

Bearded Dragon Lizard Shedding Problems

Is it a problem if my bearded dragon doesn't shed completely?

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I have two questions about my bearded dragon. My bearded dragon is going to be 6 in several days and recently I have been worrying about his shedding. There are areas on his body that he just doesn't shed. There are old pieces of skin that are not new. I was wondering if this was normal or not. Could this be from a lack of vitamins? My other question is that my bearded dragon sometimes just gets very lazy and will sit in the same spot for two or three days. Are these serious problems?

Incomplete shedding or difficult shedding is called dysecdysis. I wrote an extensive article for the 2004 REPTILES USA about shedding problems. You may want to refer to it for an in-depth account of normal and abnormal shedding.

Snakes usually shed off the old skin all in one piece, but with lizards, it is normal for them to shed in patches or pieces. Sometimes, if there is an old injury to the skin underneath, the shedding skin may not come off easily. Other causes of dysecdysis include malnutrition, external parasites, tumors, thyroid problems or certain illnesses. Most commonly, incomplete shedding occurs as a result of too low humidity.

While it is true that bearded dragons thrive with a basking zone of 95 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit and live in areas of low humidity, it might be helpful to increase the humidity during your lizard's shedding cycles. You didn't say what temperature range and humidity he is being maintained at, or what your husbandry is like, so I can't make specific recommendations. Often, soaking a lizard in warm water will help to loosen retained skin patches.

If this is a new behavior, that your lizard is sitting in the same spot for several days, combined with the erratic shedding, I would recommend that you find a good herp vet who can help you by examining your lizard and performing any necessary tests to find out why your bearded dragon is having these problems. Please seek out a professional who can help you with your bearded dragon.