Brief Description: 
The sugar glider (Petaurus breviceps) is a small, omnivorous, arboreal gliding possum belonging to the marsupial infraclass. The common name refers to its preference for sugary nectarous foods and ability to glide through the air, much like a flying squirrel. Sugar gliders can be found throughout the northern and eastern parts of mainland Australia, Indonesia, and in Tasmania, Papua New Guinea and several associated isles.

Are Sugar Gliders the right pet for you?
Sugar gliders are colony animals and are required to be kept in pairs or more. A single glider will become stressed and depressed. They require daily human interaction but no amount of human interaction can take the place of another glider. Single gliders have been known to over groom, causing bald spots throughout their body, as well as self-mutilate or develop abnormal behavior such as doing back flips and circling their cage. They may even attempt to call on other gliders by barking.

Lifespan: With proper care, Sugar Gliders can live 12-15 years.

Housing:
Sugar Gliders need a large, properly ventilated cage for adequate room to jump and glide. Large aviary cages make excellent homes for gliders; keeping in mind, bar spacing should be no greater than 1/2" wide. Cages can be covered with a large fleece blanket or waterproof cover to decrease the amount of light and provide the Gliders with privacy (It also reduces food getting thrown on walls!)

Sugar Gliders also need a safe place to sleep during the day. Safely sewn fleece pouches make great sleeping places for gliders. Coconut hides also work well. Hammocks, bridges, and vines can also be made out of fleece. There is less risk of injury when using fleece compared to other fabrics. Nails and limbs can get caught in threads of clothing, ropes, and other items.

Toys:
Sugar Gliders are very smart and often get bored if they aren’t provided with anything to stimulate their minds. Goodwill and dollar stores are great places to find toys suitable for gliders - Items such as plastic army men, ping pong balls, bracelets, and toddler floor toys. Toys made of plastic are generally considered safe, unlike toys made of rope, metal, or wood. “Wood items soak up urine and can produce a foul odor over time. Hamster balls are not appropriate for gliders! These can cause the animal to overheat or even receive a physical injury from the thin open slits.

Wheels: Providing a Glider with a wheel is extremely important and allows proper exercise and stimulation. Unfortunately, there are no glider safe wheels that can be found at pet stores. Proper wheels can be found at www.atticworx.com.

Why are pet store wheels not safe?
Wodent Wheel: This wheel has been known to seriously injure or cause deaths in gliders. This wheel, specifically, has a bar directly in the center that attaches both front and back together. When Gliders jump, they’ve been known to get caught on that center bar.
Silent Spinner: Gliders’ nails can get caught in the plastic slits of this wheel and cause serious injury.
Flying Saucer: Gliders have been known to ‘fly’ off of this wheel and slam against their cage walls. This can cause serious injuries!
Other wheels: Most other wheels are too small or just not designed for sugar gliders. Gliders can get caught in small plastic slits, or get caught in the large wired wheel. *There is absolutely no store bought wheel that is glider safe.

Water:
Giders do require fresh water at all times! A water bottle or silo works well. Bowls are not recommended as they could cause a glider to drown, or they may tip the bowl.

Climate:
Sugar gliders are most comfortable in rooms between 65° and 80° F. If your home gets any colder, consider covering the cage with a fleece blanket or adding small square fleeces into their sleeping pouches. Heat rocks and lamps are hazardous and should not be used under any circumstance. Humidity is also important for a glider to have a healthy coat and skin. In a dry climate, a glider’s coat can become cracked and their ears can potentially chip. Investing in a humidifier to place near a gliders’ cage can greatly improve their skin and coat.
Cleaning:
Cages should be deep cleaned once a month with a 50/50 water and distilled vinegar solution, then rinsed. Daily wipe down of the tray and lower cage bars is important to maintain a clean environment and keep away any insects (ants, fruit flies, etc.). Fleece bedding should be washed once a week or at least once every 2 weeks. Toys should be cleaned once weekly and wheels bi-weekly (at least).

Nutrition:
A proper diet is essential to Sugar Gliders. Providing a variety of fresh fruits and veggies each night is required in addition to a staple diet. Example of safe fruits and veggies: carrots, cucumbers, peppers, mustard greens, turnip greens, collard greens, kale, bok choy, apples, dragon fruit, cantaloupe, honeydew, kiwi, mango, grapes, and blueberries. Pellet food should NOT be fed as the staple diet as commercial pellets are not nutritionally sound but can be offered in moderation or for a daytime snack. Gliders should be fed in the evening when they start to become active. Over time, there have been studies to find what diets work best for Sugar Gliders and the recipes are readily available to create. BML is the only diet where you can purchase all the ingredients in a grocery store. GOHPW, OHPW, and TPG require specific items that must be ordered online.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended diets include (For recipes, visit <a href="http://www.sugarglider.info/staple-diets/">www.sugarglider.info/staple-diets/</a>):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOHPW (Reduced Sugar Green Original HPW)</td>
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<td>OHPW (Original High Protein Wombaroo)</td>
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<td>TPG (The Pet Glider Exotic diet)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BML (Bourbon’s Modified Leadbeaters Diet)</td>
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Yogurt drops, mealworms, or honey are great treats for Sugar Gliders. Treats should not be given too frequently!

Other People and Pets:
Sugar Gliders bond to scent and generally have their ‘favorite’ person (owner). A well socialized Glider may be more willing to go to another person than a Glider that is not properly socialized. Sugar Gliders and other pets should NOT interact whatsoever. Even supervised play time is NOT recommended as any well trained pet can become unpredictable with Sugar Gliders’ quick movements. This type of interaction can also be extremely stressful on the Glider. The bacteria in cat saliva is toxic to Sugar Gliders.

Vocalizations: Sugar Gliders are known to make a unique variety of vocalizations.
- **Barking**: Used to alert the colony, call for other gliders, or if they want something
- **Crabbing**: A high pitched warning. A common sound they make if they feel threatened. Gliders may charge or bite if provoked after making this sound
- **Hissing**: A small warning given to gliders in their colony. This can also be a sign of a potential UTI
- **Chattering**: Gliders talking to each other
- **Popping**: Generally made when a glider is sleeping and is content
- **Singing**: A female glider vocalizes when there are joey(s) in pouch or nursing
- **Sneezing**: Often used to groom themselves.

Bonding and Handling:
Bonding is very important and an integral part of owning Sugar Gliders. When first brought home, gliders should be allowed roughly 2 days to adjust to their new surroundings before attempting any interactions. Sugar Gliders are delicate marsupials and are not the type of animal that like to be cuddled or held. Gliders would prefer to run freely on you than to be held. Patience is key to successful bonding as it can take months to even years for your glider to be completely comfortable with you. It is NOT recommended to place a piece of clothing into a Glider’s cage. Doing this may cause a Glider to get caught in threads and can result in injury or even death. Placing small fleece squares under clothing and wearing them throughout the day provides the Gliders with a proper “blanket” that still has your scent on it. These can be placed in their sleeping pouches to encourage bonding. During the day when Gliders are sleeping, remove their pouch from the cage and place it on your lap. Do not attempt to handle the Glider at this time. Allow them to relax and fall asleep in their pouch. This method works well and allows the Gliders to gain trust.

Introductions to Other Sugar Gliders:
Before introducing your gliders to one another you can get them more familiar with each other’s scent by swapping pouches so they can sleep in the other one’s pouch (alone). This can be done every other day to every day for a week prior to physical introduction. Swap pouches during the day rather than at night or when they’re awake and let them sleep in the pouch. After about a week or so you can place both gliders in their pouches facing each other with the pouches open. Tempt them to come out and have a positive experience with treats in the middle. Have a fleece ready to break up a fight if needed. Once they are comfortable with each other or go into the same pouch together they can be kept together with close monitoring at first, especially the first night and during feeding.
BML (Bourbon’s Modified Leadbeaters) Diet

Sugar gliders have very specific dietary requirements that keep them healthy and happy. A diet lacking in calcium and appropriate vitamins, for example, may contribute to your sugar glider developing metabolic bone disease (MBD), like reptiles commonly get, and make their legs more prone to fracturing. Diets lacking in honey or sugary nectar (which they eat regularly in the wild and are named after) do not provide enough energy for sugar gliders who need it for all the jumping and gliding that they do.

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup apple juice
- 1/2 cup honey (do not use raw or unfiltered)
- 1 hard-boiled egg (with shell removed)
- 4 ounces Gerber Yogurt and Juice Blend (Banana or Mixed Fruit, or substitute 2 ounces plain yogurt and 2 ounces mixed fruit juice)
- 1 teaspoon Rep-Cal Herpivite Vitamin Supplement (blue label)
- 2 teaspoons Rep-Cal Calcium Supplement Non-Phosphorous with Vit. D3 (pink label)
- 2 (2.5 ounce) jars chicken baby food
- 1/4 cup wheat germ
- 1/2 cup Gerber dry baby cereal (mixed or oatmeal but most sugar gliders prefer the rice with fruit flavors)

Steps to Make It

1. Blend the honey, egg, and apple juice in a blender until it is smooth.
2. Turn off the blender and add the Gerber juice and Rep-cal Herpivite Vitamin Supplement. Blend the mixture until it is smooth and then turn off the blender again.
3. Add the Rep-cal Calcium Supplement (buy from Amazon.com) the chicken baby food, wheat germ, and dry baby cereal. One last time, blend it until it is smooth.
4. Pour the mixture into regular size ice cube trays, filling each compartment only halfway. Then place the half-filled ice cube trays in the freezer.
5. Once the mixture is frozen, simply place one cube of the BML diet in your sugar glider's food dish a few hours earlier than feeding time (which is typically in the evening) to allow the cube to melt a bit. Remove it the following morning to avoid any food spoilage or attracting any unwanted insects.
6. The BML diet should be fed along with fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables at each meal. If you are using frozen food items then you can place them in the food dish at the same time as the frozen cube of BML diet to allow everything to thaw together. By the time your sugar glider is ready to eat, its food will be soft.

Portion Size and Complete Meals

A full ice cube equals about 2 tablespoons and the BML diet should be served in 1 tablespoon increments, along with 1 tablespoon fresh or frozen fruit and 1 tablespoon fresh or frozen vegetables each evening. This is why you only fill the ice cube tray compartments halfway with the BML diet when you are preparing it. Smaller ice cube trays that can be fully filled are also available if you'd prefer those.

Small snacks, such as mealworms, fresh fruit, or treats may be offered mid-day along with this diet if your sugar glider is extra hungry but the recipe for the BML diet itself should not be altered.