

THE
AUSTRALIAN
VETERINARIAN MAGAZINE

Aussies urged to help
Ukrainian refugee
animals in need p6

**Jaws hold crucial
insights into fate and
future of tiger sharks
p10**

How to spot a puppy
scam p20



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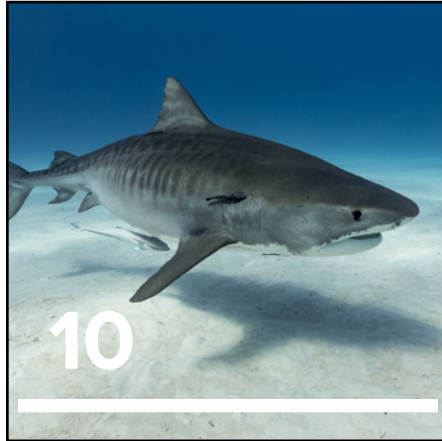


Best clinical practice is to identify causative organism by cytology or culture and sensitivity before, or as soon as possible after treatment is commenced. For single application treatment of otitis externa in dogs associated with susceptible strains of yeast (*Malassezia pachydermatis*) and bacteria (*S. pseudintermedius*, *S. canis*, *E. coli* and *Proteus* spp). © 2021 Elanco or its affiliates. Elanco Australasia Pty Ltd (ABN 64 076 745 198), Level 3, 7 Eden Park Drive, Macquarie Park NSW 2113. All trade marks are the property of their respective owners. For further information contact: 1800 678 368 from anywhere in Australia Monday to Friday or email enquiries_au@elancoah.com. ELAN0146 11/21. PM-AU-21-0854.

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TALES FROM A VET VETERAN

Veterinarian Richard Evans, has been in the industry for 56 years and re-lives some of his experience in the industry.

I graduated at the University of Liverpool 1996 (UK), and joined a multi-person large animal practice in Oswestry, Shropshire. Which was an intensive horse, dairy, beef, sheep and pig practice. In those days small animal work was minimal.

In 1968 Janet and I were married at Llangollen in Wales, where I worked for 2 years and became involved in the foot and mouth disease outbreak, which was a haunting experience.

The next 9 years were spent as a partner in a mixed practice in Newton in mid Wales. Where the vast majority of the work was with large animals, and the small animal side increased when we improved the facilities in the practice.

We moved to Australia in 1979 where I joined a practice in Albury on the nsw/vic border, where the volume of work was much less than what I had been used to in the UK.

I retired from practice for a few years as we were farming over 1000 acres, arable and grazing. I later started doing locum work in Victoria and New South Wales which was most interesting, and later I joined the Warby Street Veterinary Hospital in Wangaratta in 1989.

The industry has of course changed over the years from a huge volume of daily work, which depending on what part of the country you happen to be working, to somewhat less long days and nights.

Handling facilities are much improved for the large animals and also some excellent small animal hospital re found around the country. Furthermore, more opportunities for further education has been welcomed by owners, breeders and other participants in the small and large animal industries and households.

It is most interesting to think back on how procedures, treatments, and availability of materials has improved over the last 50 years. The types of instruments used in practice have improved but some of the old ones are still in use today! Certain procedures have changed as a result of continued research by practitioners and academics. Treatments are always being monitored and certainly there has been an enormous improvement in the results in many disease treatments and conditions. There is no doubt in my mind that one of the most important improvements in the veterinary surgical world has been the availability of excellent anaesthetic agents and this has led to much better and safer results.



There is one aspect of veterinary practice which I must not forget that being the role played by nurses, receptionists and all other staff at clinics and hospitals. In my early days there was one receptionist in the 6-man practice who dealt with telephone duties clients, occasional help with small animals when needed, and any other problems. Today things have certainly changed with a ratio of 1-2 or maybe more nurses to each vet, in addition there are other staff who deal with other duties. Following the introduction of veterinary nurse associations, there followed opportunity to attend college and university courses which has resulted in an enormous improvement in the dedication and skills of these so very important members of every veterinary practice.

As mentioned earlier the facilities on farms could be dreadful. Handling of young cattle meant wading into a dark shed and catching each animal individually which did result in some very active and perilous moments. One incident which I experienced was the day of the TB test, (An injection was given into the neck and checked 72 hours later for signs of reaction) The elderly farmer stood outside the shed door (stone sheds that could be a hundred years old were common and used to house farm animals during the harsh UK weather) while I crept in and pursued the animals around in a circular motion as they sped around the walls; each was caught and dealt with amidst a lot of steam and flying faeces. Suddenly the end wall of the stone shed fell outward and all the cattle fled! the farmer of course thought

it was hilarious until I informed him that I would be back in 72 hours to check if there was any reaction to the tuberculin injection.

During my experiences as a locum in NSW, I visited a very large cattle property to pregnancy test about 300 angus heifers. The facilities were superb, a very large long curved race and the ultimate design in cattle crushes- and plenty of staff. They were passing through the crush at quite a rapid rate and all of them were negative, about halfway through after shouting 'no' every time I tested one, which told the staff she was not in calf, there was a shout from the front where the heifers were being released and one of the staff yelled back 'I'm glad to hear the last two were empty as they were steers' by later that day most of the district knew the story.

By Dr. Richard Evans



AUSSIES URGED TO HELP UKRAINIAN REFUGEE ANIMALS IN NEED

The Australian War Animals Memorial Organisation (AWAMO), in partnership with PETstock Assist is helping to facilitate a delivery of more than \$200,000 of essential pet care supplies to animals impacted by the war in Ukraine next month.

The United Nations estimates as many as 3.7 million Ukrainians have already fled the country, and many of them are pet owners, forced to flee to bordering countries with their beloved pets without essentials such as food, medicines or apparel items.



AWAMO's emergency response aid operation will oversee essential supplies being distributed by local charities on the ground in neighbouring Poland to the regions with the highest priority as soon as it reaches its fundraising goal of \$20,000, the amount required to cover all operational costs to transport the cargo.

AWAMO President and Project Lead, Nigel Allsopp, says right now much-needed basic care products are running out across the country, impacting the distribution and administration efforts by many animal shelters caring for the animals of Ukraine.

"There are hundreds of thousands of pets suffering from abandonment or dispossession alongside their owners in Ukraine – and it's becoming increasingly difficult to access these high demand items – so they can provide a basic level of care to their pets.

"Thanks to the Petspiration Group and its partners, enough supplies to fill the shipment have been generously donated, however, we're still in need of urgent funding to cover shipping costs so we're making a plea to animal lovers across Australia so we can make it to Ukraine," - Nigel Allsopp

The Petspiration Group's CEO, Shane Young, says, we know just how important the bond between pets and people is.

"Any donation, big or small, will help this initiative take flight and make a direct impact to thousands of pets and their owners in Ukraine."

Items waiting to be delivered include over 500 kg of premium pet food donated by The Petspiration Group, 500 kg of dog coats donated by Vanilla Sugar and over \$150,000 collars and leads donated by Ezy Dogs and packed by volunteer staff.

About Australian War Animal Organisation (AWAMO):

The Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation Inc. (AWAMO), a registered not-for profit Incorporation is made up of community members from diverse backgrounds that have the like minded aim to recognise the deeds and sacrifices of all animal species, who have

given their lives and their loyalty, serving alongside their human comrades.

AWAMO has four main core activities which include: the establishment of memorials, fiscal and material sponsorship to veteran Service dogs, education and sponsorship to various animal projects assisting veterans or animals.

About Nigel Allsopp:

Founder and President of AWAMO, Nigel Allsopp is a recognised author with areas of expertise in war and service animals and captive zoo animal management.

Nigel is a passionate and much sought-after speaker as he's able to engage listeners with stories and factual experiences from his years of both practical and researched experiences in this field.

His expertise is called upon by the Defence Department and government agencies such as Veterans Affairs, RSL Headquarters and Commonwealth centenary committee plus numerous Universities.

Nigel was awarded Australia's RSL – ANZAC of the Year Award 2017 which recognises the efforts and achievements of Australian's, who have given service to the community in a positive, selfless and compassionate manner.

About PETstock Assist:

PETstock Assist (soon to be rebranded Petspiration Foundation), a registered charity run by The Petspiration Group is committed to helping pets and people to live better. Through its partnerships and programs, the charity raises awareness and changes perceptions to make a positive impact today and leading change for a better future.

Since its inception in 2007, PETstock assist has raised more than \$6.6 million, found homes for more than 13,000 rescue pets and donated more than \$80,000 to support flood affected areas in 2022.



PETstock Assist is contributed to by the fundraising initiatives of all Petspiration brands, donations by business partners and employees as they come together for the pets that inspire us. 100% of funds raised go towards its charitable partners and projects with all operating costs covered by the business.

How you can help

By donating to AWAMO's Ukraine Animal Project

via the official Go Fund Me page

https://www.gofundme.com/f/awamos-ukraine-animal-project?utm_campaign=p_cf+share-flow-1&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_source=customer

By donating via AWAMO's official website

<http://awamo.org.au/international-and-local-animal-aid-projects/australian-animal-aid-ukraine-initiative/>

100 per cent of donations throughout July and August will directly support AWAMO's Ukraine animal food and essential supplies relief project.

For further information on how to donate please contact AWAMO or head to the website

<http://awamo.org.au/international-and-local-animal-aid-projects/australian-animal-aid-ukraine-initiative/>



Ksusha Zhuk and Ritchie some of the lucky ones seeking refuge in Greece

THE PLIGHT OF UKRAINIAN ANIMALS RECOGNISED BY AUSTRALIA

Like the people of Ukraine Australians are animal lovers. There are almost 29 million pets in Australia today - more than the estimated human population of 25 million. Three in five Australian households have a pet. 90% of Australian households have had a pet at some time. The most popular are Dogs just over 5 million and Cats at 3.8 million.

In a ceremony at the Ukrainian Embassy in Canberra on Friday 29th July President of Australian War Animal Memorial Organization Nigel Allsopp presented Ambassador Myroshnychenko Vasyl with a bronze plaque and medallion honouring the animal heroes of the war. The plaque and

medallion will be dispatched to the Prime Minister of Ukraine for eventual display at an animal memorial.

There are hundreds of thousands of pets suffering from abandonment or dispossession alongside their owners in Ukraine – and it's becoming increasingly difficult to access these high demand items – so they can provide a basic level of care to their pets.

The following animal and bravery associations in Australia support and recognise the deeds and sacrifices animals have made and continue to endure, during war.



President of Australian War Animal Memorial Organization Nigel Allsopp presented Ambassador Myroshnychenko Vasyl with a bronze plaque and medallion honouring the animal heroes of the war.

The certificate that accompanies the bronze plaque and the medallion to be presented to the Ukraine Prime Minister.

AUSTRALIA'S NEW 'CAT CURFEW' WILL BAN CATS FROM GOING OUTSIDE

Dr Inns Cloete, owner of Kingsway Vet Centre, joined Bec and Jeziel to answer your pet-related questions. He told us how pets grieve, the relationship between cats and dogs and Australia's new cat curfew.

Australia's new law will ban cats from going outside, to prevent them from killing billions of native animals. Research has found that each feral cat slaughters up to 740 local wildlife each year. The new rule is still to be signed off by the WA state parliament. But if passed cats will be banned from roads, verges and footpaths unless they are on a lead.

Canberra already plans to make all new cats indoors-only from mid this year. While Victoria citizens in Bendigo are already forbidden from letting their cats off their property.

"You can train a cat to live inside but you have to provide regular activities. Cats generally don't do well on leashes unless they have been trained."



HELPING HAND GRANTS

HELPING HAND GRANTS RETURN TO SUPPORT MEDICAL, DENTAL AND VETERINARY PRACTICES

The Credabl Helping Hand Grants are back to help practices grow. Valued over \$10,000, the grants will be awarded to up to five recipients around Australia. If you own, manage or work for a medical, dental or veterinary practice, you can apply now.

Specialist medical lender Credabl is delighted to announce the return of its Helping Hand Grants for healthcare practices across Australia. The 2022/23 grants have officially launched – both direct applications from practices and nominations from the general public are being accepted until 31 December 2022. The recipients will be announced on 13 March 2023.

The grants are designed to support practice growth, showcasing the amazing contributions occurring in local communities, and to help drive patient numbers and engagement. The grants are valued over \$10,000 and will be awarded to up to five medical practices around Australia across the medical, dental and veterinary professions.

Each grant includes a cash incentive, practice growth and management coaching from industry partners including Health Business Network, Prime Practice and Vetr, a DeLonghi Nespresso coffee machine, 50,000 Qantas Points* for their business and a digital guidebook filled with great tips to help boost patient numbers.

This year's judging panel are Dr Garnett Hall (Veterinary Surgeon, Founder and CEO at VetChip and President of AVA WA), Dr Geoff Toogood (Cardiologist and Founder of Crazy Socks 4 Docs), Dr

Kristina Cain (Dentist and Business Owner of SmileChix), Stafford Hamilton (CEO at Credabl), Glen Stewart (Chief Risk Officer at Credabl), and Kelly Gall (Finance Specialist at Credabl).

Stafford Hamilton, Credabl CEO and Co-founder, says the return of the Helping Hand Grants is a way to continue to shine a light on hard-working healthcare practices right across Australia.

“At Credabl, we have seen first-hand how hard the past few years have been on medical practices, emotionally and financially. The Helping Hand Grants enable us to support up to five businesses whilst also acknowledging the challenges many practices are currently facing – from patient retention and community engagement to financial hardship,” Hamilton shares.

For previous winner Family Dental Yamba in Yamba, NSW, the last two years had significantly impacted the practice's growth plans, like many others.

“Thanks to the grant, we were able to complete our practice renovations and upgrades despite the floods and other challenges. Without Credabl's help and support, these dreams would not have become a reality and we are forever grateful!” – Dentists, Aninke Lippert and Willem Espag.

Our 2020/21 Helping Hand Grant recipients also included Brentford Dental in VIC, Cygnet Clinic in WA, Modbury Veterinary Clinic in SA and Family Health Clinic in QLD.

APPLICATION DETAILS

MEDICAL PERSONAL

Medical, dental and veterinary businesses can directly APPLY for a Helping Hand Grant via the dedicated program page at:

<https://www.credabl.com.au/helpinghand22/>

PATIENTS & CLIENTS

Patients and clients can NOMINATE a doctor, dentist or vet by visiting the nomination page at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/helpinghandnominate>.

T&Cs apply.



DR KENNETH SIMPSON ANNOUNCED AS RECIPIENT OF 2022 WSAVA SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dr Kenneth Simpson, a Professor of Small Animal Medicine at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine in the USA, is to receive the 2022 WSAVA Award for Scientific Achievement in recognition of his outstanding contribution, particularly in the areas of internal medicine and veterinary gastroenterology.

The Award, given annually to an individual judged to have made a significant contribution to the field of small animal medicine, will be presented during this year's WSAVA World Congress, which takes place from 29-31 October in Lima, Peru. Dr Simpson will present a WSAVA Award Lecture during the Congress.

Dr Simpson graduated from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, Edinburgh University in 1984, and gained a PhD in gastroenterology at the University of Leicester in 1988. He undertook an internship at the University of Pennsylvania and a residency in small animal medicine at the Ohio State University, before returning to the UK as a lecturer at the Royal Veterinary College in London. In 1995, he joined the Faculty of Small Animal Internal Medicine at Cornell University. He is a Diplomate of the American and European Colleges of Veterinary Internal Medicine and is a past-president of the comparative gastroenterology society.

Dr Simpson's research interests are focused on inflammatory diseases of the GI tract, host bacterial interactions in health and disease, and culture independent bacteriology. His scientific contributions evaluating the interplay between genetic susceptibility, the microbiome, the host environment, and the host immune system played a key role in his research team's discovery of an adherent-invasive E. coli (AIEC) and its role in granulomatous colitis of Boxers and French bulldogs. It also spurred studies that implicate AIEC metabolism as a target for therapeutic intervention in people with Crohn's disease and dogs with granulomatous colitis.

Commenting on receiving the Award, he said: "When I was growing up in Scotland, my uncle Gordon -- an exceptional

veterinarian and farmer -- waited patiently while I learned to recognize sick from healthy sheep, and instilled in me the intimate connection between the environment, husbandry and health. His belief that I would make a good vet set me on a journey as rich as anyone could wish for. To those who have mentored me as a clinician and a scientist, and worked with me in the hospital and laboratory, I thank you for your inspiration, encouragement and camaraderie."

Co-chair of the WSAVA Scientific Committee, Dr Frédéric Gaschen said: "As a successful veterinary clinician-scientist, Dr Simpson has addressed many important fundamental and clinical questions related to canine and feline gastroenterology. He has also contributed significantly to the advancement of knowledge in human gastroenterology. His achievements are impressive and his publications record spans practice-relevant clinical studies to focused basic research investigations. In many ways, Dr Simpson has demonstrated that he is an exceptional member of our community."

The Committee's Co-chair, Dr Mary Marcondes added: "Dr Simpson has contributed enormously to the veterinary medical profession. His long list of scientific publications demonstrates how much he has added to veterinary science. This award is a recognition of his work and is well deserved."

The WSAVA represents more than 200,000 veterinarians worldwide through its 115 member associations and works to enhance standards of clinical care for companion animals. Its core activities include the development of WSAVA Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice, including pain management, nutrition and vaccination, together with lobbying on important issues affecting companion animal care worldwide. WSAVA World Congress brings together globally respected experts to offer cutting edge thinking on all aspects of companion animal veterinary care.



Dr Kenneth Simpson

JAWS

HOLDING CRUCIAL INSIGHTS INTO FATE AND FUTURE OF TIGER SHARKS

Using DNA retrieved from historical tiger shark jaws over the past century, an international group of scientists has revealed that population decline is changing the genetic diversity of one of the ocean's apex predators.

This includes the discovery of a previously unidentified population of the shark in eastern Australian waters that appears to have disappeared entirely from the southeastern range of the species' distribution, says University of the Sunshine Coast marine ecologist and study co-author Dr Bonnie Holmes.

Until now, it was believed that tiger sharks in Australia were always part of a large Indo-Pacific population, whose movements extended several thousand kilometres across the Pacific and Indian Oceans, with enough gene flow to make them less susceptible to local impacts.

In the study published in *Scientific Reports*, the research team, led by Dr Alice Manuzzi at Denmark Technical University, found significant change in the genetics of tiger sharks (*Galeocerdo cuvier*) from eastern Australia across the past six decades.

"This updated research using historical DNA from tiger shark trophy jaws dating back to the early 1900s suggests one newly identified local population has reduced to a point where it has very likely been lost," said Dr Holmes

"The population's genetic signature starts to reduce from the 1970s – coinciding with increases in commercial shark fishing and the introduction of shark control programs," she said.

The DNA samples were gathered from tiger shark jaws from the Gulf of Carpentaria, Coral Sea and Tasman Sea found in museums, national fishery institutes and personal collections.

Contemporary tissue samples from 2000–2015 came from fin-clips from sharks caught in the Queensland Shark Control Program, the New South Wales Shark Meshing Program, commercial and recreational landings, and sharks caught for tagging and tracking research purposes.

Genetic diversity is the fuel that drives future evolution

One of the world's largest shark species, tiger sharks are top level predators in marine ecosystems, feeding on a wide range of organisms including seabirds, turtles, dolphins, and various fish species. The species is listed globally as near threatened.

The scientists say the eradication of semi-independent evolutionary lineages will not only have a local effect on tiger shark abundance, but also the evolutionary potential of the species as a whole and the ecosystem services they provide.

Professor Einar Eg Nielsen from the Technical University of Denmark says the documented Australian decline in tiger sharks numbers is likely caused by a combination of factors.

"Our study shows that tiger sharks can have local and genetically isolated populations at a restricted geographical scale – such as the southeast Australian coast – and that these local populations are vulnerable to direct exploitation and shark control programs," says Professor Nielsen.

"When we, through genetic analysis, better understand the

distribution and migration of shark populations and their responses to human activities over historical time, we are better able to design proper management plans and actions at the appropriate geographical scale," he said.

Professor Charlie Huvneers, study co-author from Flinders University, says declining shark populations can affect marine ecosystems by influencing the abundance and behaviour of prey species and through changes in predator-prey interactions.

"Tiger sharks are top predators in marine ecosystems, feeding on a wide range of organisms including seabirds, turtles, dolphins, and various fish species," Professor Huvneers said

"Seasonal changes in tiger shark abundances have been shown to affect the behaviour and preferred habitat of their prey as tiger sharks are top predators in marine ecosystems."

According to Dr Holmes, a USC Lecturer in Animal Ecology, the research highlights the need for more genomics work to be undertaken on vulnerable and endangered large shark species across Australia, especially those still harvested in commercial fisheries, like hammerhead sharks.

The tiger shark project is part of a larger project umbrella "GENOJAWS" where the scientists have studied retrospective genetics/genomics of four big sharks: sand tiger shark, mako shark, white shark and tiger shark.



Dr Bonnie Holmes tags a tiger shark in Queensland waters

One of the world's largest shark species, tiger sharks are top level predators in marine ecosystems, feeding on a wide range of organisms including seabirds, turtles, dolphins, and various fish species. The species is listed globally as near threatened.

PAWS FOR A CAUSE: SAFE PETS SAFE

FAMILIES RECEIVE 50 TONNE FOOD DONATION IN HOMELESSNESS WEEK

With the increased rate of pet ownership in Australia¹ and an increase of those who are facing disadvantage or crisis, there is growing concern about how pet owners will provide their pet with essential care and supplies.

In recognition of Homelessness Week (1-8 August), the Petspiration Foundation and Ivory Coat donated 50 tonnes of bagged pet food to Safe Pets Safe Families (SPSF) as part of their Fill Their Bowl Project to support vulnerable people and pets in South Australia.

Through this generous donation, SPSF will be able to continue supporting vulnerable owners and their pets and ultimately reduce the occurrence of surrender, animal abuse, neglect, and euthanasia.

SPSF founder, Jennifer Howard, says that the Fill Their Bowl Project is an integral part of their organisation and allows them to make a real difference to the people and pets within the community.

“The rising cost of living and an increase in pet ownership has really impacted many who are experiencing crisis or are at a disadvantage, and through my own personal experience I can appreciate what it feels like to be in a position when you’re unable to care for a pet, and I don’t want anyone else within the community to have to experience this,” says Jennifer.

“With regular help from volunteers and generous partners - such as Ivory Coat and the Petspiration Foundation - we can maximise our impact and continue our mission to help keep vulnerable people and their pets together by alleviating the burden of providing essential pet care during times of hardship.”

“Since our inception in 2013, we have distributed hundreds of paw packs through Paws and Pals outreach service, supporting several families and pets in need. This donation is key in helping us to make an immediate impact on pets and people experiencing difficulty in the state.”

Ivory Coat’s National Account Manager, Sam McLoughlin, says that they value the opportunity to help ease the burden on South Australian pets and their owners.

“We’re proud to partner with Safe Pets Safe Families and support the ongoing and incredible work that they carry out to help relieve the burden on pet owners across the state,” says Sam.

“Pets are such an important part of our lives and struggling to provide them with essential care can be extremely stressful for owners. By donating pet food, we hope to play a part in SPSF’s journey towards making a change to the lives of hundreds of pets across the state.”

“The rising cost of living and an increase in pet ownership has really impacted many who are experiencing crisis or are at a disadvantage”

Jennifer Howard

Petspiration Foundation CEO, Shane Young, says that they’re proud to partner with Ivory Coat and SPSF to assist in easing the financial strain on pet owners and help reduce the number of healthy pets being surrendered to shelters.

“The bond between pets and their people is important, and we want to continue supporting this integral bond through SPSF,” says Shane.

In conjunction with the Fill Their Bowl Project, Ivory Coat will



be providing additional donations to SPSF's The Paws and Pals program, partnering with homeless organisations and facilities to provide pop up veterinary clinics every few months to remove barriers for the homeless and their pets.

Safe Pets Safe Families encourages those who are able to donate pet food, providing a meal and peace of mind for a struggling family and their pet.

Drop off locations are available at <https://safepetssafefamilies.org.au/fill-their-bowl-project/>

About the Petspiration Foundation

The Petspiration Foundation (formally PETstock Assist) is a registered charity committed to helping pets and people to live better. Through its partnerships and programs, the Foundation raises awareness and changes perceptions to make a positive impact today and leading change for a better future.

Since its inception in 2007, the Petspiration Foundation has raised more than \$6.6 million, found homes for more than 13,000 rescue pets and donated more than \$80,000 to support flood affected areas in 2022.

About Safe Pets Safe Families

Safe Pets Safe Families was founded in 2013 by Jennifer Howard, working with people and pets in crises to improve outcomes and reduce the occurrence of surrender, animal abuse, neglect, and euthanasia. We actively assist our clients in finding safe housing and provide strategies to reduce the incidence of intergenerational poverty. "The rising cost of living and an increase in pet ownership has really impacted many who are experiencing crisis or are at a disadvantage, and through my own personal experience I can appreciate what it feels like to be in a position when you're unable to care for a pet, and I don't want anyone else within the community to have to experience this," says Jennifer.

Since inception, the not-for-profit organisation has donated hundreds of meals to pets in need and has seen exponential growth over recent years. The organisation services South Australia.

¹Animal Medicines Australia: Pets and the Pandemic 2021

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www.dechra.com.au



VARROA MITE OUTBREAK



VARROA MITE DETECTED IN NSW

The NSW Government is urging beekeepers across the state to safeguard their industry after biosecurity surveillance detected Varroa mite in hives at the Port of Newcastle.

NSW Agriculture Minister Dugald Saunders says swift measures are being taken to contain the disease, which is the most serious pest for honey bees worldwide.

“We have immediately launched an eradication plan which involved setting up a biosecurity zone, containing the infected hives and euthanising the bees.” Mr Saunders said.

If you have bee hives located within the biosecurity zone please notify DPI of their location by calling 1800 084 881

“Australia is the only major honey producing country free from Varroa mite and if it has the chance to establish here, it could cost the honey industry more than \$70 million a year.

The Biosecurity Zone covers an area within a 50 kilometre radius of the Port of Newcastle. Beekeepers within this zone must not move or tamper with their hives.

They must also notify the NSW Department of Primary Industries with the location of all of their hives.

“Biosecurity is one of my top priorities and beekeepers have been working with the Government through the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program to act as an early warning system,” Mr Saunders said.

“If it weren’t for their diligence in monitoring hives and catch boxes at strategic locations around our ports and airports, this threat may have gone undetected.”

The mites are tiny reddish-brown parasites and are easily identifiable to the naked eye.

If you have bee hives located within the biosecurity zone please notify DPI of their location by calling 1800 084 881 or completing the form on this website: <https://forms.bfs.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forms/9247>



STATEWIDE EMERGENCY ORDER ISSUED FOR VARROA MITE IN NSW

A statewide emergency order has been issued to control the movement of bees across NSW and stop the spread of varroa mite.

Minister for Agriculture Dugald Saunders says the order has taken effect from 6.00 o'clock tonight.

"After the first detection of varroa mite at the Port of Newcastle on Friday, DPI is investigating potentially contaminated hives outside the initial 50 kilometre biosecurity zone," Mr Saunders said.

"That includes a property near Trangie in central west NSW, where containment and control activities will be carried out tomorrow.

"If varroa mite settles in the state, it will have severe consequences, so we're taking every precaution and action needed to contain the parasite and protect the local honey industry and pollination."

The statewide order is a fourth tier general emergency zone that has been added to the existing zones, in which no bees are allowed to be moved across NSW.

A 50km biosecurity zone is still in place around the port of Newcastle and beekeepers within that area must also notify the NSW Department of Primary Industries of the locations of their hives.

A 25km surveillance zone is also still active around the site, where officials are monitoring and inspecting managed and feral honey bees to limit the extent of the incursion.

A 10km emergency zone around the Port remains in place, where eradication plans will be enacted to treat hives, including at a new fourth property that has been identified.

"Australia is the only major honey producing country free from varroa mite, the most serious pest to honey bees worldwide," Mr Saunders said.

"We're working with apiary industry bodies and stakeholders to ensure beekeepers are well informed and can continue to help us with this critical response".

The mites are tiny reddish-brown parasites and are easily identifiable to the naked eye.

If you have bee hives located within the 50km biosecurity zone please notify DPI of their location by calling 1800 084 881, completing the form on this website: <https://forms.bfs.dpi.nsw.gov.au/forms/9247> or emailing hive.location@emergency.dpi.nsw.gov.au.

For more information visit:

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa>



THE ABCS OF VETERINARY DENTISTRY:

G

IS FOR GINGIVAL ENLARGEMENT DUE TO GINGIVAL HYPERPLASIA

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As we move through the dental alphabet, this issue brings us to the letter G. In this article we continue our journey of the soft tissues and look at gingival enlargement.

As we move through the dental alphabet, this issue brings us to the letter G. In this article we continue our journey of the soft tissues and look at gingival enlargement.

Introduction.

Gingival enlargement is clinically characterised by a proliferation of gingival cells causing the gingiva to become thickened and enlarged. Histology is required to make a diagnosis.^{1,4} Gingival enlargement can be localised or generalised, presenting as a singular lesion, or multiple lesions affecting a single tooth or extending to multiple teeth.^{1,3,4}

There are three broad aetiology factors. Firstly, hereditary predisposition factors attributed to specific breeds including but not exhaustive are Boxers, Collies, Bulldogs and Great Danes.^{2,5} Secondly, chronic inflammation reactive to bacteria, plaque and calculus stimulates excessive gingival cell formation.^{1,3} Lastly, medications such as cyclosporine, diphenhydantoin, nitredipine and nifedipine can induce stimulation of gingival fibroblasts resulting in gingiva enlargement.^{2,4} It is recommended that if the cause is due to medication, it be stopped and changed to a different drug where possible.

Thickening of the gingiva leads to elongation; however, the marginal bone usually is unaffected unless there is the addition of periodontal disease, thus creating a pseudo pocket. These pockets provide space for plaque, calculus, bacteria, hair and debris to accumulate within the sulcus, unless treated will lead to the regression of periodontal disease.

Histopathology is required for a definitive diagnosis of gingival hyperplasia, rule out neoplasia and other possible causes.^{1,2,4} Radiographs are necessary prior to treatment to rule out osseous changes and assess the extent of periodontal disease.¹ If severe osseous changes not consistent with periodontitis are present, then an incisional biopsy must include both bone and lesion for histopathology prior to treatment to rule out neoplasia.^{1,2}

Gingivectomy is considered the appropriate treatment to remove excess gingival enlargement and restore a healthy contour of gum tissue.³ Removing excess gingival tissue reduces pocket

depths so that plaque and bacteria cannot become trapped within the sulcus. In addition, it enables accessibility to the pet's teeth for owners to perform regular oral hygiene. Gingivectomy is contraindicated if there is to be less than 2mm of attached gingiva after the procedure or if the defect extends below the mucogingival junction as this leads to gingival breakdown.¹

Home care is the essential key to preventing or slowing down the process of gingival enlargement returning.^{1,3} Initially after a gingivectomy, home care using Maxiguard™ oral gel twice daily as a rinse for two weeks is recommended to maintain oral health whilst healing is occurring.⁶ Once healing is complete, tooth brushing is necessary twice daily to remove plaque and control gingival inflammation. Dental revisits are imperative three monthly to assess oral health and regular scale and polish treatment may be required to reduce inflammation.^{2,3,6} Where breed predisposition is the determining cause of gingival hyperplasia, recurrence is expected. Therefore, it is important to inform owners that treatment will most probably need to be repeated in the future. However, a rigorous home care regime can slow down the process by controlling the inflammatory element involved.^{1,3}

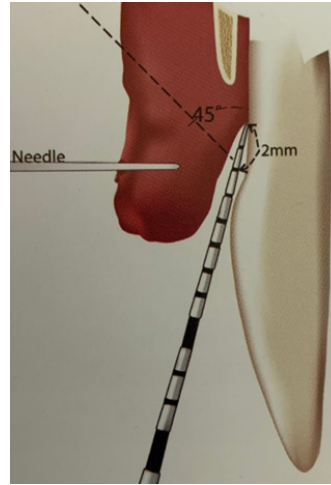
Case Study.

Maddison, a 5-year old, 25kg, spayed female Boxer was referred by her family veterinarian for assessment and treatment of gingival enlargement. Maddison was found to be in good health, well hydrated, heart rate 82 bpm, respiratory rate 28 bpm and body temperature of 38.2°C. Pre-anaesthetic blood chemistry and haematology profile indicated no significant findings. Conscious oral examination revealed generalised gingivitis and multiple gingival enlargement lesions, particularly around the left maxillary premolar and molar teeth.

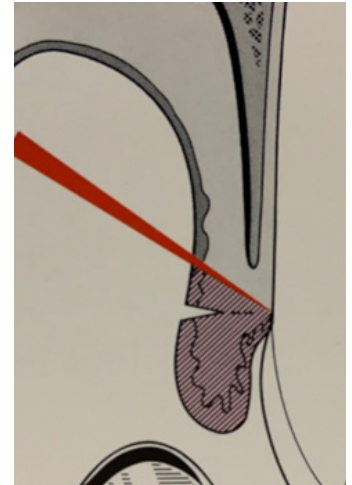
A 20g intravenous catheter was placed aseptically in the right cephalic vein to administer a balanced electrolyte solution of Hartmanns 2.5ml/kg/hr. A pre-anaesthetic was administered, followed by induction with Alflaxan™ 2mg/kg via the catheter, an endotracheal tube was placed, inflated, tied and connected to the anaesthetic machine. Anaesthesia was maintained with a combination of 1.75% isoflurane in oxygen. Anaesthetic monitoring included visual assessment, reflex activity, oxygen saturation, heart rate, respiratory rate, capnography, ECG and blood pressure. Maddison was placed into dorsal recumbency, and a warming blanket was placed over her to maintain body



(Figure 1)



(Figure 2)



(Figure 3)

temperature. Intravenous fluids were increased to 5ml/kg/hr.

Once Maddison was stabilised, a comprehensive oral examination was performed by the dental specialist and nurse. Assessment of each tooth was recorded onto a dental chart (www.vetdentalcharts.com). Generalised gingivitis was present. There were multiple gingival enlargement lesions ranging from 4 to 8 mm in size resulting in pseudo pockets. Gingival enlargement was greatest around the maxillary left 2nd to 4th premolar teeth (Figure 1).

Dental radiographs were taken using a size 2 Sopix digital DR sensor plate which revealed no periodontitis or obvious osseous changes. Based on these findings, taking into consideration Maddison's breed, a tentative diagnosis of gingival hyperplasia was made.

The owners were contacted and informed of oral and radiographic findings. It was explained to the owner that Maddison would benefit from having a gingivectomy to restore normal gingival margins thus reducing the opportunity of periodontal disease progressing¹ and that a biopsy was recommended for histopathology. The owners consented to treatment.

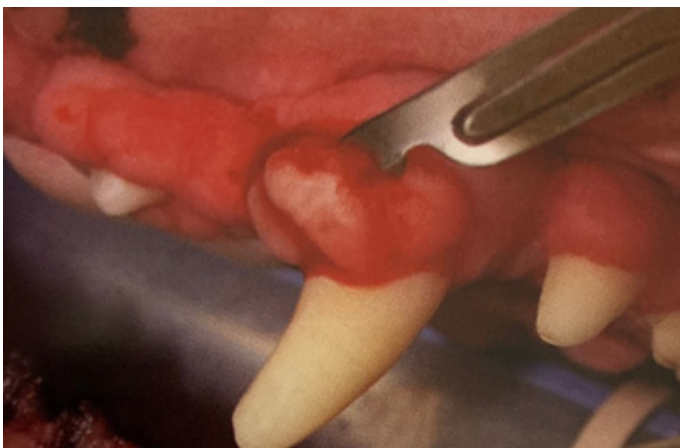
Nerve blocks were placed by injecting 0.5mls Mepivacaine 3% into each location – bilateral infraorbital and inferior alveolar. Pocket depths were determined using a Williams Explorer into the base of the pocket (Figure 2).⁶⁻⁸ Indents were then placed on the buccal side of each pocket approximately 2mm from the location of the epithelial attachment (base of sulcus/pocket) in a coronal direction (Figures 2 and 3), this allows for a 1mm shrinkage of gingiva.^{1,3,5,8} An incision was made with a No. 15 scalpel blade, along the indents to the depth of the underlying tooth surface. The scalpel blade was held at a 45° angle with the tip of the blade

toward the crown of the tooth (Figure 3 and 4).⁶⁻⁸ With this angle the gingiva was cut creating a thin bevelled gingival margin. The excess gingiva was removed using college forceps to reveal healthy crowns (Figure 5). The ends of the incision were tapered into healthy gingiva to create a scalloped contour.¹⁶ Haemorrhage was controlled by applying pressure for 5 minutes with gauze swabs.^{16,7} Teeth were scaled with an Acteon piezoelectric ultrasonic scaler with a Cislak H6/7 universal scaler tip to scale supra-gingivally. A Cislak 13/14 Columbia curette was used in the gingival sulcus to complete the cleaning. Teeth were then polished with fine grit pumice mixed with water to a paste consistency and applied to the teeth using a soft prophyl cup attached to a low-speed hand piece. Mouth was washed and dried with a 3-way syringe to remove any excess pumice or organic matter from the oral cavity. The pharynx was checked and deemed clear.

The patient was turned onto left lateral recumbency. Isoflurane was turned off and the patient was left on oxygen until first sign of swallowing, the endotracheal tube was deflated and removed. The patient was moved to a recovery cage, IV fluids were reduced to 2.5ml/kg and monitored. The patient was given meloxicam post-op for pain and inflammation. Half hour prior to discharge, IV catheter was removed and a bandage placed over the site to assist with haemostasis.

At discharge, owners were informed that Maddison could eat her regular diet. However, if she showed signs of discomfort, then soft food could be fed for a few days.⁶ Owners were given Maxiguard Oral Gel™ and instructed to place a pea size drop on both upper canines twice daily for two weeks to maintain oral hygiene whilst the gum was healing.¹⁶ Owners were instructed to bring Maddison back for a revisit in 2 weeks' time to assess the healing process.

...Continued page 18



(Figure 4)



(Figure 5)

THE ABCS OF VETERINARY DENTISTRY: G IS FOR GINGIVAL ENLARGEMENT DUE TO GINGIVAL HYPERPLASIA. CONTINUED...

A revisit consultation two weeks later showed that the gum had healed well. The owners were shown how to brush Maddison's teeth by the dental nurse and instructed to do so daily using Petosan™ toothpaste and toothbrush. It was explained the importance of daily rigorous oral hygiene to slow down the return and progression of gingival hyperplasia.^{1,3} The owners were informed that regular revisits and scale and polishes would be required to control this condition.^{1,3,6}

Conclusion.

Gingival enlargement if left untreated leads to the progression of periodontal disease due to deep pseudo pockets creating an area for debris and bacteria to accumulate. Treatment is paramount to remove excess gingival tissue and create healthy sulcus depths to control gingival inflammation. Regular oral hygiene and dental prophylaxis is imperative to prevent and/or slow down the return of gingival hyperplasia.

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UNDERSTANDING JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS

Japanese encephalitis (JE) is a mosquito-borne disease primarily affecting pigs and horses. JE virus can also cause disease in people bitten by infected mosquitoes and is a rare but serious health concern.

Japanese encephalitis has recently been detected in piggeries in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia. There are currently no confirmed detections in Western Australia (WA).

Japanese encephalitis is a reportable, acute mosquito-borne viral disease that can cause reproductive losses and encephalitis in susceptible species. The disease occurs mostly in pigs and horses but can also rarely cause disease in people who are bitten by infected mosquitoes.

Japanese encephalitis is not a food safety concern. Commercially produced pork meat or pork products are safe to consume.

For more information about the risk of Japanese encephalitis to human health and human vaccination options, please refer to the Department of Health website.

Animals most commonly become infected through the bite of infected mosquitoes, though vector free transmission of the virus by direct contact, semen and embryos has been reported in pigs. The normal life cycle of Japanese encephalitis cycles between waterbirds, pigs and mosquitoes, which may then spill over to horses and humans.

The most common clinical signs of Japanese encephalitis in pigs are reproductive losses including abortions, mummified foetuses and stillborn or weak piglets. Tremors and convulsions are occasionally seen in pigs up to six months of age.

In horses, most clinical disease is mild and may be unrecognised, however fever, decreased or no appetite, lethargy, wobbliness and in-coordination may occur. Some

horses may die.

Pig and horse owners should be highly vigilant for signs of this disease. If you suspect any animal is showing signs of the disease, you must report it. You can do this by contacting your local veterinarian, your local DPIRD Veterinary Officer or the national Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888. Contacting the hotline will put you in touch with a DPIRD veterinarian.

Pig and horse owners should also manage mosquitoes on their property to minimise potential human and animal exposure to mosquito-borne viruses. This involves emptying, covering or discarding any water holding containers. Permanent effluent ponds or water bodies should be well maintained to prevent mosquito breeding. Speak to your local government environmental health officer for advice if mosquito numbers remain problematic.

For advice on control mosquitoes in piggeries, please refer to the Mosquito Management in Piggeries guidelines.

Good biosecurity practices and restricting contact between pigs and wild birds is also essential.

RESPONSE TO JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS DETECTIONS 2022

The Australian and State and Territory Government Departments of Health and Departments of Agriculture, are working closely together to protect public and animal health.

National working groups of animal biosecurity, communicable disease, human vaccine and arbovirus experts have been established to support the response. Their work includes planning and implementing mosquito surveillance and control measures as well as identifying animal and human populations at risk, and for the roll-out of human vaccines.

DPIRD is undertaking surveillance activities to assist with understanding the distribution of Japanese encephalitis in Australia.

To reduce the likelihood of Japanese encephalitis being introduced to WA through movements of pigs and semen, live pig imports have been suspended and movement controls are in place for semen. For updated information and applications on livestock and commodity movement, please see the DPIRD importing livestock page: <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/livestock-biosecurity/forms-importing-livestock-western-australia>:

It is not known how the virus came into mainland Australia. The movement of infected mosquitoes or migratory waterbirds may have played a part in the virus' spread.

Australia has national plans in place to respond to animal disease incursions. The AUSVETPLAN Response Strategy – Japanese encephalitis outlines the response approach to this disease.

CLINICAL SIGNS IN ANIMALS

Although clinical signs of the disease are rare in species other than pigs and horses, it has been detected in a wide range of species including cattle, sheep, goats, chickens, ducks, dogs, cats, flying foxes, bats, frogs, snakes and lizards.

Pigs

The most common clinical signs in pigs are stillborn or weak piglets, or neonates with neurological signs. Litters from sows and gilts would be expected to be equally affected when the

disease is first introduced.

Piglets under six months of age infected after birth can develop encephalitis where signs such as paddling, tremors or convulsions may be seen. Wasting, depression or hindlimb paralysis may be seen in suckling and weaner piglets. Adult sows do not typically show obvious signs of disease. Boars may experience infertility and oedematous, congested (enlarged) testicles

Horses

Horses and other livestock are considered dead-end hosts and do not develop viraemia substantial enough to infect mosquito vectors. They therefore do not play a role in transmission to other animals or people.

Many infected horses will show no clinical signs while others may show mild clinical signs such as fever, anorexia, lethargy, and jaundice that generally last for 2-3 days. In more severe cases encephalitis can also occur. Encephalitis can present as incoordination, difficulty swallowing, impaired vision, and rarely a hyperexcitable form can occur. Some horses with encephalitis recover but for others the disease is fatal. JE has also been reported in donkeys.

“Japanese encephalitis is a reportable, acute mosquito-borne viral disease that can cause reproductive losses and encephalitis in susceptible species. The disease occurs mostly in pigs and horses but can also rarely cause disease in people who are bitten by infected mosquitoes.”

Healthy WA

WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS IN YOUR ANIMALS

Japanese encephalitis is a reportable disease. If you suspect JE in any animal immediately contact your local DPIRD Veterinary Officer or phone the Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline (1800 675 888).

Subsidised disease testing and investigation is available in cases that are consistent with JE. For information about subsidised disease testing, contact your local veterinarian or see the Significant Disease Investigation Program webpage.

For more information about how to increase biosecurity practices in your piggery, please refer to the Pork Biosecurity Manual.

RISK TO HUMAN HEALTH

For human health information visit the Healthy WA website

https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/J_M/Mosquito-borne-diseases-overseas.

Japanese encephalitis is not a human food safety concern.

HOW TO SPOT A PUPPY SCAM



The pandemic pet boom means record numbers of Australians recently bought, or are looking to buy, a puppy. Unfortunately, purchasing a precious pooch is also fertile ground for fraudsters, with the consumer watchdog reporting Australians were conned out of more than \$3 million in 2021.

So, how do you spot a puppy scam?

PETspot has four top tips to ensure you're dealing with a responsible breeder.

1

IF IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, IT PROBABLY IS

"Although a breeder might claim to be responsible, we always recommend doing your own research to ensure the breeder is who they say they are," says PETspot CEO, Nick Figliano.

Some 'too good to be true' tell-tale signs include:

- The price is well below market rate.
- Ads that say that the puppy is 'free' if you pay for shipping.
- Puppies for sale are younger than two months old.
- Promises the pet will be transported directly to you after a small up-front 'deposit', which often result in requests for multiple extra payments to cover unexpected costs, additional shipping fees or vet bills.

2

A PICTURE SPEAKS A THOUSAND WORDS

"There's no doubt that puppy scammers are very good at what they do. They often use false or stolen photos of puppies, certificates, breeder ID numbers and other details.

"Always browse through the images provided and reverse search them online to see if you can find the same images from other sources, especially from stock image websites," says Nick.

"Try to find reviews of the breeder online or check with a reputable breeder's association. Scammers often put pages up and take them down quickly, so if you think you see something that's not quite right take a screenshot of it and report it to Scam Watch,"

3

IF SHOPPING ONLINE, DO YOU RESEARCH AND TAKE YOUR TIME

It sounds like common sense, but trusting a stranger on the internet after looking at some adorable online puppy pictures is an easy trap.

"Buying a puppy is an emotional decision and sometimes, we do crazy things when we're in love with our potential new pet – it can be surprisingly easy for logic to go out the window," says Nick.

"If you're serious about purchasing from a breeder online, ask if you can come to visit the puppy. While some breeders may not allow prospective buyers to visit their homes for security and safety reasons, the pandemic has taught up there are plenty of ways we can connect virtually."

- Have a live video call with your breeder. Don't be afraid to ask questions about your potential pets' parents, their health history and the breeding program more generally – an enthusiastic and passionate breeder will lay all their cards on the table.

"If you're dealing with a breeder who won't chat on the phone or have a video call with you, that's a huge red flag,"

4

GET PROFESSIONAL HELP

If you're feeling overwhelmed by the choice online or you're just not sure who to trust, seek out an expert in the space.

"At PETspot, our mission is to connect reputable breeders to well-informed, well-prepared prospective puppy owners," says Nick.

"We have created a strenuous code of ethics to fact-check dog breeders which includes providing proof of registration with regulatory bodies, showing health tests of the litter of puppies and an identity check."

PETSpot now has more than 400 authenticated breeders on its platform.

If you have been the victim of a pet scam, you can report it to the ACCC via Scam Watch:

<https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/>

CITIZEN SCIENCE KEEPS WILD BIRDS IN FLIGHT

DATA FROM BIRDING APPS OFFER UTILITY TO RESEARCHERS AND MANAGERS

Source: S.J. & Jessie E. Quinney College of Natural Resources, Utah State University

New research examines the accuracy of information produced by citizen science apps for monitoring bird populations and found that it could actually offer a lot of utility for researchers, with some caveats.

Using the eyes and ears of public volunteers can stretch the reach of science, according to a new analysis from Erica Stuber from the Department of Wildland Resources and the Ecology Center. Stuber and a team of researchers examined the accuracy of information produced by citizen science apps for monitoring bird populations. They compared publicly-produced data with officially tracked numbers from monitoring programs and found that, with some refinement, data from citizen scientists could offer a lot of utility for researchers.

Citizen science uses volunteers from the general public to collect a variety of information to answer particular questions or to collect observations -- and report it to a shared database. Over the past decade such collective public power has benefited science efforts in all sorts of ways, from sorting images of the cosmos to mapping mosquito populations. But the big data collected by such efforts is now outpacing scientists' ability to effectively use it, especially when it comes to decisions about wildlife populations.

Which is a shame, Stuber said, because data from such public efforts are often collected with more detail and across a wider geographical range than professional researchers can manage by themselves. If there was a way to better filter, focus and apply such data, it could be a valuable resource in a climate of shrinking restoration budgets, insufficient feet-on-the-ground and intimidatingly vast areas that wildlife depend on to survive and thrive.

A key step toward better using the available information is to understand and test the data coming out of such projects by directly comparing citizen science numbers with more traditional monitoring methods.

The app eBird, developed and maintained by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, has been around for 20 years. It has several attractive features, including tools to help identify species and GPS tracking of sighting locations. It allows birdwatchers to keep

track of their birding activity while making the data collected openly available to others. A popular product, eBird has produced an inordinate amount of data, but not always in a form that researchers can directly use.

Every three years the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates the number of bald eagle nesting sites in territories across the U.S. to track how the population is faring. Stuber partnered with the agency and the eBird science team to identify the type of information that could benefit agency efforts, and to compare that filtered app data with official counts of bald eagle populations. When Stuber compared the official numbers with numbers from the app, she found them surprisingly well-matched. She's repeated this comparison with other bird counts and is finding patterns.

Citizen science uses volunteers from the general public to collect a variety of information to answer particular questions or to collect observations - and report it to a shared database.

"The data from citizen science isn't always right on target, but it is still useful," she said. For instance, the data from citizen scientists seem to be a good match for tracking the timing of migrating waterfowl, Stuber said, but it's not always super accurate in pinpointing waterfowl abundance across seasons.

"If we can begin to identify the circumstances when it is most accurate, and when it misses the mark, and why, we'll be able to use this massive resource to augment official monitoring efforts that can be hugely expensive and often dangerous."

Although numbers from the citizen science app won't replace official counts of wild bird populations, it can complement them, she said. And it can communicate nuance and detail that official counts sometimes don't catch. There is still a lot of work to be done, but these comparisons create a baseline of information to launch similar work.



HELPING NEUTERED CATS AVOID OBESITY

ESSENTIAL NUTRIENT COULD HELP NEUTERED CATS AVOID OBESITY

Increasing the essential nutrient choline in cat food can reduce the common risk of obesity in spayed and neutered cats, researchers at University of Guelph have found.

Researchers discovered kittens that consumed higher amounts of choline after being spayed or neutered voluntarily ate less and gained less weight and body fat than those that consumed choline at the currently recommended levels.

“The goal of this research is really to do a call on the pet food industry to change the diets that are currently available and include higher levels of choline — not just the minimum needed to prevent deficiencies, but an additional volume that would support optimal growth and benefit fat metabolism,” said Dr. Adronie Verbrugghe, professor in U of G’s Ontario Veterinary College who studies pet nutrition and obesity.

Verbrugghe is also the Royal Canin Veterinary Diets Endowed Chair in Canine and Feline Clinical Nutrition. Her latest research was featured in the Toronto Star.

About 79 per cent of domestic cats are spayed or neutered. The procedure, common for population control and other health benefits, is one of the highest risk factors for feline obesity, studies show.

Published recently in PLOS ONE, the U of G study involved a

small sample of male domestic short-haired kittens that were neutered at six months of age.

The kittens were divided into two groups, monitored, weighed and fed the same diet three times daily for 12 weeks after their neuter surgery. Housed together, one group received additional

“The additional choline did not impact lean muscle mass growth or impact growth itself, but reduced excess body mass,”

Dr. Adronie Verbrugghe

choline supplemented in their food and one did not.

Choline, an essential nutrient, is already found in cat food and is a field of ongoing research, particularly for feline fat metabolism and liver health, Verbrugghe said. The opportunity to study how it might also act as a supplement to prevent obesity in growing kittens naturally presented itself, she added.

“These cats, right at that time when they’re spayed and neutered, provided an excellent scenario to test that,” said Verbrugghe, who worked on the study with Hannah Godfrey, a PhD student in biomedical sciences. “The additional choline did not impact lean muscle mass growth or impact growth itself,





TOO THIN



THIN



IDEAL



OVERWEIGHT



OBESE



but reduced excess body mass,” Godfrey said. Pet owners should be more informed about benefits of dietary changes

Researchers used male kittens that were housed together. Researchers found kittens that consumed additional choline voluntarily ate less, and the kittens that consumed choline according to current industry standards gained more weight and body fat.

Given that obesity in cats can be prevented, Verbrugge said, pet owners should be aware the energy levels of spayed or neutered cats decrease. The absence of sex hormones makes them less active, affects appetite and changes their energy metabolism. Therefore, de-sexed cats should be fed less, she said.

“Every spay and neuter procedure should go together with a recommendation on how to adjust the cat’s diet and I think nowadays that is not happening enough,” Verbrugge said.

Cats are still under-represented among patients in veterinary practices, she added, most likely because trips to the vet can be stressful for them.

This research was funded by a collaborative research development grant from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, in partnership with Elmira Pet Products.

The choline supplement was provided by Balchem. Acquisition of a DXA scanner was supported by funding from the Canada Foundation for Innovation and the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation.

Contact: Dr. Adronie Verbrugge

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WSAVA FREE COURSE

WSAVA OFFERS FREE COURSE MODULES FOR MEMBERS

A three-module online course on vaccination has been launched by the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA). Available free of charge to WSAVA members, the course offers foundational learning on all aspects of vaccine practice for those keen to develop their knowledge in this important area of veterinary medicine.

The course is based on the Global Vaccination Guidelines created by the WSAVA’s Vaccination Guidelines Group (VGG). They provide globally applicable recommendations on best practice for the vaccination of dogs and cats to help veterinarians to undertake the practice in a standard and evidence-based way. Each module features narrated and interactive e-learning, with videos, downloadable resources, multiple choice questions and drag and drop activities to help learners test their knowledge.

The modules are available in English with other languages to follow shortly. They can be accessed here:

<https://bit.ly/3OUTvLp> RACE accreditation is underway.

The course has been generously supported by MSD Animal Health, committed Partner of the VGG.

Dr Richard Squires chairs the VGG, a team of experts from around

the world which provides evidence-based scientific advice to the global veterinary profession on optimum vaccination practice. Commenting on the launch of the modules, he said: “The VGG’s goal is to enhance the understanding and practice of vaccination in companion animals globally and we are delighted that our Vaccination Guidelines are one of the most frequently downloaded resources on the WSAVA’s website.”

“We hope that this new course will encourage even more veterinarians to update their knowledge in this evolving area of veterinary medicine and that they will then join with us in driving positive change in vaccination, ensuring that even more companion animals are vaccinated in a scientifically-based, robust and safer fashion.”

The WSAVA represents more than 200,000 veterinarians worldwide through its 115 member associations and works to enhance standards of clinical care for companion animals. Its core activities include the development of WSAVA Global Guidelines in key areas of veterinary practice, including pain management, nutrition and vaccination, together with lobbying on important issues affecting companion animal care worldwide.



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RESPONSIBLE VET MED DISPOSAL

When it comes to discarding unused, unwanted or expired medicines, Australia is a nation of hoarders, according to a study from Griffith University.

The 2018 study "You don't throw these things out: an exploration of medicines retention and disposal practices in Australian homes" concluded that many households don't properly store or dispose of old medicines. Old and forgotten medicines are routinely kept in multiple locations around households. This creates risks for accidental ingestion by children and pets or decreased efficacy.

The same is true for veterinary medicines, says Animal Medicines Australia, the peak body for Australia's animal health companies. It's premier pet report, *Pets in Australia: a national survey of pets & people* established Australia is a nation of pet lovers with 69% of households living with at least one pet.

Launching the Vet-Med Disposal Campaign to help veterinarians, farmers and pet owners dispose of medicines safely, AMA's Executive Director Ben Stapley says greater consumer awareness of the risks of keeping expired medicines on the farm or at home is needed.

"Disposing of old, expired and unused medicines responsibly, whether for your human or animal family members, is essential to safeguarding your health and to protect the environment," says Mr Stapley.

"There are several easy ways pet owners and farmers can safely and responsibly dispose of unwanted and old medicines.

"The Return Unwanted Medicines Project (the RUM Project) provides an easy, free avenue to clean out your kitchen, pantry and bathroom drawers," says Mr Stapley.

"Firstly, read the labels on all those unused medicines and consider if your pet still needs them. Check the expiry date then place all unneeded meds in a bag or container for safe transport and return them to your local pharmacy, where your pharmacist will put them in a secure bin for disposal."

Farmers looking to safely dispose of vet meds also have convenient disposal options at hand.

"Farmers tend to have larger quantities of vet meds to dispose of because of the size and number of their animals. Leftover medicines in one litre containers or less, can be disposed of at participating pharmacies in Australia through the RUM Project.

"Larger quantities in containers holding one litre or more may be eligible for Agsafe's ClemClear® program, which is also free for products carrying the drumMUSTER logo."

"As with human medicines, keeping expired vet meds in the home or on-farm for possible DIY diagnosis at a later date is never a good idea," says Mr. Stapley.

"Self-diagnosing your pet, unless you are a trained veterinarian, can delay vital medical treatment your pet may need. Similarly, using expired animal medicines may be ineffectual or even dangerous so if you have a sick animal, always consult your vet. And when it comes to those old veterinary medicines lying about the place, a good rule of thumb is if in doubt, dispose of it responsibly."

"Larger quantities in containers holding one litre or more may be eligible for Agsafe's ClemClear® program, which is also free for products carrying the drumMUSTER logo."

For more information and to check eligibility criteria go to animalmedicines.org.au, www.chemclear.org.au, www.returnmed.com.au or talk to your local pharmacist.

For more information, please contact:

Alex Speed, Animal Medicines Australia

a.speed@animalmedicines.org.au

or 0474 740 808



PETS IN THE RENTAL CRISIS

“There are far too many pet surrenders based on rental and housing issues across all age groups”

Companion Animal Network Australia is calling for a national law to save pet victims of the rental crisis

Leading animal welfare charity Companion Animal Network Australia (Australia CAN) is calling on the federal government to take a national approach to securing pet friendly rentals amid a historic housing crisis that is causing people to choose between their pet or a home.

“It’s already harder to rent due to the rental and housing crisis and even harder to rent with pets, causing people to have to choose between their much-loved companion animals and a home,” said Trish Ennis, CEO of Australia CAN.

Formerly Animal Welfare League Australia, Australia CAN represents the companion animal welfare work of six member agencies (NSW, QLD, VIC, SA, WA and TAS) that provide rescue, shelter, re-homing, fostering, health care and enrichment services to more than 50,000 animals every year across Australia.

“Our members are reporting far too many pet surrenders solely based on rental and housing issues across all age groups,” said Ms Ennis. “They are also finding that people are reluctant to argue against their landlord or strata’s ‘no pets’ policy because they are unwilling to risk losing their home or are unaware of their rights.”

Australia CAN member Animal Welfare League SA reported a 1.8% increase in pets surrendered due to rental issues in one year (7.5% in FY20/21 to 9.3% in FY21/22). According to member Animal Welfare League QLD, people needing to surrender their pet due to accommodation reasons has increased from 19% to 27% during the past two years. In May 2022 alone, 108 pets (79 dogs and 29 cats) were surrendered to Australia CAN’s member agencies across the country.

“We need a national, strategic approach in imposing regulations preventing landlords from discriminating against people with pets and contributing to thousands of animals being surrendered to shelters,” said Ms Ennis.

Australia CAN Rent with Pets program

Australia CAN champions the benefits of the human-animal

bond and promotes responsible pet ownership through national campaigns, partnerships and initiatives, including its Rent with Pets program which provides information, advice and resources to support tenants and landlords to be responsible pet owner tenants and welcoming landlords, and encourage pet friendly rental laws.

On a mission to create a more pet friendly Australia, Australia CAN wants a national law similar to what Victoria brought in last year where landlords cannot refuse a tenant’s request for a pet without approval from a tribunal.

“It would save money, protect lives and avoid a lot of stress. We know this causes mental health issues for people, as well as disruption and separation anxiety for their pets,” said Ms Ennis. “The increase in surrenders is also putting huge pressure on shelters and rescue groups across the country as many struggle with space and resources to care for these animals.”

Australia CAN’s Rent with Pets program aims to increase awareness around the surrender of pets to shelters due to difficulty finding pet friendly rental properties, and how we can all help to stop this.

“Many landlords and rental agents have a ‘no pets’ rental tenancy policy because they may think it’s easier to manage a property without pets or the pets might cause damage,” said Ms Ennis. “We know that a well-managed pet-friendly rental can deliver great economic outcomes for those willing to introduce a ‘pets considered’ policy.”

For instance, pet owning tenants are generally willing to pay more rent, pet friendly properties rent faster and reduce your advertising spend, and responsible pet owners can make excellent tenants and want to hold longer leases.

“Renting to more pet owners reduces animal euthanasia and results in better animal welfare and outcomes for tenants and landlords,” said Ms Ennis.

For a summary of rental laws in each state, visit Rent with Pets at <https://rentwithpets.com.au/tips-for-tenants/a-state-by-state-guide-to-the-laws-around-pet-ownership-and-rental-properties/>





WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Australia CAN shares advice on supporting pet friendly rentals and to relieve some of the pressure on animal welfare groups.

- Sign our pledge and contact your local MP to encourage pet friendly rental laws in your state.
- Adopt a pet from a shelter or rescue group, or one of our members
- Ask people to become responsible pet owners and help others to do the same.
- If you're a landlord or property manager, encourage responsible renting with pets by adding to advertisements 'will consider pets with references'.
- If you are searching for a pet friendly rental and a landlord refuses to allow pets, provide a pet resume and offer to pay a pet bond to cover the costs for cleaning or repairs and give them peace of mind. Here are some tips to write a stellar pet resume.
- If it's impossible to keep your pet at your rental, consider family and friends or short-term pet boarding facility for the time being.

Visit [Rentwithpets.com.au](https://rentwithpets.com.au) and learn how to work with each other to achieve the goal of no surrenders due to rental refusal.



THE HEALING BENEFITS OF HEMP FOR AUSSIE PETS



Australian natural pet care brand **BUDDYPET** (buddypet.co) produces a comprehensive range of hemp-based dietary health supplements and grooming products that target common pet health concerns from the management of arthritis symptoms and inflammatory skin conditions to pet anxiety. **BUDDYPET**, established in 2017, develop Australian grown and manufactured animal health products that contain 100% ethically sourced and organically grown hemp from the Tasmanian hinterland.

BUDDYPET works directly with Australian farmers to selectively breed-specific hemp cultivars that produce pristine quality, high-yielding raw material for BUDDYPET products. All BUDDYPET health supplements are made from hemp seed. Hemp seeds are an excellent source of essential nutrients such as protein, fatty acids, fibre, vitamins and minerals, without excess calories, starches and sugars. As such, hemp seed oil is an excellent nutritional supplement to support and improve pets' health.

Dr Ailsa Rutherford, Head of Animal Health at BuddyPet, formulates all BUDDYPET products to ensure their optimal efficacy and safety. Dr Ailsa is a senior practicing veterinarian and a member of the Australia and New Zealand College of Veterinary Surgeons in Emergency and Critical Care Chapter and Veterinarian Practitioners Board of NSW.

With close to 29 million pets in Australia and three in five households owning one or more pets, Australia has one of the highest pet ownership rates in the world. 'Today's pets are treated more like family members, and along with that comes shifting ideas about the types of products pet owners purchase for them. As people all around the world are becoming more health-conscious, their daily routines and choices influence their pets' nutrition, fueling a movement towards natural health products and ethically sourced and environmentally sustainable superfoods like hemp.

Dr Ailsa Rutherford, a believer in integrative medicine and holistic care of pets, combines natural therapies with Western medicine at her Byron Bay veterinarian clinic. "Integrative medicine involves combining conventional medicines with evidence-based natural medicines as well as looking at diet, lifestyle, and mental health to deliver holistic care. In practical terms, it means that when an animal comes in with a problem, we're trying to look at all angles from which we can improve that animal's health and well-being to help them - through diet, exercise, physical therapies, and drug therapies where needed. Natural medicines like hemp seed oil can play an important role in the holistic care of our pets." Dr Ailsa Rutherford, Head of Animal Health. For more information, visit buddypet.co.

Dr Ailsa says that hemp seed oil supplementation has immense health benefits for both healthy and unwell pets, pointing out that hemp seed oil is also vegan and gluten-free.

"As more and more people look towards a sustainable way of living for themselves and their pets, they are using hemp seed oil as a supplement both in healthy animals as a part of a healthy diet and for pets with health issues to help relieve symptoms and support the body's natural defences. Hemp seed oil is of particular interest as a supplement for our animals as it contains a high essential fatty acid content in an optimal ratio of omega-6 to omega-3s."

Essential fatty acids are important to maintain a healthy coat and skin; the anti-inflammatory omega-3 and gamma-linolenic fatty acids can help improve cardiovascular health, reduce inflammation in skin and joints, slow cancer cell growth, and support the immune system and reduce the risk of cognitive degeneration. Hemp seeds are also a source of Vitamin E and contain powerful antioxidant properties." Dr Ailsa Rutherford, Head of Animal Health, BuddyPet

1 Pets in Australia: A national survey of pets and people, via Animal Medicines Australia, 2019

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ABOUT BUDDYPET

BUDDYPET is an Australian-owned company with a clear vision to bring hemp's healing benefits to every pet in Australia. From the organic seeds sewn in Tasmanian soil to the meticulous formulation of each product in the BUDDYPET range, every step of the process is designed to help protect and nurture pets with absolute confidence. A thought leader in the natural pet care industry, BUDDYPET creates high-value pet health products with a strategic focus on nutrition and health supplements to fight chronic inflammation, backed by a team of scientists and senior practicing veterinarian, Dr Ailsa Rutherford, as Head of Animal Health.

BUDDYPET products are made in Australia with 100% Australian ingredients, available now via www.buddypet.co and selected independent pet retailers across Australia.

The BUDDYPET range includes dietary health supplements and grooming products for dogs and cats. Vegan supplements include: BUDDYPET Marley, for anxiety and itchy skin; BUDDYPET Milly, a turmeric and hemp seed oil blend for health support in senior dogs; BUDDYPET Luna, a fish oil and hemp seed oil blend for health support in senior cats; BUDDYPET Cooper, hemp protein for digestive health. Grooming products include: BUDDYPET Poppy, a hemp seed oil shampoo for dry, itchy skin and dandruff; BUDDYPET Maisie, hemp seed oil shampoo for sensitive skin; BUDDYPET George, hemp seed oil conditioner for sensitive skin and BUDDYPET Toby, hemp seed oil skin balm to support wound healing.



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For further details, interviews and images, please contact:

Nicole Ford -Head of PR and Social

n.ford@buddypet.co | 0414-554-356

SURVEY UNCOVERS MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PAY AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS OF AUSTRALIA'S VETS

PROFESSIONALS AUSTRALIA LAUNCHES SURVEY TO UNCOVER MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PAY AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS OF AUSTRALIA'S VETERINARIANS

Professionals Australia – the union for Australia's veterinarians, has launched a new national survey to investigate the pay, conditions and workplace experiences of Australia's vets.

Professionals Australia CEO Jill McCabe said that, Australia's vets would be comprehensively surveyed on their pay, hours of work, experiences and attitudes about working as a vet.

"With the explosion of pet ownership over the pandemic more Australians rely on vets to care for their companion pets. However, vets also play a vital role in other areas of animal health and well-being, including large animals, livestock and wildlife.

"While being a vet is perceived as an attractive and rewarding career, we have heard from many vets that the reality of their working life is very different.

"The day to day work of many vets is characterised by long hours, poor pay and stressful working environments.

"Many vets work 10 hour shifts, six days a week, manage high workloads and deal with emotionally charged situations every day.

"Despite a significant outlay of time and money in their tertiary education, vets often fail to see a return commensurate with their investment. They become stressed, dissatisfied with their career and ultimately want to leave the industry .

Ms McCabe said that the survey will provide important data on the working arrangements of veterinarians that will be used by the union to advocate for better pay and conditions for vets through the industrial relations system.

"This survey will provide hard data on the current pay and working conditions of Australia's vets, that we will use to bring about change in the careers of our dedicated, highly skilled and hard-working vets across Australia."

The Professionals Australia Veterinarian Employment Survey can be completed here.



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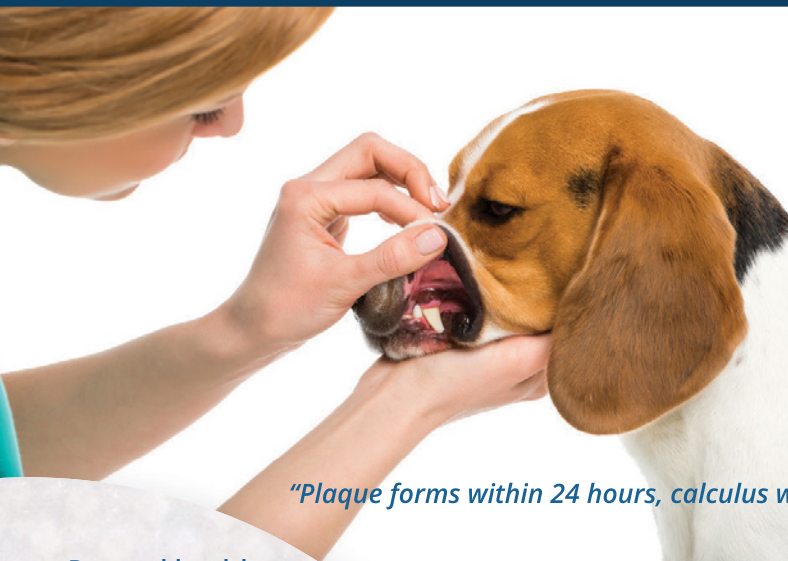
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BRUCE ADDISON, Veterinary Microbiologist • Addison Biological Laboratory, Inc.



"Plaque forms within 24 hours, calculus within 3 days and gingivitis begins as early as 2 weeks."

— WSAVA.org

Pet oral health care is an ongoing challenge for pet owners and veterinary teams. Periodontal disease is the number one health problem in small animal patients, according to the American Kennel Club. [↗](#)

By age 3, more than 80 percent of dogs and cats have some form of periodontal, or gum disease. Pet owner resistance to in-clinic dental procedures that involve x-rays and anesthesia is well known.

To optimize pet health, **the starting point for comprehensive oral care must be in the home** where bad breath is the primary warning sign. Most veterinary clinic personnel miss the opportunity to educate pet owners about daily oral care and promote in-home solutions for their pets.

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"Zinc is well documented to tie up sulfur compounds in the oral cavity which are a primary cause of bad breath, the first signal of impending dental disease." — Bruce Addison, Veterinary Microbiologist, President and Founder

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LEPTOSPIROSIS IN DOGS

Pet Insurance Australia looks at Leptospirosis in dogs and how pet owners can help keep their pets safe, particularly after heavy rainfall.

“There has been an increase in cases of Leptospirosis in dogs,” Nadia Crighton from Pet Insurance Australia says. “This is very concerning for a lot of pet owners, particularly those that have been affected by heavy rainfall.”

Leptospirosis is transmitted by rodents’ urine with dogs picking up this disease by drinking from contaminated ponds and puddles. This can lead to serious complications. Some Pet Insurance Australia veterinary treatment claims for leptospirosis treatment in the last 12mths have been upwards of \$3,000.

“If you think you have a rodent problem at your home, contact a pest control company quickly to get on top of the issue. If your local off-leash area is flooded consider only on-lead walking and discourage your pet from drinking from puddles or walking on muddy parklands.”

Nadia Crighton from Pet Insurance Australia

“Remembering that this is only a snapshot of those who actually have pet insurance, so the figures could be much higher around the community,” Crighton says. “The good news is there is a vaccine that is commonly used in Queensland. We strongly advise dog owners, particularly those in rain-affected areas around Australia to seek this vaccination from their local veterinarian.”

In the past year, PIA has seen a large spike in claims related to Leptospirosis during the month of March when heavy rainfall was seen around the country.

“This is certainly becoming a big problem and pet owners do need to be vigilant in keeping their pets safe,” Crighton recommends.

“If you think you have a rodent problem at your home, contact a pest control company quickly to get on top of the issue,” Crighton says. “If your local off-leash area is flooded consider only on-lead walking and discourage your pet from drinking from puddles or walking on muddy parklands.”

Vaccination is key. If you are concerned speak with your local veterinarian about vaccinating your beloved companion animal.

“Leptospirosis can be prevented,” Crighton says. “If you are concerned or are living in a high construction area where rats could be prevalent seek out a vaccination to protect your dog.”

SYMPTOMS OF LEPTOSPIROSIS IN DOGS CAN INCLUDE:

- Sudden fever and illness
- Stiffness in muscles
- Shivering
- Reluctance to move
- Lack of appetite
- Increased thirst and urination
- Vomiting & or Diarrhoea
- Dark red gums
- Change in breathing
- Discharge from nose

OTHER TIPS INCLUDE:

- Keeping dogs on a lead
- Do not allow your dog to play in ponds or puddles
- Keep your pet’s area rodent-free
- Remove food scraps
- Stay away from flooded parks and muddy areas



AGELESS SPECIES

We helped track 77 species for up to 60 years to try to reveal the secrets of long life. And some don't seem to age at all

Ever wondered about the secret to a long life? Perhaps understanding the lifespans of other animals with backbones (or “vertebrates”) might help us unlock this mystery.

You've probably heard turtles live a long (and slow) life. At 190 years, Jonathan the Seychelles giant tortoise might be the oldest land animal alive. But why do some animals live longer than others?

Jonathan the tortoise lives on St Helena Island, a small, remote British colony west of Angola, Africa. St Helena Tourist Board/EPA

Research published today by myself and colleagues in the journal *Science* investigates the various factors that may affect longevity (lifespan) and ageing in reptiles and amphibians.

We used long-term data from 77 different species of reptiles and amphibians – all cold-blooded animals. Our work is a collaboration between more than 100 scientists with up to 60 years of data on animals that were caught, marked, released and re-caught.

These data were then compared to existing information on warm-blooded animals, and several different ideas about ageing emerged.



Jonathan the tortoise lives on St Helena Island, a small, remote British colony west of Angola, Africa. St Helena Tourist Board/EPA

WHAT FACTORS MIGHT BE IMPORTANT?

Cold-blooded or warm-blooded

One popular line of thought we investigated is the idea that cold-blooded animals such as frogs, salamanders and reptiles live longer because they age more slowly.

These animals have to rely on external temperatures to help regulate their body temperature. As a result they have slower “metabolisms” (the rate at which they convert what they eat and drink into energy).

Animals that are small and warm-blooded, such as mice, age quickly since they have faster metabolisms – and turtles age slowly since they have slower metabolisms. By this logic, cold-blooded animals should have lower metabolisms than similar-sized warm-blooded ones.

However, we found cold-blooded animals don't age more slowly than similar-sized warm-blooded ones. In fact, the variation in ageing in the reptiles and amphibians we looked at was much greater than previously predicted. So the reasons vertebrates age are more complex than this idea sets out.

Environmental temperature

Another related theory is that environmental temperature itself could be a driver for longevity. For instance, animals in colder areas might be processing food more slowly and have periods of inactivity, such as with hibernation – leading to an overall increase in lifespan.

Under this scenario, both cold and warm-blooded animals in colder areas would live longer than animals in warmer areas.

We found this was true for reptiles as a group, but not for amphibians. Importantly, this finding has implications for the effects of global warming, which might lead to reptiles ageing faster in permanently warmer environments.

Protection

One suggestion is that animals with certain types of protections, such as protruding spines, armour, venom or shells, also don't age as fast and therefore live longer.

A lot of energy is put into producing these protections, which can allow animals to live longer by making them less vulnerable to predation. However, could it be the very fact of having these protections allows animals to age more slowly?

Our work found this to be true. It seems having such protections does lead to animals living longer. This is especially true for turtles, which have hard shell protection and incredibly long lifespans.

We'll need to conduct more research to figure out why just having protections is linked to a longer life.

One species of crocodile studied, *Crocodylus johnsoni*, has a powerful armoured body with protruding scales that protect it from predation. Shutterstock

Reproduction

Finally, it has been posited that perhaps longevity is linked to how late into life an animal reproduces.

If they can keep reproducing later into life, then natural selection would drive this ability, generation to generation, allowing these animals to live longer than those that reproduce early and can't continue to do so.

Indeed, we found animals that start producing offspring at a later age do seem to live longer lives. Sleepy lizards (or shinglebacks) are a great example. They don't reproduce until they're about five years old, and live until they're close to 50!



The Viviparous lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) is one of the cold-blooded species we studied.

Read more: Breakthrough allows scientists to determine the age of endangered native fish using DNA

The challenge in understanding ageing

To understand ageing, we need a lot of data on the same animals. That's simply because if we want to know how long a species lives, we have to keep catching the same individuals over and over, across large spans of time.

This is "longitudinal" research. Luckily, it's exactly what some scientists have committed themselves to. It's also what my team is doing with sleepy lizards, *Tiliqua rugosa*. These lizards have been studied continuously at Bunday Bore station in the Mid North of South Australia since 1982.

The sleepy lizard is one of the species used in the longevity study. As far as we know, this species lives up to 50 years. Mike Gardner

Here, more than 13,000 lizards have been caught over 40 years of study. Some have been caught up to 60 times! But given the 45-year longevity of these lizards, we've been studying them for a shorter time than some of them live. By keeping the survey work going we might find they live even longer.

Some animals' chance of dying isn't linked to age

Another interesting part of this research was finding, for a



The sleepy lizard is one of the species used in the longevity study. As far as we know, this species lives up to 50 years.

range of animals, that their chance of dying is just as small when they're quite old compared to when they're young. This "negligible ageing" is found in at least one species across each of frogs, salamanders, lizards, crocodiles and, of course, in tortoises like Jonathan.

We're not quite sure why this is. The next challenge is to find out – perhaps by analysing species genomes. Knowing some animals have negligible ageing means we can target these species for future investigations.

Understanding what drives long life in other animals might lead to different biomedical targets to study humans too. We might not live to Jonathan the tortoise's age, but we could theoretically use this knowledge to develop therapies that help stop some of the ageing process in us.

For now, healthy eating and exercising remain surer ways to a longer life.

Read more: The search to extend lifespan is gaining ground, but can we truly reverse the biology of ageing?

Sleepy lizards are a kind of blue-tongued skink, found only in Australia.

by Mike Gardner, Flinders University originally published on The Conversation

<https://theconversation.com>



One species of crocodile studied, *Crocodylus johnsoni*, has a powerful armoured body with protruding scales that protect it from predation

THE 2022 GREAT AUSTRALIAN DOG SURVEY

It's a human's world and dogs are just living in it - but they're also sleeping between our bed sheets, keeping us company while we work, earning cash and earning themselves a spot at the pub, the results of the 2022 Great Australian Dog Survey has found.

Scratch, the Aussie dog food company that puts dogs and the planet before profit, surveyed the owners of over 12,700 Aussie dogs to dig up the dirt on attitudes towards our furry friends and their perceived role in society, and the results are in!

THE FINDINGS WE'RE CHASING OUR TAILS OVER

Aussie dog owners (which make up around 40% of the population) are becoming less interested in having kids, with 1 in 3 respondents (37%) desiring children less since becoming a dog owner. This is up from 33% in 2020.

This could be linked to nighttimes being a family affair without adding children into the mix: 65% of dogs sleep in their owners' bedrooms. Of those, 73% are allowed on the bed, and 56% sleep in the sheets.

Dogs truly are a key part of Aussie families. Half of all dog owners (50%) say it's been harder to cope with losing their dog than it has been when losing a human. Given how much they mean to us, it's no surprise that we don't agree with current government legislation labelling dogs as objects. 8 in 10 Aussies believe that dogs deserve to be seen as more than 'property' by Australian law.

If that wasn't enough to bark about, 2 in 5 dog owners (40%) believe their dogs might even be a part of the LGBTQIA+ family.

The survey sheds insight into the way Aussies love and care for their dogs, covering:

- **Money, savings and work**
- **Travel, holidays and leisure**
- **Family planning**
- **The top 10 dog breeds**
- **COVID-19**
- **Dog health and nutrition**

Scratch co-founder and CEO, Mike Halligan, said, "We did our first Great Aussie Dog Survey in 2020, and we couldn't believe the results. A lot has changed in society since then so we wanted to follow up and find out how the lives of Aussie dogs have changed. The results have left us laughing, crying and scratching our heads!"

THE BREAKDOWN

MONEY, SAVINGS AND WORK

Aussies are happy to splash cash on their pups. Three quarters (74%) purchased their dog for over \$1000.

The majority of dog owners (61%) are spending anywhere between \$1,000 to \$4,000 on their dogs per year, and 73% of owners buy their dogs new toys at least every two months.

More than half of all dog owners would take a pay cut if it meant spending more time with their furry friends, and one in three (35%) have negotiated to work from home in order to spend more time with their pooches - 52% of respondents cite that their workplace isn't dog-friendly.

Dog owners want to be able to live comfortably with their dogs. 78% say they would spend more on renting or buying property so that their dwelling suits their dog's needs. On that, 1 in 5 Aussies (22%) have lied to their landlord about their furry friend.

Dogs can be money makers too, with 7% making money or being compensated for their presence on social media. While the percentage may be small, 7% of the sample equates to 900 dogs - that's a lot of income-earning doggos!

TRAVEL, HOLIDAYS AND LEISURE

Respondents cited the biggest difficulty of dog ownership as finding a dog-sitter when going away (37%), and 83% said their dogs make it harder to holiday.

2 in 3 dog owners (66%) would like the opportunity to be able to take their dog on an overseas holiday with them, and when it comes to moving overseas to live, it's a no-brainer: 95% of owners will pay the costs to move their furry friends overseas with them. The majority (76%) of dog owners believe the time has come for dogs to be allowed on planes (40% unmuzzled/ uncaged; 36% with a muzzle and/or cage).

Aussies want their dogs to play a part in their social lives, too. 71% of respondents are in favour of dogs being allowed inside cafes and pubs, and 66% of dogs have dog friends they go to visit.

Dogs are also having an impact on the dating lives of single Aussies. 1 in 3 respondents (36%) say dating has become more difficult since getting a dog.

BUYING AND RAISING A DOG

When asked about how difficult it is to raise a dog, Aussies are on the fence: 42% claim that it's easy, and 39% claim that it's hard.

The overwhelming majority agree that being a good pet parent is important, with 9 in 10 respondents believing that first-time dog owners should have mandatory education. This comes as 1 in 3 (36%) regret not training their dog more. Managing behavioural issues and training was cited as the second biggest difficulty associated with being a dog owner.

The most common place Aussies found their dogs in 2022 was a breeder (51%), followed by adoption (22%), online (11%) and friends (10%).

In theory, Aussies are on board with adopting their next pupper: 83% would consider adoption for their next furry friend. However in practice, only 22% adopted their dog from a rescue organisation in 2022, down from 30% in 2020.

When it comes to dog breeds, Aussies are most partial to the cavoodle, with 'doodle' breeds and retriever breeds dominating the top ten list.

“

We did our first Great Aussie Dog Survey in 2020, and we couldn't believe the results. A lot has changed in society since then so we wanted to follow up and find out how the lives of Aussie dogs have changed. The results have left us laughing, crying and scratching our heads!

”

Scratch co-founder and CEO, Mike Halligan.



THE TOP TEN DOG BREEDS IN AUSTRALIA IN 2022

1. Cavoodle
2. Labrador Retriever
3. Greyhound
4. Border Collie
5. Golden Retriever
6. Goldendoodle
7. Labradoodle
8. German Shepherd
9. English Staffordshire Bull Terrier
10. French Bulldog

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON DOGS

From the respondents who purchased their pooch in the last 0-2 years, 1 in 3 (36%) claim that COVID-19 influenced their decision. Of those, 12% sometimes regret this decision.

Like their human counterparts, COVID has had an impact on the mental health of our dogs, with 25% of owners saying their dog's anxiety has increased since the onset of the pandemic. Over half of all Aussie dogs currently experience anxiety (52%), and 1 in 5 experience anxiety 'quite a bit'.

The pandemic has, however, afforded Aussies more time with their dogs. In 2020 only 22% of respondents spent all day with their dogs. Fast forward to 2022 and that number has jumped to 44%.

HEALTH + NUTRITION

It turns out Aussies think their dogs are in better shape than humans: 9 in 10 dog owners believe their dog is a healthy weight for their size.

They're not immune to illnesses, though. Half of all owners (51%) have had to make changes to their dog's food at least once due to sickness.

As for their appetite, it's a 50/50 split: half of all respondents believe their dogs like variety in their diet (53%), but half believe they aren't fussed or like eating the same food every day (47%). Treats are a winner, with 97% of dogs being fed dog treats regularly.

Owners are, however, skeptical about what they're putting in their dogs' mouths. Only 31% of them trust dog food labels.

Scratch, which makes and delivers fresh and healthy dry food for dogs, is on a mission to change the pet food industry for the better.

"We weren't surprised by the lack of trust in pet food brands. The lack of transparency that exists in the industry is something we're working to shed light on to improve the health of Aussie dogs. With so many pet owners aware that diet can have a direct impact on the health of their dogs, it's concerning that Scratch is the only Australian pet food company currently disclosing ingredient quantities on labeling," commented Halligan.

"Our number one priority is giving the dogs of Australia the best quality of life we possibly can, so we're proud to roll out initiatives like the Great Aussie Dog Survey to help us learn from owners what else we can do for their dogs. Dogs truly are a human's best friend, and are clearly worth the investment - after all, 97% of respondents said their dog has had a huge or positive impact on their lives" he concluded.

To view the full list of results from the 2022 Great Australian Dog Survey, and learn more about Scratch Dog Food, visit www.scratchpetfood.com.au/australian-dog-survey

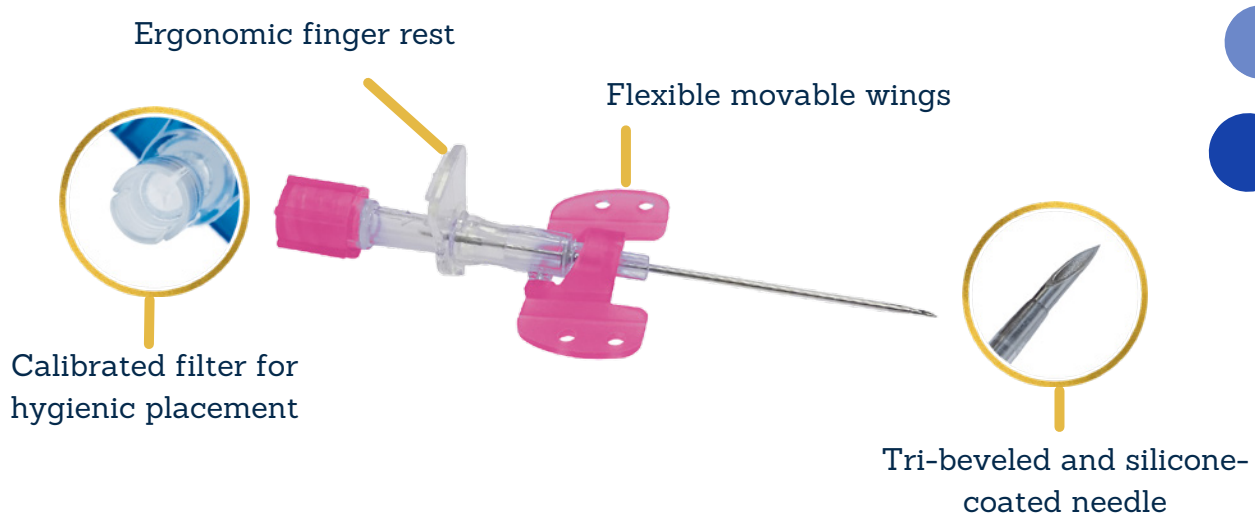
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A REVOLUTIONARY, METHANE-REDUCING FEED ADDITIVE FOR CATTLE

ELANCO AND ROYAL DSM ANNOUNCE STRATEGIC ALLIANCE IN U.S. FOR BOVAER®

Elanco Animal Health Incorporated (ELAN: NYSE) and Royal DSM have created a strategic alliance connecting two leading, sustainability-focused companies to address one of society's most significant opportunities of the decade, mitigating climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from farming.

This alliance will nearly double the announced global supply potential of Bovaer®, giving more farmers the opportunity to reduce methane emissions, creating value and positive environmental impact, contributing to health for the planet.

Elanco has secured the exclusive U.S. licensing rights to develop, manufacture and commercialize Bovaer® for beef and dairy cattle.

Bovaer® is a first-in-class and best-in-class methane-reducing innovative feed additive for beef and dairy cattle, already available in Europe, Brazil, Chile and Australia. More than 50 peer-reviewed studies and 48 on-farm trials in 14 countries show Bovaer® consistently reduces enteric methane emissions by approximately 30% for dairy cows and even higher percentages for beef cattle¹.

DSM and Elanco intend to provide farmers, dairy and beef

companies, and retailers with a solution to substantially lower the carbon footprint of beef and dairy production, supporting the animal protein industry's ESG efforts and helping secure a sustainable future for the planet. The methane reduction from feeding a million cows Bovaer® is equivalent to planting 45 million trees or removing 300,000 cars from the road. With 9 million dairy cows and 14 million beef cattle on feed in the U.S. alone, the product would contribute to a significant and immediate reduction of the environmental footprint of meat and dairy products, supporting the Global Methane Pledge to cut emissions 30% by 2030.

The strategic alliance is expected to enable both parties to maximize the opportunity for the product in the U.S. market, once approved, while also nearly doubling previously announced Bovaer® production capacity globally. Elanco will be responsible for the U.S. approval process, commercialization strategy and product supply, supporting DSM supply in markets outside the U.S. Elanco will assess and evaluate the regulatory submission and manufacturing options with the intent to bring Bovaer® to the U.S. market as quickly as possible. Already the State of Indiana, for example, has indicated its support for expanded manufacturing investment in the state as it continues to build public-private partnerships supporting the state's growing agriculture economy.

"We are excited to partner with DSM to start the process of bringing this game-changing innovation to U.S. livestock

"This alliance will nearly double the announced global supply potential of Bovaer®, giving more farmers the opportunity to reduce methane emissions, creating value and positive environmental impact, contributing to health for the planet."



producers,” said Jeff Simmons, president and CEO of Elanco. “It will further strengthen Elanco’s efforts to create the livestock sustainability market and the next era of value for farmers by adding to our efforts to reduce, measure and monetize emission reductions, including Experior™, Uplook™ and Athian. We are eager to work with regulators to bring a unique innovation like DSM’s Bovaer® to the U.S. market as quickly as possible to support farmers and positively impact the climate crisis.”

Geraldine Matchett and Dimitri de Vreeze, Co-CEOs of Royal DSM, commented: “This agreement marks an important milestone for DSM, Elanco, and the climate change mitigation efforts of the U.S. We believe Elanco, as a company that shares our determination to revolutionize the sustainability of the cattle industry, is the ideal partner to help us increase and accelerate the total impact of our game-changing feed additive by bringing us closer to customers across the U.S. This alliance will help us realize Bovaer®’s potential as a powerful solution with a significantly positive impact on the planet. In addition, and fully aligned with our purpose-led performance-driven strategy, the alliance enables us as DSM to monetize our long-term innovation faster.”

With an estimated global market opportunity for livestock methane reduction of \$1 billion to \$2 billion, Elanco expects Bovaer® to have blockbuster annual revenue potential in excess of US\$200 million in the U.S. market with initial contribution by mid-decade. This alliance is not expected to impact Elanco’s previously stated financial commitments.

The strategic alliance connects two sustainability leaders, Elanco, a leading animal health company, and Royal DSM, a health, nutrition and biosciences company, to accelerate tangible sustainable solutions in the U.S., supporting the Global Methane Pledge goal of cutting emissions 30% by 2030.

Elanco gains exclusive licensing rights to develop, manufacture, and commercialize Bovaer® in U.S.

Royal DSM will receive royalty income from Elanco’s U.S. Bovaer® sales, including a single-digit millions upfront payment, as well as a portion of product supply from Elanco.

Bovaer® is expected to have blockbuster revenue potential for Elanco in the U.S. market in excess of US\$200 million., in the estimated \$1-2 billion global market for methane reduction from cows.

This alliance will nearly double the announced global supply potential of Bovaer®, giving more farmers the opportunity to reduce methane emissions, creating value and positive environmental impact, contributing to health for the planet.

1. <https://www.dsm.com/corporate/sustainability/our-purpose/minimizing-methane-from-cattle.html>
2. <https://www.globalmethanepledge.org/>

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2

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SKIN ALLERGIES IN CATS

Does your cat have itchy, scratchy, or dry skin? Ideally your cat's fur should be clean and fluffy, and feel soft and smooth when you pet her. So if you do discover redness, lumps, flaking or other signs of irritation when you pet her, she may have a skin condition that requires treatment. Look out for an increase in scratching, licking or itching in places she's favoring more often.

Your cat's itchy & dry skin can have many causes. If she is showing signs of irritation, consult with your veterinarian who will be able to diagnose the condition. Your veterinarian may recommend tests to identify the exact reason for your cat's skin condition. Common causes may include:

Food Intolerances	This can occur as a reaction to certain kinds of proteins in your cat's food.
Allergies	Your pet may be allergic to either food or environmental factors like dust, pollen or mold.
Parasites	Fleas, lice and mites can all cause mild to severe skin irritation.
Hormonal Imbalances	Pets with too much or too little of certain hormones are prone to skin problems.
Infections	Bacterial infections can cause skin problems.

The Importance of Nutrition

The food your pet eats plays an important role in his or her overall health and well-being. Balanced nutrition is an essential part of an active, healthy lifestyle. When your pet has a skin condition, it's even more important to feed the right food.

How can the right food help?

Some skin conditions can be cleared up quickly, while others need lifelong management. The good news is, most pets with skin conditions can be helped if you feed the right food, even if the cause of the condition is not dietary. Some important nutrients that can help heal and protect your pet's skin include:

Protein: High-quality protein provides the building blocks for natural skin regeneration. Feeding unique protein sources, such as venison or duck, can also help reduce reaction in pets with a food allergy or intolerances to more common ingredients.

Essential Fatty Acids: A food containing high levels of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, found naturally in fish oil, will help nourish and protect your pet's skin, preventing dryness.

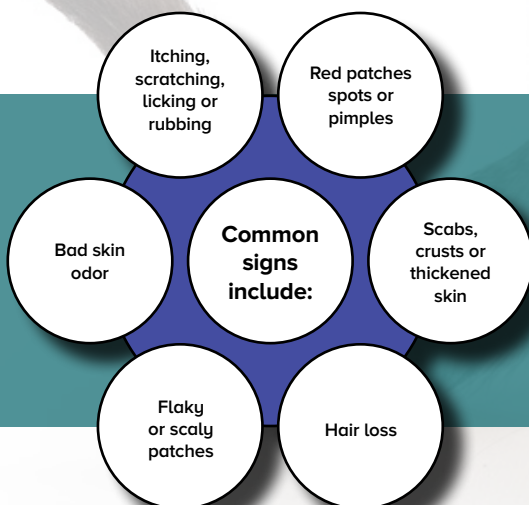
Antioxidants: Vitamin E and other antioxidants are vital in helping to maintain your pet's healthy immune system, and protect it from cellular oxidation caused by free radicals.

Combining these nutrients in a single pet food provides a convenient way to manage your pet's skin condition.

Does my pet have a skin condition?

Your pet's skin should be smooth and soft with no flaking, redness or signs of irritation. It should be neither too dry nor too oily and have no areas of hair loss. For an accurate diagnosis and treatment options, always consult your veterinarian.

Hills Pet Nutrition



“Some skin conditions can be cleared up quickly, while others need lifelong management. The good news is, most pets with skin conditions can be helped if you feed the right food, even if the cause of the condition is not dietary”

Hills Pet Nutrition

SKIN ALLERGIES IN DOGS

Dog skin conditions are unfortunately all too common. Some allergic reactions can cause incessant scratching, licking, chewing, and fidgeting; making life so uncomfortable for him. They can also give way to hair loss and painful lesions that become infected without proper care. Here are the most common causes of skin conditions, often known as dermatitis according to PetMD in your furriest family members.

Environmental

Environmental factors such as dust, mold, pollen, mildew, and other airborne allergens might also make your dog itchy and uncomfortable, resulting in painful lesions and hair loss. Keep in mind dogs can develop sensitivities to perfume and cigarette smoke too.

Dogs sometimes develop a sensitivity to lawn grasses that produces itching. Moisture that gets trapped on the skin can also cause pets to develop skin lesions known as “hot spots,” which are especially common to dogs with thick coats, as well as long coats that are prone to matting.

Nutritional

Food allergies are fairly rare in dogs, but when allergies do occur, the condition is usually caused by the proteins contained in beef, pork, lamb, chicken, eggs, and fish, as well as plant-based proteins from wheat. Beef, dairy, and wheat tend to contribute the most problems for dogs.

The main symptom of nutritional allergies is skin irritation and excessive scratching, but you may also notice your dog experiencing digestive issues such as vomiting or diarrhea. No matter what the side effects, it's best to call your veterinarian if you notice him coping with any of these issues.

Parasitic

Dogs can develop an allergic reaction to flea bites, which is actually an immune response to flea saliva known as parasitic dermatitis. This can cause excessive itching, inflammation, and hair loss.

Although fleas are the most common cause of parasitic dermatitis, tick bites can also trigger a similar reaction in dogs. The exact cause of parasitic dermatitis in dogs can be hard to pinpoint as they're also prone to skin reactions from various types of mites, such as Cheyletiella mites or scabies. If treating your dog's fleas and ticks doesn't do the trick, check with your vet to see if your dog has a mite infestation.

Infectious

Dogs can also develop infectious dermatitis, which is caused by bacterial, fungal, or yeast infections. One common cause is fungi called dermatophytes, more commonly known as “ring worm.” Another is a yeast infection called Malassezia pachydermatis, which might be secondary to other health problems. In addition to treating any underlying medical conditions, antibiotics or antifungal medications are typically prescribed to address this form of dermatitis.

How to Help

Parasitic dermatitis is the easiest skin condition to deal with. If you suspect this is the culprit behind your pup's itching, treat your home and all of your pets for fleas, and start them all off with a flea preventative. Other allergies and irritants are harder to diagnose on your own, though. So if fleas are under control and your dog continues to suffer from uncontrollable itching, skin irritation, or hair loss, you should consult a vet to help pinpoint the cause. This will likely include a series of blood tests, skin samples, and other lab work to get to the bottom of what's making your pet's skin feel so unpleasant.

Narrowing down the underlying cause of your pet's itching might require some trial and error, but your patience is well worth it. Your vet may recommend starting your pet on a therapeutic pet food to help soothe your itchy pal. Once the irritant or allergen is identified, remove it from your pet's environment or food. If you can't for some other health obligation, consider a topical anti-inflammatory or oral medication recommended by your veterinarian.

Skin damage that's severe enough or shows signs of infection might also require antibiotics to treat. Your vet can also recommend special shampoos and rinses that provide your pet some relief in the interim.

Dog skin conditions can make your furry friend terribly uncomfortable, and it's hard to watch him suffer. Identifying the cause and talking to your vet are the first steps on the road to recovery and relief for you and your companion.



*By Jean Marie Bauhaus-
Hill's Pet Nutrition*





5 YEARS OF RESCUE AWARDS

Photo Credit - Jo Lyons Photography,

IVORY COAT WALKS THE TALK

SUPPORTING PET RESCUE AND BUILDING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE AND PETS

When Bernadette Elisha was a young child in Indonesia, she was always warned about not touching stray cats because they have diseases. Today, the Sydney resident lives and breathes rescue pets as a volunteer foster carer for rescue groups and employee of Real Pet Food Company, proud supporter of local animal loving communities, charities and shelters.

The company's pet food brand Ivory Coat is a major sponsor of this year's Pet Insurance Australia Companion Animal Rescue Awards, Australia's first and only national awards program for hard working rescues, shelters, companion animal welfare organisations, foster carers and passionate pet adopters.

"Before Covid, I used to work in advertising – it was stressful,

high-paced and competitive," said Bernie. "During the pandemic, I realised life must have more meaning than this and decided to move to the pet care industry. I work with Ivory Coat as an e-commerce specialist and it's rewarding to do what I love every day."

Bernie enjoys working with a team equally passionate about pet care education, volunteering with animal rescue groups or have welcomed a rescue pet into their home. She volunteers as a foster carer for Inner City Cats and cat colony guardian for Community Cat Carers.

Bernie sometimes brings in her foster felines to work, keeping them safely contained in a meeting room turned into a full-time cat

entertainment room. Plus, there are frequent visits from ‘chief dog officers’ who offer free cuddles that boosts productivity.

“At Ivory Coat, we believe that animals bring love to everyday families,” said Bernie.

That’s why Real Pet Food Company encourages volunteering through its Volunteering Day program for employees. As part of the company’s charity partnership program, Real Pet Food supports the Starlight Foundation (granting puppy wishes) and Greyhounds As Pets (GAP).

Supporting pet rescue with volunteering and donations

So far this year, Real Pet Food Company has donated more than \$500K worth of Ivory Coat products to charities, communities, shelters and foster agencies, such as Sydney Dogs and Cats Home, Aussie Helpers, Animal Welfare League QLD, Lort Smith Animal Hospital, Forever Friends Animal Rescue and many others.

To help recognise the work of the rescue industry, Real Pet Food Company has also continued its support of the Rescue Awards under the Ivory Coat brand as the sponsor of the Ivory Coat People’s Rescue Story and Ivory Coat Foster Carer Story categories.

“Foster Carers and Rescuers impact the lives of so many animals every year across Australia for the better and deserve to be recognised for the incredible work they do, giving so many animals a second chance at a forever home,” said Connie MacLulich, Ivory Coat Brand Manager and Rescue Awards Judge.

“Volunteering at your local rescue can be a rewarding experience, we strongly encourage anyone willing and able to speak to their

local shelters and foster agencies to find out how they can help.”

Being a foster carer for sick and homeless kittens and cats is certainly not a future Bernie thought would happen to her.

“It can be a challenging experience; in fact, traumatising for some rescuers and causing them to quit,” she said. “I think to myself, if I don’t do it that’s one less person out there trying to help.”

Bernie’s resilience comes from seeing photos of the transformation in her foster cats when they find their forever home.

“I fell in love with the rewarding aspect of rescuing animals. Volunteering is also a way of life for me. I feel connected to a bigger meaning in life and I’m not alone,” she said.

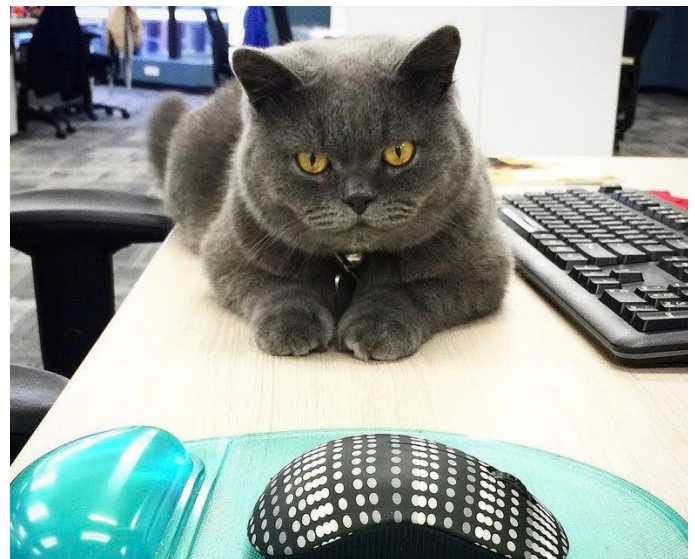
“I feel very proud that our company is helping to highlight the work done by the rescue community through the Companion Animal Rescue Awards. There is so much good work done by grassroots organisations. Many rescue leaders are constantly faced with heartbreaking situations. Having such a platform to acknowledge their excellent work is crucial to keeping up their morale and continue their good work.”

“I fell in love with the rewarding aspect of rescuing animals. Volunteering is also a way of life for me. I feel connected to a bigger meaning in life and I’m not alone,”

**Connie MacLulich,
Ivory Coat Brand Manager and Rescue Awards Judge**



Ivory Coat team member Bernie Elisha & her foster cat Loki. Photo Credit - Ivory Coat.



Gus being a boss in the Ivory Coat office. Photo Credit - Ivory Coat.

RECORD BIOSECURITY INVESTMENT TO COMBAT FOOT AND MOUTH, AND LUMPY SKIN DISEASE

A \$65 million investment to bolster the NSW Government's biosecurity measures will fast-track the development of vaccines against Foot and Mouth (FMD) and Lumpy Skin Disease and help position NSW as leaders in the fight against exotic animal diseases.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW Paul Toole said the goal was to develop mRNA synthetic vaccines for both FMD and Lumpy Skin, a game changer for NSW farmers.

"Current FMD vaccines are made using the virus itself, meaning even vaccinated animals have to be destroyed for Australia to regain our FMD-free status following an outbreak," Mr Toole said.

"The development of a synthetic mRNA vaccine could be the key for Australia to apply for FMD-free status without having to destroy vaccinated animals, allowing us to preserve our trade status.

"Australia currently enjoys FMD-free status, giving us continued access to premium international markets for our world-class produce.

"The world is also yet to develop a killed or synthetic vaccine for Lumpy Skin, so having these two mRNA vaccines in our arsenal should these diseases reach our shores would give us a clear edge on the world stage.

"Our message is simple: We are doing everything we can to keep NSW free of FMD and Lumpy Skin Disease, but we are also preparing for the worst by investing \$229 million this year alone – the biggest investment by a single jurisdiction on exotic pest and disease control."

The new funding package includes \$3.5 million to drive forward plans for a national mandatory sheep and goat electronic identification system.

The NSW Government is also committing \$55.8 million for practical, on-ground biosecurity risk mitigation and response preparedness activities, including:

\$26.3 million to expand a trained response workforce of at least 2,000 experts;

\$17.8 million for on-ground animal control activities such as funding to control potential infected premises, increasing culling

of feral pigs and deer, and incentivising farmers to beef up their biosecurity plans;

\$9.7 million to enhance disease surveillance through new intelligent track and trace technology; and,

\$2 million to roll out targeted extension and awareness campaigns to educate livestock owners, handlers, and the community on clinical signs and reporting requirements, as well as how to reduce risks.

Minister for Agriculture Dugald Saunders said the preparedness package addresses the devastating impacts an incursion of FMD – or any other exotic animal disease – would have on NSW and Australia.

"This funding will immediately boost our ability to make an early detection of an exotic pest or disease in NSW, deploy cutting edge technology to survey and diagnose diseases and train a response ready workforce to manage a significant outbreak," Mr Saunders said.

"We need to be prepared to fight and eradicate any exotic pest and disease that arrives on our shores, and this investment means we will have the right army and technology ready to do just that.

"Our farmers deserve to have the confidence to know that if we have an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease, we will be quick to respond, well prepared and ready to return to export markets faster.

"We have been meeting with farmers, livestock agents and agricultural experts right across NSW who have said measures like these would play an instrumental role in building confidence amongst the sector that the government is equipped and ready for the fight.

"Today, through this announcement, we reinforce our commitment that we will do whatever it takes to keep our world-class agricultural sector safe."

Find out more on foot and mouth disease funding launch (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/beef-cattle/health-and-disease/viral-diseases/fmd>)



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