

Learning about our  
bearded dragon

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**SPIKE**

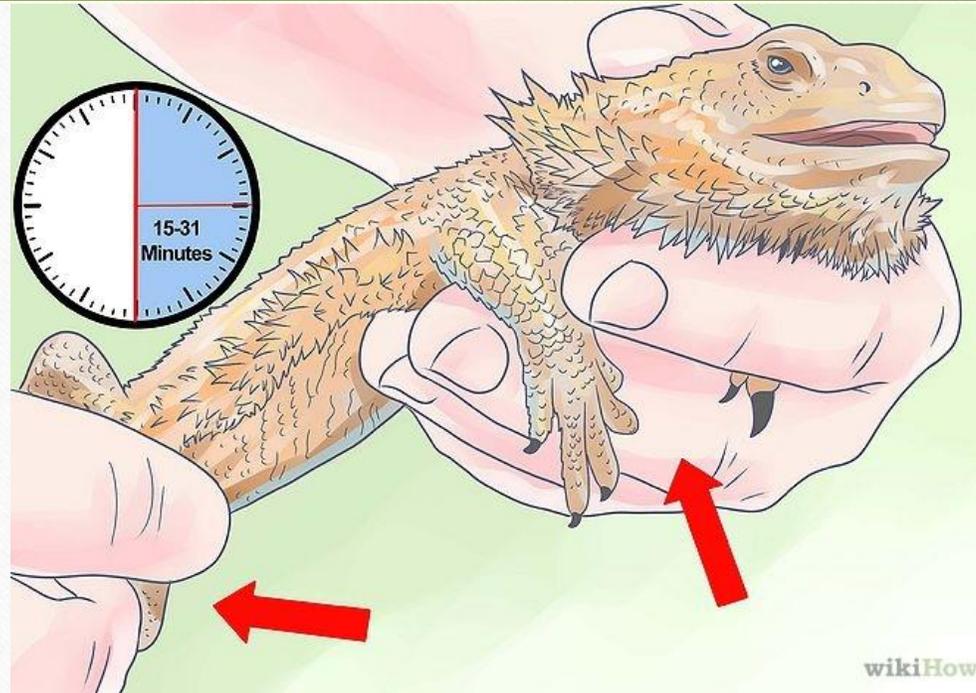
# WHAT IS A BEARDED DRAGON?

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- The bearded dragon's scientific name is *Pogona Vitticeps* and they are medium sized lizards which are generally 12-24 inches in length from their head to the tip of their tail. Those in captivity grow 10% less (so max length 21 inches). SPIKE GREW TO 24 INCHES!! There are many different bearded dragon colors which sometimes can help tell you what environment they came from.
- Source: <http://www.thebeardeddragon.org/bearded-dragon.php>

# How to correctly hold him

To pick up a Bearded Dragon, place your hand under its abdomen and gently scoop it up. As the dragon lays on your palm, gently curve your fingers around its abdomen. Support its feet, but do not squeeze!



# Fun Facts

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- Bearded dragons are called "bearded" because the spikes and scales they have around their head resembles a beard. They use this as a defense mechanism and will expand their throat whenever they feel threatened.

*Source:*<http://www.thebeardeddragon.org/bearded-dragon.php>

- Unlike some lizards, bearded dragons will not re-grow tails, legs, or anything else. So if your bearded dragon has lost his or her tail, it will not regrow.

*Source:*<http://www.thebeardeddragon.org/bearded-dragon.php>

# Bearded Dragons do have TEETH!!!



Spike on left and right. “Abby” in center



Front teeth are for grasping and tearing. Side teeth for holding. Only bite for hunting or if provoked.

# More Fun Facts



- Male Bearded Dragons bob their head quickly to show other dragons that they're dominant.
- The bearded dragon uses its beard to make it look larger to potential attackers.
- In the wild, Bearded Dragons will often stand up on their hind legs to run from danger.
- Bearded dragons can excrete 'dry' urine to conserve fluids in their native desert habitat. The white blob after fecal matter is uric acid.
- When they feel threatened, bearded dragons will go flat to the ground.

# What will he eat?

Greens	Vegetables	Fruit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•escarole</li><li>•<i>kale</i></li><li>•<i>collards</i></li><li>•parsley</li><li>•clover</li><li>•dandelion greens</li><li>•<i>turnip greens</i></li><li>•<i>mustard greens</i></li><li>•beet greens-only occasionally</li><li>•spinach-only occasionally</li><li>•<b>NEVER</b> iceberg lettuce</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•broccoli</li><li>•okra</li><li>•<i>peas</i></li><li>•<i>green beans</i></li><li>•zucchini</li><li>•squash</li><li>•grated carrots</li><li>•sweet potato</li><li>•bell pepper</li><li>•frozen mixed vegetables</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•figs</li><li>•kiwi</li><li>•papaya</li><li>•melon</li><li>•apples</li><li>•grapes</li><li>•dates</li><li>•peaches</li><li>•apricots</li><li>•strawberries (seeds removed)</li><li>•plums</li><li>•<i>bananas</i> (peeled)</li></ul>

# Also.....

- Live crickets, hormworms and superworms. Can each dubia roaches too.



# Spike ( and all bearded dragons) are:

- OMNIVORES. - they eat both plants and animals (like us!).
- In the wild, live 5-8 years. In captivity, like Spike, can live about 10 years.
- Naturally only live in Australia. Live in deserts and some woodlands.
- DIURNAL - active in daylight, sleep in darkness (also like us!)
- Cold blooded (need the sun to stay warm). LOVES to bask on rocks – reptile sunbathing!
- Tend to sleep in awkward positions, can dig or cover themselves under rocks or in sand.
- Can see in full color! Eyes on sides of head give larger field of view but less depth perception.

# Please don't make loud noises

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- Loud noises may spook Spike
- Use your quiet, inside voice in the classroom



# Brumination

- They start bruminating at about 8 months old – and will bruminate once a year.
- Reptile style hibernation – “short sleep”
- Decreased activity, decreased eating, hiding, avoiding basking light, sleeping a LOT
- In the wild (Australia), usually starts in fall and can last the entire winter. But in captivity – they seem to start in spring...since our spring is actually Australia’s fall!
- Some sleep for days, some sleep for a day/normal for a few days/sleep for a day, some sleep for weeks, and some will even sleep for MONTHS!
- Spike tends to sleep for a day or two, then active for a day or two, and repeats for about a month.

# Changes in Reptiles

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- At times you will notice that Spike is looking a little different. This is called shedding. All lizards grow continuously throughout their lives. However, their skin doesn't grow to accommodate their changing size, so they must shed their skin regularly to allow for proper growth. This is called ecdysis.



Spike →  
← Not Spike



# Caring for Spike

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- Mrs. Breitberg will feed and water Spike every morning. He is fully grown but can carry some germs so if you ever touch or hold him you will need to wash/germx your hands. He is OUR classroom pet, so please help be me to welcome him and make him feel at home!
- Spike could cause salmonellosis - an infection caused by Salmonella bacteria that can be acquired through contact with reptiles. Most reptiles are carriers of Salmonella even though they are healthy. Reptile-associated salmonellosis bacteria is spread by direct or indirect contact with fecal material from reptiles. The bacteria are also commonly found on the skin of reptiles.