



Choosing a diet to feed to your sugar gliders can be a daunting task because the "right" diet for sugar gliders is quite a controversial subject. Much of their nutritional needs remains a mystery because they are still fairly new to the exotic pet industry, and very few *proper* diet studies have been performed to date. The longer they are kept as pets, however, the more that is learned about their nutritional requirements.



Sugar gliders are omnivores, and in the wild they feed on eucalyptus gum, sap, insects, nectar, and honeydew (an excretory product of nectar eating insects). They will also eat bird eggs, lizards, small birds and other small prey items. This diet is pretty hard to duplicate in captivity. So a variety have foods have been fed over the years, in an attempt to *somewhat* mimic their natural intake and to see what makes them thrive in captivity. Part of the difficulty lies in captive gliders being less active (due to not needing to truly forage for their food or survive predatory attacks) than their wild counterparts - leading to a different metabolism and therefore different dietary needs. Unfortunately many books, pet stores and Internet sites give out conflicting information, which doesn't help much. There are many diets sold commercially being touted as "complete" and even more suggestions and opinions to be found on the Internet and by word of mouth... so many choices! What is a new glider owner to do?



Relax! While I am *not* going to tell you what diet to feed, I *am* going to help you out by listing the diets commonly known and/or available for sugar gliders and providing you with links to help you do your own research. There is much to consider, and I know you want to do what is "best" for your new, furry friend. The ultimate decision will be in your hands.



While the vast majority of sugar gliders have generalized dietary needs, a handful of sugar gliders being kept as pets may have dietary restrictions due to age, weight, or specific health concerns. I suggest taking your research results - and possibly this info sheet, as well - to your exotic veterinarian, and asking them for their assistance in choosing the right diet for you and *your* sugar gliders.

| EXAMPLES OF GLIDER DIETS ¹ | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| HPW Plus™ HPW Breeders Formula™ HPW Complete™ | | "The Original HPW diet" a/k/a WHPS Diet (Wombaroo High Protein Supplement) | |
| BML Diet (Bourbon's Modified Leadbeaters) | The Pet Glider Nutrition System a/k/a The "PP Diet" a/k/a The Priscilla Price Diet" | The Suncoast Diet | Glider Complete |
| Pet Pro | PML Diet (Pocket's Modified Leadbeaters) | Vet's Pride | Candy Otte's Blended Diet ² |
| Judie's BML | Glider-R-Chow | Quiko Glider Food | Brisky's Diet |

¹ Not intended to be suggestions - I am not endorsing all of the listed diets - this list is provided as a guide to diet availability and type *ONLY*.

² Not recommended as a safe diet - has proven to be dangerous for sugar gliders

| A WELL CHOSEN GLIDER DIET HAS... | A POOR CHOICE OF GLIDER DIET HAS... ³ |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An overall 2:1 Calcium to Phosphorus (Ca:P) ratio ✓ 25% - 50% protein ✓ Avoids fats and refined sugars ✓ 15% - 20% fruit ✓ 40% vegetables ✓ 15% cereals/grains/breads | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More than 55% protein ✓ A pellet-only formula ✓ A Calcium to Phosphorous (Ca:P) ration of other than 2:1⁴ ✓ Fats and refined sugars are a moderate to large part of the diet |



ADDITIONAL DIET CONSIDERATIONS

- Can you easily and regularly obtain all of the diet's ingredients?
- Are the ingredients affordable for you?
- Can you safely and properly store the diet prior to feeding?
- Is the preparation and storage method for the diet something that will fit into your routine/lifestyle?
- Do any of your gliders have any special dietary needs?
- Do any of your gliders have any diet preferences? (I.E.: Are they "picky" eaters?)
- What recommendations has your veterinarian made regarding the diet of your gliders?

About the author: Julie Hammock is a wife, mother, & grandmother residing in North Central Florida. She is the owner of [Hammock Haven Pets Plus](#) and the author & co-author of several veterinarian and owner oriented sugar glider articles. She is the proudly owned by 4 sugar gliders, 3 Chihuahuas, a Labrador Retriever and 2 leopard geckos.
She chooses to feed [the HPW Breeder Formula™ & Complete™ diet](#).

³ Unless specifically instructed to feed by your glider-familiar veterinarian, diets of this type should be used with extreme caution, at your own risk, and/or avoided entirely if possible

⁴ Obviously, the requirements of sugar gliders are of importance to their overall health, and they are prone to metabolic bone disease resulting from an improper ratio of calcium to phosphorus in the diet. If a diet is relatively higher in phosphorus than calcium, calcium will be leached from the bones and other tissues to balance the levels in the blood. This results in a softening of the bones, making them susceptible to fractures, along with a myriad of other health problems related to calcium imbalance