

Summer is Here!

ORCHARD VETERINARY CENTRE

news

Summer 2019

Long, hot and sunny days create plenty of activity in the great outdoors, where we and our pets head for during the warmer months. Whether it be on the beach, in our own gardens, the park or countryside, just as with other seasons in the year, there are a few factors to take into consideration regarding the safety and welfare of our pets, and summer is no exception.

Flora and Fauna

Grass seeds are quite small, but can cause big problems for your dogs, as they may become embedded in their feet, ears and eyes. Seeds can even be inhaled, and lodge in the nose or sit in an airway to the lungs. Those breeds with longer ears and coats or 'feathery' feet are magnets for grass seeds!



Regularly inspect your pet's coat and body especially after exercise.

Pay careful attention to their feet, eyes and ears.

Trim hair around the ears and under the ear flaps.

Keep hair short between pads and toes.

The most common seeds we see are the small round and arrow shaped seeds, the latter has a very sharp tip, so can burrow and pierce the skin.

Seed Signs to look out for:

- Licking paws ● Pawing at eyes
- Red swelling between toes
- Excessive ear scratching or shaking of head
- Sneezing ● Coughing

As with any unusual behaviour or signs of illness, always contact us for advice.



Hot Dogs!

Even with all the campaigns and media reports, there are still people who think it is okay to leave their dog shut in a car on a hot day! **NEVER leave your pet in the car**, not even for a short while, not even in the shade, not even with the windows open. Vehicles very quickly reach oven-like temperatures, and **your pet will literally cook in minutes!**



Exotic Pets Exotic animals are increasingly popular as pets, but they raise important concerns about the welfare of both animals and owners. Last year the RSPCA received over 15,000 calls about exotics and rescued over 4,000 neglected or abandoned animals, including over 500 snakes, over 300 turtles, and nearly 150 bearded dragons.

The British Veterinary Association has also issued a number of statements concerning the owning and breeding of exotic animals, including campaigning against the keeping and trade of primates as pets. Similarly the RSPCA point to raccoon dogs, which may look extremely cute as cubs, but really don't make good pets in a domestic environment.

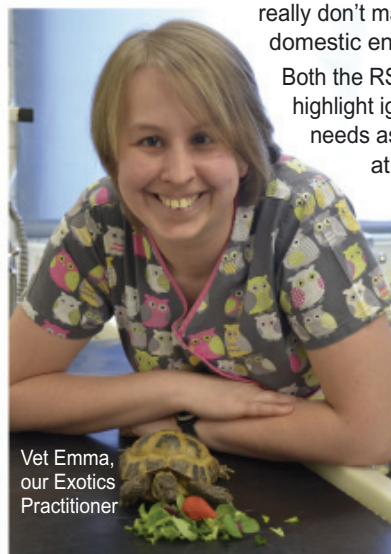
Both the RSPCA and the BVA highlight ignorance of animal needs as a priority issue, but at least on this point

Orchard Vets are able to help. We are proud to have a General Practitioner in Exotic Animal Practice within our ranks, vet **Emma**, who normally works out of our Harborne surgery. So, should you start thinking about acquiring a non-traditional pet, whether a terrapin, tarantula or corn snake, come in for a chat so that you are fully aware of all the issues.

Staff News The Orchard Vets family has grown again as we have taken on two new staff members this year. **Danielle** joined us in February - she is an experienced veterinary nurse who will be working at our Harborne and Oldbury branches. **Becky** joined our receptionist team at Easter and will usually be working at our Wednesbury surgery.

We hope you'll join us in extending a warm welcome to both Dani and Becky.

Also congratulations to **Gemma** who completed an Advanced Programme in Veterinary Nursing of Exotic Species at the beginning of the year, adding to the team's proficiency in caring for some of our more unusual patients!



Vet Emma,
our Exotics
Practitioner



Gemma

HOURS

Church Street
OLDBURY
B69 3AF

0121 544 0404

Mon to Fri 8.30am - 6.30pm
Sat 11.30am - 12noon

Home Farm
Northfield Road
HARBORNE
B17 0TD

0121 428 1777

Mon to Fri 8:30am - 6:30pm
Saturday 2.30pm - 3pm

210 Holyhead Road
WEDNESBURY
WS10 7DH

0121 556 6890

Mon to Fri 8:30am - 6:30pm
Saturday 9am - 10am

www.orchardvets.co.uk

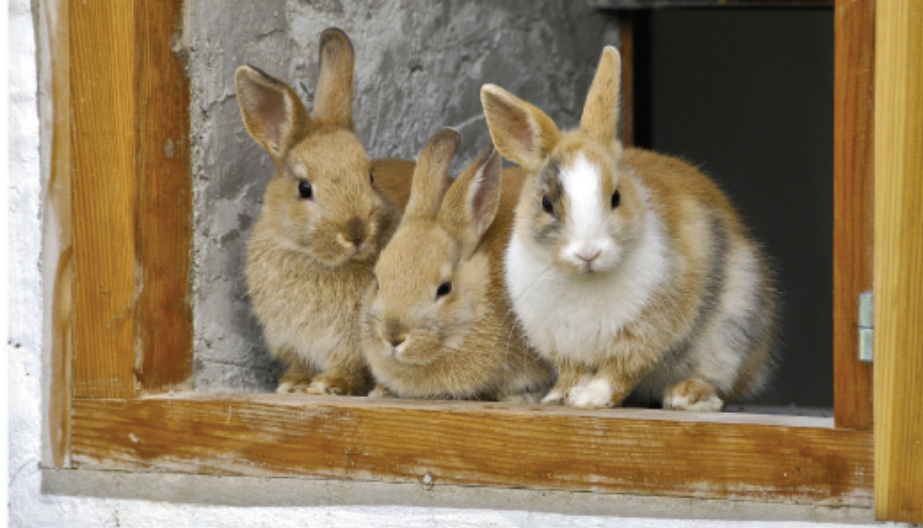
Buzzing Flies!

Hopping along to another problem during the warmer months, is **FLYSTRIKE**. If a rabbit's hindquarters become moist, dirty and sore, flies are attracted to this area, where they can lay eggs. The hatching maggots will then literally feed on the rabbit's skin and underlying tissue. Flystrike is a very serious and painful condition, which requires immediate veterinary treatment, as sadly it can often be fatal. **Flystrike is real emergency, so please do contact us quickly!**

Help to protect your rabbit

On a daily basis, fully inspect their hindquarters to ensure they are clean, dry, egg and maggot free, and remove soiled bedding and waste material. Clean hutches frequently.

If your rabbit appears to have a regular rear end soiling problem, bring bunny along for a check-up. Overgrown teeth and claws or obesity may be preventing your rabbit from grooming properly. Talk with us about the protective sprays available.



Your Pets Love Summer too

SO..... In hot and sunny temperatures you should always be aware that your pets could suffer from **heatstroke (hyperthermia)** - a rise in body temperature. Animals cooling systems are not as efficient as humans, and they can very quickly overheat and dehydrate. If their temperature reaches too high a level, serious damage may occur to organs and the cell system. In severe cases this can be fatal, so it is a very good idea to **aim** to prevent heatstroke in your pets by:

Exercising pets in the cooler morning or evening air and don't over exert.

Ensure there is access to shady cooler areas in and outdoors.

Regulate your pets' time spent lying in the sun and heat, in the garden and indoors, **especially your conservatories!**

Provide plenty of fresh clean drinking water.

Place rabbit and guinea pig housing, outside run and drinking water in the shade and ensure the hutch has good ventilation.

Extra care should be taken with those pets that are overweight, elderly, have heart conditions, breathing problems or have long/thick coats.

Recognise the signs of heatstroke

- increased panting
- excessive/thick saliva
- pacing/distressed
- dark gums
- lethargy
- unwilling/unable to rise
- vomiting
- dizziness/disorientation
- collapse
- loss of consciousness

Take prompt action by moving your pet to a cool area, and contact us immediately.



Having a B-B-Q?



A warm Saturday evening or sunny Sunday, and out come the barbecues, not only to the delight of humans, but also to our cats and dogs! As eating outside is a far more relaxed affair, this provides our pets with the perfect opportunity for stealing **rib and chicken bones** from your casually placed plate on the grass, and also raiding the black bin bag for **corn on the cob husks!** All of these left-over foods, if devoured by your pet, can get lodged in the mouth, throat and stomach, some of which may require surgical removal. **Any signs of pawing at the mouth, retching, vomiting, lethargy, not eating or drinking, then do not delay in contacting us.**



Parasite Paradiseis your pet!

With summer's warmer temperatures and humid conditions, fleas and ticks really do ramp up their activity, so it is very important to ensure your pets have not only preventative, but also effective care.

For cats and dogs with no protection against **fleas and ticks**, these parasites can choose your pet as the perfect place to live. These blood sucking parasites will certainly

make a meal out of your pet, and cause major irritation. **Fleas**, plenty of scratching, sore skin, and if they really get stuck in, even weight loss and anaemia, especially in young animals. **Ticks** may attach to and then feed from your pet, and can transmit **Lyme Disease**, which affects the nerves and muscles. Talk with our team, about a suitable product to combat fleas and ticks.