile and calm than an intact male. Any age male can be neutered, and when done, their bald spots will grow their fur back. It was mentioned

that the males are sweeter in general. It doesn't always follow that a given male will be sweeter than a given female. In fact, some females are very calm and could not be improved on. It depends on the nature of the given animal. They all have very different personalities. It really is just personal preference.. BOTH make wonderful pets!

### Should I Breed My Sugar Gliders?

There is such a high volume of rescue gliders out there and unless you are wanting to keep their joeys, then I would say it is best not to breed them. If you have a male and female sugar glider living together, babies are most certainly inevitable. They will breed at the right age. Two requirements for them to breed and have success in raising their babies is warmth and a high protein diet. In the wild they breed in the monsoon season. At this time it is extra warm and there is a wealth of insects and other high protein food available. They typically have one or two babies at a time, and will usually have on average about three pregnancies per year. Some things to consider: Once a pair starts to have joeys, they might not be as friendly as they were as pets. Males can get very protective of their young. Also, Sugars will eat or abandon their young if they feel that they are in danger.

### Should My Sugar Glider Have Free Run Of The House?

We would say.. No. There are too many dangers in our big ol houses that they could get hurt or even killed by. Electric outlets are dangerous. Any wires plugged into those electric outlets can be just as dangerous if the sugar decides to chew on them. Open toilets are deathly for Sugars. Any standing water, in sinks, in soaking dishes, anywhere, could be the death of your Sugar. Who knows what they would find to eat. Chocolate is deathly to them. Some plants, if ingested, would kill them as well. Plus there are SO many places that your Sugar glider could squeeze into and get lost. Our personal opinion is to never let your sugar glider run free in your home without constant supervision by YOU. When you are done watching him run around and play, it's best to put him back inside his cage, when you know he cannot be harmed.

### Do Sugars Get Along With Other Pets?

Sugar Gliders in the wild, live in the top canopy of the rainforests, and stay there most of their lives. Since they seldom are on the ground, they don't seem to have a fear of many animals. In the wild, we suspect that their only predators are birds of prey, and perhaps some snakes. At any rate, it seems that they don't have an immediate fear of most of our other pets. We've seen pictures of Sugar Gliders sleeping with cats, or riding on a dogs head, but it would all depend on the nature of both the Sugar, and the other pet. Sugar Gliders, when out, want to be on their human. When they are off of you, they don't really like to go to the floor, but rather will climb up on things. This usually keeps them out of harms way. Of course, as with any animal, you want to slowly introduce them to the other animals.

### Do Sugar Gliders Really Need Heating Pads?

The more appropriate question is as follows: Do Sugar Gliders really need to be kept at a warmer temperature? The answer to this is yes. Sugar Gliders need to remain in a temperature of 70-90 degrees F, with 75-80 degrees being optimum. Most people have found the best way to ensure their temperature is warmer is to use a space heater. Heating Pads need to be covered with a long sock and the open end of the sock needs to be pulled out of the cage bars over the cord so the sugars can't get the cord. Then you want to put an igloo over top of the heating pad and when the sugar gets cold, he/she can go get under the igloo and get warm. The igloo on top of the heating pad makes it feel like it is in a sauna. Although when the sugar gets warm enough he/she will go back to their pouch.