

## 60 Sugar Glider Behaviors and Common Indicators

1. Not playing	abnormal	You should have a wheel and other toys for your gliders to play with. If they just sit there and do not explore the cage, then they may be stressed-out or depressed. So you should spend as much time as possible with them including handling them, teasing them with feathers, placing them on things to crawl on, etc. If you give them some room to move around outside of the cage, that helps if they are lethargic. Also if the lights are on, they may not want to come out to play. You may have to turn on some little night lights so you can see but are dim enough to still be dark in the room.
2. Not drinking or eating	abnormal	You should measure the food and water you offer so you can monitor how much is eaten each day. If they are not eating or drinking, they can become dehydrated.
3. Shivering	not always normal	If she shivers a lot (not including the "just woke up" shivers) she may be cold or there may be a draft. Eliminate the draft and make sure she has enough protection with a fleecy pouch or a fleece in a nesting box. Babies must be kept warm. Carry them in a pouch under your shirt if you have to. Consult vet on babies shivering.
4. Hissing while pooping	normal	Many gliders do this and stop as soon as they relieve themselves.
5. Hissing while peeing	abnormal	Often a sign of urinary track infection. Get to vet.
6. Barking	normal	Gliders will bark at night to communicate with one another. In rare circumstances they will bark if frustrated like if you are teasing them with a toy they can't get to.
7. Crabbing or biting you and nibbling either moderately or very hard	normal	They crab at first when they are frightened. Then later they crab when they want to sleep and you bother them... or if you disturb them when they want to be alone in their nest.
9. Self Mutilation: Biting self, over-grooming	abnormal	Over-grooming can make an area swell, lose fur and bleed. This can lead to self-mutilation and it is very dangerous. You may have to fix her up with an e-collar and rush her to the vet. This happens because of infection, open sore, depression and a few other reasons. If she grooms herself in one area and then methodically moves on to the next area in rotation, that is not self-mutilation.
10. Aversion to direct eye contact	normal	Gliders will often run away from you or crab at you if you look them straight in the eye. At first, don't look her in the eye, but from the corner of your eye. If you stare them down, they confuse you for a predator at first.
11. Repetitive inside cage climbing or running in circles inside the cage or top of cage	abnormal	This means boredom and frustration or loneliness. Try to get her out of the cage as much as you can for out-of-cage play. They will also do this if they are alone. Being alone stresses-out gliders. They hate being alone.
12. Grabbing food and running off with it to eat it in hiding separate from cage mates	normal	Gliders often run and eat in a place they feel safe and comfortable. They also do this to keep other gliders from stealing their food.
13. Running up to you and jumping on you	normal	Running up your legs, arms, etc. And sitting on your shoulder or head. Normal and a sign she is getting used to you or likes you.
14. Grooming / licking owner	normal	They will rub up against you, lick your hands, fingers, ears and comb through your hair. This means they are bonding with you and are beginning to accept you as part of the colony. Perfectly normal.
15. Grabbing your hair with their hands and running their teeth through your hair	normal	Part of grooming behavior. If they start scraping your scalp with their teeth, try to distract them or put them in the cage for a few minutes to calm them down.
16. Scraping their teeth on your arm, leg, ankle, etc.	normal	They do this with trees to get the sap out. They can't help themselves. Distract them with a treat or a toy.
17. Urinating / pooping on owner (see #18)	normal	You can't housebreak them.

18. Peeing on you	normal	They may completely empty their bladder on you which is normal. They may also dip their cloaca down and smear you a little with urine. That is scent marking.
19. Pooping on owner (see #17 & #18)	normal	Sorry, part of glider ownership.
20. Jumping towards you and towards the front of the cage when you approach	normal	Like a dog, they are happy to see you and want attention.
21. Staying In the pouch from 6 Am - 9 PM or thereabouts	normal	They may not be sleeping this whole time. They could just be lounging, slap-fighting or grooming each other.
22. Drinking or eating during the day	normal	If they are hungry or thirsty, they think nothing of waking up and having a midnight snack or drink of water.
23. Snuggling In your bra or shirt pocket	normal	Some like to snuggle with you and others don't. Depends on the personality of the glider. You can't force it.
24. Finding different spots to sleep / not sleeping in the same place	normal	Glidens like to switch-out to different nesting spots. Consider giving them more than one pouch and or nesting box.
25. Dragging or favoring hind legs	abnormal	Glidens will scootch their hind quarters when scent marking, but they are not actually favoring or dragging their legs. If they are actually dragging their legs and having trouble getting around, that is a sign of Hind Leg Paralysis. Get that animal to a vet ASAP. Diets deficient in Calcium cause this.
26. Runny poop	abnormal	A few loose stools every once and a while is no big deal, but if it goes on for more than a day, they will quickly dehydrate and can die from dehydration. Get to vet who will prescribe antibiotics. Feed Pedialyte on way to vet.
27. Under-eye puffiness	abnormal	Usually a sign of tooth decay or an abscess. Get to vet right away.
28. "Sneezing" into hands and then wiping face	normal	They are not sneezing. They are spitting into their hands and use the moisture to groom themselves.
29. Putting their hind foot in mouth and then scratching with it real fast all over	normal	Another way of moistening their digits to groom.
30. "Slapping" owner's face with their hand and running away	normal	Just being playful. Sometimes will do this out of jealousy if you are paying more attention to another glider.
31. Male grabbing another glider by the head or ears and rubbing on that glider's head, chest or tummy	normal	This is a scent marking behavior often performed by the alpha individual of a colony.
32. Making a "chit chit" sound while wrestling with cage mate	normal	Just playing.
33. "Screaming" while tussling / balled-up with a cage mate	abnormal	Fighting. Take them apart before they hurt each other. Can happen if colony is large and if males are not neutered or if an individual is at the end of the pecking order. Fighting also happens if you plop a strange glider in the midst of an established colony. Be prepared to pull them apart if they fight. Wear gloves in anticipation of them fighting.
34. Flinging food	normal	Drape the cage or use Tupperware containers on their side to put food tray in to limit flinging food on your walls.
35. Eating their own poop	abnormal	Usually means something is lacking in their diet.
36. Chewing on items: Furniture, Cloth, Wood, Plastic, etc.	normal	They go after the most expensive thing they can destroy. Keyboards, remotes, picture frames, etc.
37. Battling each other over food	normal	Alpha and older individuals can be bullies at feeding time. You may have to serve two separate dishes
39. Lunging or crabbing at passers-by	normal	Normal until they are bonded and used to their surroundings. If they do this after they have bonded, you probably are not letting them out of the cage enough and they are reverting to a wild state. Let them out more.
40. Frightened sounding crabbing / chortling upon hearing / seeing loud noises / quick movements	normal	Glidens hate loud sounds, sudden movements, jerkiness. They are hyper. Try to speak in soft voices and don't make sudden movements.
41. Male smelling female cloaca, following her around, rubbing on her head, chest, tummy, etc.	normal	If he is doing this non-stop she is probably in heat.

42. Male mounting female and biting down on the back of her neck (See #43)	normal	Mating wounds on the back of female necks are common and dangerous. If you see a wound, flush it with water, dab with honey and take the animal to the vet. It will usually not heal on its own and since their mouths are filled with bacteria, it will probably get infected and worse. Take that animal out of the cage into its own cage so its cage mates will not over-groom the wound.
43. Female turning around to bite or chase away a male (See #42)	normal	Part of mating ritual. If it gets to rough you may have to separate them for a few days.
44. Male-on-male or female-on-female mating behaviors	normal	Gliders are indiscriminate in their sexual behavior. Especially if the males are not neutered. They can't help it. Neuter them. Females will also hump each other at times.
45. Flossing: male pulling on penis with his mouth	normal	He's masturbating but the gentle term in this community is "flossing." If the penis is damaged or if there is an infection, this can lead to self-mutilation so watch for blood or signs of the penis always being extended and not going back in. The penis looks like a long piece of red embroidery thread with a "y" on the end.
46. Finicky / picky eating habits	normal	Pickiness is normal. You may have to blend their foods in order for them to eat all you offer them.
47. Repetitive / ritualistic playful activity	normal	Hopping on an object, jumping off, running to a certain place, jumping down, hopping somewhere else and then starting all over again from where they started. Perfectly normal. They are ritualistic sometimes.
48. Stealing food from each others' mouths (see #12)	normal	Dads teach their joeys how to eat solids by chewing food next to babies' mouths so they can taste and eat out of the mouths of the dads. They grow up "stealing" food from one another so don't worry about it.
49. Females licking area between cloaca and pouch	normal	They do this after mating and also just before pouch drop. It makes the area slick so joeys can climb into pouch. Doing it right after mating I guess is practice. They only really need to do it after the 16 day gestation period.
50. Rejecting, killing and eating baby joeys	abnormal	Females reject and kill babies for several reasons: 1) Inexperience; 2) Stress; 3) Bad diet; 4) Abnormal joeys. Pregnant and lactating moms need a lot of protein. Some say the reason they eat the babies is to eliminate any evidence of death or sickness so predators are not attracted to the nesting site.
51. Babies crying	normal	Sign that they want mom to come back to the nest. If she does not come back, can be sign of rejection. Also sign they may be cold. If they are cold to the touch, put them in your hands and warm them up and call the vet. Keep them warm or they will die if mom or dad is not tending to them. Don't put them on a heat rock. Your vet may direct you to a special heating pad for that purpose or an incubator.
52. Mom or dad scooping-up babies and taking them away from you	normal	Mom and dad will let you play with the babies for a short time, but will often come scoop them up and take them back to the nest when they sense it's been long enough.
53. Protective nest guarding. Dad lunging at or biting you when joeys are In nest	normal	Dads get very protective and less friendly until the babies are weaned sometimes. Forgive him. He's just trying to protect the babies.
54. Father glider charging and biting you really hard and not letting go	normal	You may have to wash up and change clothes if you have multiple colonies between visits. If a Dad smells another animal on you, he will see it as a threat when there are babies around.
55. Tilting / rocking head back and forth before jumping or gliding	normal	They are "triangulating" to figure distance before jumping.
56. Sleeping in a pile on top of one another	normal	Some will wrestle to get to the bottom of the pile, which is the favorite spot for most gliders.

57. Disappearing into furniture, closets, under appliances, etc.	normal	You have to wait for them to get hungry or thirsty and let them come out on their own. If they don't come out after 24 hours, they may be stuck in which case you might have to dismantle the furniture to get them.
58. Drinking or eating small amounts throughout their "Most Active Time" out of the nest / pouch	normal	They eat in spurts, not all at once. They will alternately eat, play and sleep even at night.
59. Peeking their heads out of whatever they are sleeping in	normal	Curiosity. Just checking you out.
60. Face hugging: jumping onto your face	normal	That's a face hug. Close your eyes.