The History of the GliderKids Feeding Plan

My research began in 2008 by evaluating each of the recognized glider diets and determining the amounts of calcium, phosphorus, protein, sugar, fat, fiber and iron provided by the recommended glider serving amount of each diet. Data was collected and the Nutrient Calculator was developed to do the math as a part of this process of comparing glider diets. There are no established recommended daily amounts of any nutrients for gliders. By comparing the amounts of nutrients in various glider diets I found a wide range for these nutrients with the highest and lowest amounts being found in the two most widely used diets at the time, BML and Original HPW. The nutrient amounts in those diets became the upper and lower ends of a range for each nutrient.

I wanted to be able to offer my gliders a diet that included a wide variety of fruits and vegetables while maintaining a combined calcium to phosphorus ratio between 1.5:1 and 2:1 for the complete meals offered when averaged over several days time. With that goal in mind I developed a recipe for an easy to prepare glider staple that allowed some variation in the recipe to accommodate the preferences of other glider owners but still provided nutrients in the range based on amounts found in other successful diets. Initially I chose to use only ingredients that were already used in other glider diets when writing the recipe I called the Blended Diet. The goal of the Blended Diet recipe was to produce a staple food that contains amounts of Calcium, Phosphorus, Protein, Fat, Fiber and Iron that are between the amounts found in the Original HPW Diet and in the BML Diet. The recipe was never intended to be a combination of any other diets.

For me, the key to balancing the overall glider feeding plan is to offer a variety of fruits and vegetables each week with any glider staple mixture you choose. Fruits and vegetables each have different amounts of vitamins and minerals and are rich in some and poor in others. By offering a wide variety, it is more likely that the overall feeding plan will provide adequate amounts of all necessary vitamins and minerals.

If you wish to undersand the process (math) of calculating ratios, more information on calculation of the ratio for combinations of foods can be found here:

http://www.gliderkids-diet.com/RatioExample.pdf

Recent discussions in 2011 on several glider forums have expressed concerns about some glider diets containing too much iron contributed by the use of enriched baby cereals. Other discussions have stated gliders have had crystals in their urine from being fed diets with added calcium. No one has specifically indicated health issues in their gliders due to the iron or calcium in the Blended Diet. In consideration of potential problems that might eventually be associated with the iron and calcium content of any glider diet, I modified the basic recipe to use additional Wombaroo High Protein Supplement in place of the baby cereal and slightly reduced the amount of Now Brand Calcium Carbonate in the mix. I also revised the recipes to make a larger batch that provides 120 two teaspoon servings. It will feed 2 gliders for 2 months or 4 gliders for 1 month.

I named the revised recipes the GliderKids Staple to avoid confusion with other glider diets. The basic GliderKids Staple alone has a ratio of 2:1 which allows a wide range of fruits and vegetables to be used. I try to offer a different fruit and vegetable each night so my gliders get at least 7 different fruits and 7 different vegetables each week.

There are always glider owners that wish to alter the basic staple food they have chosen to meet their own and their glider's preferences. Some want to offer less honey, some feed eggs but not chicken, others feed chicken but not eggs. I have included variations of the GliderKids Staple to reflect these preferences. I personally use version #4 using the baby food chicken only most of the time. If I happen to have hard boiled eggs on hand when I am mixing a batch of the GliderKids Staple then I use the Basic Mix recipe.

For those that do wish to calculate the calcium to phosphorus ratio of the combined foods they offer their gliders, the amounts of nutrients in the recommended 2 teaspoon serving is noted with each staple recipe. The GliderKids Nutrient Calculator can be used to calculate the amounts of nutrients contained in combinations of a GliderKids Staple with fruits and vegetables you choose for your gliders. It can be found on my web page along with the staple recipes:

http://www.gliderkids-diet.com/Staple-Recipes.html

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