

Sexing Your Beardie

Introduction

There are many rumors about how to tell the difference between a male and a female bearded dragon. Many beliefs are based in fact, but are not as absolute as many would have you believe.



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The myths:

Some say that females are smaller than males. Some say that only males turn their beard black. Some say that only females will wave their arms. Some say that there are no noticeable differences.

The facts:

Most of the above is a matter of degree. None are absolutely isolated to one gender or the other. Males tend to turn their beards black more often than females, but it is not something to use to determine sex. Males and females are pretty much the same size. So that shouldn't be used as a method to determine sex either. I have noticed females with smaller heads than males, but that isn't always the case. A common difference is that a male will have a thicker tail than a female. But keep in mind that age can also play a factor in that. As far as the submissive or dominant behaviors, both sexes will show any of the beardie behavior. I have seen all behavior performed by my males and females. However, males do tend to be more dominant and females more submissive.

So How Do I Tell?

Well, there are a few methods to determine the sex of your bearded dragon. The simplest method is to invade their privacy and just look. On the underside of their tail, just above the vent, there is typically either a single bulge (or none) or two separated bulges. If you see two clearly separate bulges, as in the upper image to the right, you have a male. If you see only one, you probably have a female. There is uncertainty with a single bulge, particularly if there isn't much of one. When beardies are young, they all look like females, but develop clearer signs of gender as they get older. You should be able to tell by time they're 7-8" STL.

The best way to hold your dragon when making this check is to place your dragon in one hand, perpendicular to your fingers, and facing away from you. Place your thumb over the back to hold them in place. With your other hand lift the tail up to approximately 90 degrees. Be gentle!!! You don't want to hurt your beardie.

Male



Female

