

SO YOU WANT TO BE ...A RESCUE HOME

Everyone has standards. For some, offering basic life necessities...what's needed simply to survive...is all they do. For others, nothing short of offering everything the gliders need to be healthy and happy is acceptable. Personally, I don't believe any rescue home should be content with that first option. While there are times when gliders must be removed from a dangerous situation immediately and a temporary stopover offering the bare minimums is the only available option, it should not be the ending solution. The goal should be to get the gliders into a home that offers emotional, as well as physical, support because that is what's best for the gliders.

Many people have found such joy in the care of their gliders that they have a desire to become a glider rescue home. While their hearts are certainly in the right place, there is more to being a Glider Rescuer than just taking in gliders that need to be rehomed and providing a good home for them. It may seem simple to say you are a glider rescue but there are many things to consider before taking action on your desire to help. There are many ways to do that without being a rescue home:

1. assist in railroading gliders
2. donate time, money or items to rescue homes
3. educate other owners or "wannabe" owners
4. support established 501(c)3 sugar glider groups

Each role plays a vital part in helping gliders. No one can do it alone, and by working together we can achieve greater results.

For those who do want to open their doors as rescue homes, realize that there is more involved than simply taking in gliders. There's a lot of hard work and very little public thanks. Your life revolves around the gliders in your home...feeding, nail clipping, cage cleaning, etc. As a rescue home, you must uphold a level of standards of care that goes beyond those of the average pet owner. Rescue homes must:

1. BE KNOWLEDGEABLE AND EXPERIENCED

- know how to properly care for a wide range of illnesses and injuries (many gliders that come to rescue homes have physical and/or behavioral problems)

2. BE PREPARED

- have supplies on hand, including medical supplies, pouches and enrichment
- you need to have enough on hand to be able to accept at least 2 sets of gliders (and assume they come in with nothing as many do)

3. HAVE FINANCES AVAILABLE

- must be able to offer ALL needed care from the moment they arrive ***YOU AREN'T HELPING GLIDERS BY TAKING THEM IN IF YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY FOR THEIR CARE***
- community support comes and goes; you can't count on donations to pay for gliders you take into your home

4. HAVE TIME

- there's a huge difference between caring for 2 cages and caring for 10 or 20 cages (food preparation and feeding can take 1 hour/day; cage cleaning can take 8+hours/week; add to that out of cage time, record keeping and nail clipping and it's like working a second job)

5. HAVE SPACE

- gliders need adequate size cages that are spaced apart from other cages
- you'll need more than 1 quarantine room (it's not unheard of to have 3 sets of gliders arrive within 1 week)
- you'll also need out of cage time play areas (again, remember quarantine must stay separate)
- also, all areas must be easy to keep clean and sanitary