



# 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

Spring 2003 Vol. 1

## Preparing for Breeding Season

by Terri M. Sommella



2002 Redflame x Blood hatchlings

By now, all of our sleepy beardies are waking up or have been awakened by you and we are looking forward to 2003 babies. Here are some tips for waking up those sleepyheads and things to consider before you or your dragons decide to breed.

### Wake Up Time

In the last issue, we mentioned that after the 8 weeks of brumation, we turn lights back up to 14 hours, weigh each dragon, soak each dragon in warm water for 15 minutes or so, to rehydrate the animal and get body systems going again. But sometimes those sleepyheads are very slow to regain their appetites. What do we do? We start feeding lightly, feeling for any kind of impaction or hard lump until the animal defecates. It can take weeks to get them back in the normal rhythm. The most important thing is to keep the dragons hydrated. If they are not eating, we feed a mix of Gerber strained baby food, about ½ chicken and ½ green or mixed veggies and a little Pedialyte through a syringe or eyedropper. We feed this mix every other day until the dragons' systems kick in, they start eating again and defecating regularly. We put a good size drop on top of the tip of the beardie's nose. Since their nostrils are on the sides and beardies do smell, they will lick off the baby food. Another method of getting dragons to eat is to offer tomato hornworms and silkworms. Hornworms are expensive

but have successfully jumpstarted a few of our dragons who were slow to come around or who were too interested in breeding to eat. The important thing is to pack on the weight before you breed the dragons. Otherwise the dragons can become weak from laying and breeding and succumb to parasites, respiratory dysfunction and dehydration. Breeding season is stressful on dragons. Don't rush the season by putting them together too soon. Weigh the dragons when they first come out of brumation and every week thereafter through breeding season.

### Set Limits!

Breeding beardies can get out of control very quickly. This drains the animals and can cost you a fortune to feed the babies. Our first year, we only had three breeding females. Our bill for feeding the hatchlings and voracious parents was as high as \$500 a week!!! What happens if you don't feed the babies enough? Cannibalism - missing toes, legs, arms and tails. Limit females to laying 3 clutches. Add additional calcium (no D-3). Conduct several checks a week apart for any signs of pinworms or coccidia.

### Keep Accurate Records

Finally, inbreeding by careless owners is a rampant problem. Please keep good records and only outcross to improve the dragons. 🐉

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## 2003 BREEDINGS!!!!

Breeding season is under way! We are expecting our first clutches to hatch in late April. This year, we are taking names on a Wait List for Hold Backs. No deposit is required. We will contact you in order as the babies hatch and are identified as very special. If you want a Hold Back from any of the following pairs, please email ASAP with your phone number in case email addresses get changed. We would also encourage you to stay in touch!

- ❖ Blood x Blood
- ❖ Blood x Redflame
- ❖ Redflame x Redflame
- ❖ Orange Glow x Orange Glow
- ❖ Citrus x Orange Glow
- ❖ Citrus x Citrus
- ❖ Snow x Snow
- ❖ Leucistics\*

\*Leucistics are a new bloodline and very few if any healthy dragons are available anywhere. Ours are doing OK so far. Hopefully, we will have healthy babies for sale. We will NOT sell weak babies no matter how beautiful.

- ❖ We ship nationwide & accept money orders, Visa, Amex, MC, Discover and PayPal. Email [terri@fireandicedragons.com](mailto:terri@fireandicedragons.com) for details on individual dragons or call 410-252-6687.
- ❖ **New! Lower Shipping Costs!** With warm weather coming, we are able to ship using our smaller boxes. This means you save quite a bit in shipping costs. Average Spring / Summer shipping costs are now \$30.00. 🐉



### DRAGON SPOTLIGHT:

**Name: "Piemur"**  
**Color Morph: Redflame SF**  
**Stats: 20.5" long and weighs 525 grams**  
**Age: 2 years**

## DRAGON SPOTLIGHT:

**Name: "Dawn" – Daughter of "Ramothe"**  
**Color Morph: Citrus**  
**Stats: 17 1/4" long and weighs 390 grams**  
**Hatched: 6/30/02**  
**Age: 7 1/2 months old**



### SPRING: WHAT TO DO THIS TIME OF YEAR

**Clean & Check Lights:** Spring is a good time to change your UVB lamps unless you have done so within the last 6 months. We disinfect cages using 1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water, rinse until we don't smell bleach anymore, dry thoroughly and add fresh pre-sifted play sand. **DO NOT USE WALNUT SHELLS OR ANYTHING ELSE.**

**Check Gums & Toenails:** We check dragon's gums for any signs of anemia, gray or whitish gums usually means parasites. We also check toenails for signs that they are too long. Sometimes a bearded dragon's nails can grow long enough to need a slight trim. Bearded dragon's nails have a thick part and a thinner part growing out from the thick part. If the thin part is 1/2 inch or longer we trim only the thin part to 1/4 inch, making sure we have Quick Stop on hand. Trimming the back nails will also help to prevent females from puncturing the eggs when they cover them up after laying.

**Check Cage Size:** Dragons grow so fast that they often outgrow their cage before we realize it! If your bearded dragon is in a cage smaller than 55 gallon, now is the time to get a bigger one! 🐉

*We, at FIRE AND ICE DRAGONS, are dedicated to improving the health, vigor and bloodlines of high color morph Bearded Dragons. This is our promise to you. 🐉*

**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 juvvies and up we provide fresh cranberries, broccoli, peas, cantaloupe, kiwi, yellow squash, red grapes, broccoli, radishes and more. Babies get green 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 cage.
- ❖ **Poops:** Baby dragons poop at least once per day. Adults usually poop once a day. 🐉

**DRAGON Q & A:****Q: Can beardies get coccidia from crickets?**

– Josh

**A:** Yes! In fact, the leading cause of coccidian problems in beardies is feeders. The dragon ingests the crickets and then defecates. The crickets will crawl on the feces picking up additional parasites and then the dragon eats the crickets. The next time the dragon defecates; the feces are even more heavily infested. The crickets crawl on the feces and the dragon eats the crickets. Now the dragon is holding many times the normal coccidian levels. This is why crickets should never be recycled by putting them back in the cricket colony at night after pulling them out of a beardie's cage. This is also the reason why dragons should be regularly checked and treated for coccidia. Beardie's can die from parasitic infestations. (More Q & A on pg. 4.) 🐉

**TOMATO HORNWORMS & SILKIES**

We purchase our Tomato Hornworms and Silk Worms through Mulberry Farms. See [www.mulberryfarms.com](http://www.mulberryfarms.com). In the wild, beardies would eat a variety of insects and veggies and fruits. In trying to emulate the wild diet as much as possible, we feed a variety of invertebrates as well as a huge variety of fresh foods. The Care Sheet is a basic guideline. 🐉

**DRAGON SPOTLIGHT:**

**Name:** "Goliath"- "Ramoth's" son  
**Color Morph:** Citrus  
**Stats:** 21" long and weighs 520 grams  
**Hatched:** 6/30/02  
**Age:** 7 1/2 months old

**DRAGON SPOTLIGHT:****Name: "Kate"****Color Morph: Hypomelanistic Red****Stats: 380 grams, 17"****Hatched: 1/02****Age: 1 year old****PEDIGREE CERTIFICATES:**

To prove our dedication to improving the bloodlines of color morph dragons, we provide Pedigree Certificates with every purchase of a Fire and Ice Dragon. The Certificate includes color photos of the parents, and useful stats on both parents and your new dragon! 🐉



2002 Hatchlings - Blood "Lucy" x Redflame "Piemur."  
For obvious reasons, we are repeating the cross this year. Piemur gave his size to Lucy's petite form and as you can see, the color combination was awesome!!!  
Our holdbacks now look much like Kate (above). 🐉

**MORE DRAGON Q & A:**

**Q: When is it safe to breed the females? At what age will the male start trying to breed her?**

– Sonia

**A:** Females should be at least a year old. Males can become sexually mature as early as 5 or 6 months and yes, he will try to breed her. If that happens, she might produce eggs but at a young age is at risk for egg binding which can be fatal. It's best to separate males and females at 4 months of age.

**Q: Spike has been eating like a maniac and growing like crazy. However, over the past 3 weeks he has become sluggish, barely moving and not eating. He's in a large cage, temps are 100 on one end and 80 on the other. Ideas?**

– Kathe

**A:** Since you and I have already ruled out other possibilities, my guess would be that Spike is getting ready to shed. It's normal for dragons to slow down right before a shed. (Note: Spike shed the following week.)

**Q: Do beardie's drink from a bowl?**

– Chris

**A:** Rarely. It's very important to mist the dragon's head lightly with a plant mister every evening at 5 or 6 pm. The dragons get very hot basking all day and can quickly dehydrate which causes kidneys to fail if this is prolonged. The reason we say to mist at 5 or 6 pm, is to give the dragons enough time to dry off before lights go out which for us is 8pm.

**Q: Should I use a red light or heat rock? Our house gets chilly at night. Temps at night are almost 65 degrees.**

– David

**A:** Beardies should have a nighttime cooling down so do not use artificial heating at night. It's good for dragons to be at 65 degrees at night. In the desert, nighttime temps are always chilly. 🐉

**RECOMMENDED READING:**

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

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

