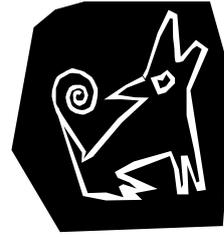


Consults by appointment
Mon– Fri: 9-12 noon, 4-7pm
Sat: 9-4pm
Sunday + P.Hol: 9-11am



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The Seaforth Howler

Editorial

By Dr Rob Miller (Partner)
 Each season seems to have its own draw back for our pets. Winter is here and with it comes the signs of arthritis. Both cats and dogs do suffer from arthritis particularly as they age, but it is an infinitely treatable condition. Do not hesitate to bring in your pets if you spot they are feeling the cold in their joints this winter! For helpful hints on how to keep your pets warmer and more comfortable, turn to page 4.
 In this Howler, Terry completes his review of feline viruses and vaccines.

What do the nurses get up to when studying? Elesha reviews her current course at TAFE.
How old is old in the cat and dog world? Read on for all the facts.
Virginia teaches us how to get you dog to obey your every command .
Hendrika is back from the Australian Veterinary Conference in Adelaide to answer some frequently asked questions. I'm off on hols, time was short etc so my apologies for any typos.
 Enjoy this edition of the Howler!

Feline Viruses and Vaccination Part 2

By Dr Terry Collins (Practice Partner)

Carrying on from the last Howler we look at the remaining feline viruses and vaccines.

Feline Leukaemia Virus (FeLV)

This is a relatively rare virus in Australia and its incidence worldwide has decreased the last 25 years due to reliable tests being available and also effective vaccines. Transmission between cats occurs through friendly contacts, but also through biting. The most common signs of persistent FeLV viraemia are immune suppression, anaemia and lymphoma. Seaforth Veterinary Hospital, in line with the views of the WASAVA (World Small Animal Veterinary Assoc) for our locale, does not recommend vaccination against FeLV. No FeLV vaccine offers 100% protection.

Feline Immunodeficiency (AIDS) Virus (FIV)

FIV is closely related to HIV / AIDS. Humans are not susceptible to FIV infection. Biting transmits FIV. Cats infected with FIV may live as long as uninfected cats. Most clinical signs are a consequence of immunodeficiency and secondary infection. Cats should never be euthanased solely on the basis of a FIV positive test result. An FIV vaccine is available in Australia but is not recommended by Seaforth Veterinary Hospital in line with the views of the WASAVA applied to our locale. Antibodies developed in the cat as a result of vaccination are indistinguishable from those induced by normal infection.

Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP)

FIP is a mutation of the Feline Corona Virus that is ubiquitous in domestic cats and is

News Column



- **Congratulations to Elesha for achieving a Distinction in her radiology assignment**
- **New treatments available to help your pet through Winter**

particularly common where conditions are crowded, eg large catteries.

The disease is especially common in kittens and young cats.

Susceptible cats are most likely to be infected following contact with FCoV in faeces from asymptomatic cats.

Progression of the disease is usually rapid and mostly fatal.

Treatment is fruitless and ante-mortem diagnosis often impossible. Infected kittens do not necessarily infect their littermates. I have known only one kitten in a litter to succumb.

There is a licensed FIP vaccine available; however, it is not very effective in preventing FIP and it is not recommended by Seaforth Veterinary Hospital, in line with the WSAVA policy applied to our locale.

In this issue we have discussed what are referred to as non-core feline vaccines. Some have usefulness in certain locales but not to the local feline scene in Sydney's Northern Beaches.

In the next edition of the Howler we will look at canine viral diseases and their vaccines.

Rabies Vaccines for Africa

By Dr Rob Miller (Practice Partner)

Did you know that we are an *Intervet partner*? As such when you pet is vaccinated at Seaforth Veterinary Hospital you are helping to vaccinate dogs in Tanzania against Rabies!

25,000 Africans die each year from rabies, most due to a bites from dogs. 60% of these victims are under 15 years old due to the interaction of dogs and children.

The vaccination program has resulted in excellent rabies control.

Intervet have supplied more than a million doses of the vaccine by this scheme. Well done!

Studying to be a nurse

By Elesha Forrest (Veterinary Nurse in training)

I am currently studying Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing at Sydney Institute of Tafe Ultimo, part time one day a week.

This certificate will take two years to complete with 18 units to study over that time. With this nursing position at

Seaforth being my first working with small animals I am finding it very beneficial. To date I have studied or am in the process of studying 5 units including

1. Coordinate Patient Admission and Discharge including providing initial veterinary nursing care to patients and grief support to owners.
2. Monitor and Maintain Animal Health and Wellbeing.



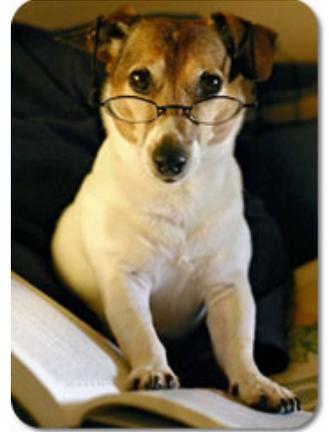
This unit covers the process of following animal health management practices to monitor animal health via daily observations of behaviour and condition. Including young animals and those with special needs. Eg aged, sick or injured animals.

3. Animal Structure and Function, is to provide trainee veterinary nurses with basic knowledge on the way the body is structured, how individual structures work and how structures work together to carry out the more complex functions of the body.

4. Apply Imaging Routines, covers the process of x-rays (in accordance with established industry sequences and clinic policies and procedures) and follow specific instructions from the veterinarian, and

5. Provide Specific Animal Care Advice, covers the process of providing advice to owners about animal care, nutrition, behaviour and products.

The course easily relates to the working environment and is helping me develop better skills to benefit Seaforth Veterinary Hospital, our patients and clients.



A Good Innings!

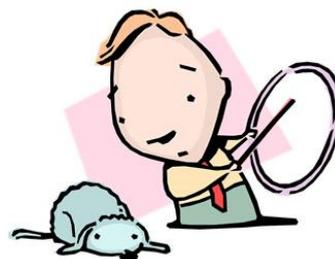
By Dr Rob Miller (Practice Partner)

The oldest canine on record was an Australian cattle dog called Bluey who lived to 29. Some say this is equivalent to a human living to in excess of 200 years old, but the "correct calculation" is more like 129 years old. Still pretty good!

Our local award goes to Isabelle of Manly, a white female toy poodle who turned 20 years old in May! But sad news, as Isabelle has since passed away.

Not forgetting our feline friends the oldest reliably recorded cat was a female tabby named Ma, owned by Alice St. George Moore of Drewsteignton, England. This cat was put to sleep on November 5, 1957 at the age of 34 years, which in real terms would be 152 years old!

And at Seaforth Vets? We have seen cats in excess of 23 years old at Seaforth Vets but currently our oldest patients seem to be around 21 years old.



I'm too old for this!

On Rabbits

Rabbits make lovely pets as many of our clients and staff can attest to. We have had some great stray rabbits full of character at Seaforth Vets. There are some still looking for good caring homes.

If you think you can make a difference don't hesitate to contact Bree or India our rabbit nurses!

Getting their feeding and housing right is paramount to their well being, get this wrong and you may be killing them with kindness. A happy bunny? Go to You Tube and watch happy rabbits do a binky!

It would do us all good to come back as a rabbit in another life. Maybe we would all show these animals a little more compassion. The rabbit has been around for 64 million years and it ain't going anywhere soon so get used to them. This earth is to share.



Viscous rabbits planning the destruction of Australia

COME BACK BABY!

Virginia Pennefather (Delta Accredited Behavioural Trainer, Puppy Class Instructor)

Our doggie off leash areas often double as sporting grounds on weekends and evenings. This can offer fantastic socialisation opportunities for our dogs where they get to meet lots of lovely kids, adults and other dogs. Having said that not everyone loves your family pet as much as you, and as dog owners we have a social responsibility to ensure that we can get them to return to us when called.

You will always be competing with the environment for your dog's attention. Some dogs will never overcome certain instinctive behaviours (for example a major desire to go meet wild rabbits). When this is the case you have to go into management mode and keep them on lead. It's unlikely that *anything* would be able to get them back until they've satisfied their natural instincts.

We often sabotage a 'reliable recall'. If you only ever ask your dog to come back to you when you are ready to leave the park and go home, then he will quickly learn that when you say "come" he should run as fast as possible in the opposite direction. Remember that you are a constant in your dog's life, he knows you're always around, but he may only get to frolic off leash with his mates a couple of times a week – and he is going to maximise that opportunity.

It can be incredibly frustrating, somewhat embarrassing and maybe even dangerous for your dog not to respond to your request

to come back. There are a couple of simple rules when training a recall, and be assured that it is never too late to start (or restart).

Ask yourself if you call your dog to come to you at home, how quickly does he do that? If he's not breaking the land-speed record then that's where you should start. Get out something really startlingly yummy as a treat (BBQ chicken is a good example, or even a container with a teaspoon of cat food) then call him to you from a very short distance. Give him the treat and praise enthusiastically. Do this a couple of times a day over a week or so around different areas of your home / garden.

When you go to the park think about initially keeping him on a long, light line and only go when it's quiet and his canine buddies aren't around to distract him. Call him *once only* from a small distance and don't do it when he's in the midst of intensively catching up on the newest scents. Reward generously and then immediately let him go off again. Always remember that a pat on the head for coming back means very little to him when he's at the park interacting with his mates and reveling in all the different aromas.

Never punish or grumble at your dog when he comes back to you. Dogs live for the moment. If your dog has lifted his leg where he shouldn't or nicked someone's ball and then come back to you, any form of admonishment will only jeopardise future recalls.

When your dog is freely roaming and he 'checks in' with you at the park, think about rewarding him for it. It makes hanging around you more enticing. Intermittently ask him to come, reward and put his lead on then *take the lead off and let him go again*. At some stage the lead will stay on and he'll go home, but you've conditioned him to be more accepting of your movements for when you eventually decide you want to go home. Dogs pick up on our body language quicker than our voices, so that's how they 'always seem to know when it's time to leave'. It's a good idea to desensitise your actions so they are less inclined to anticipate us.

With a bit of consistent training using positive reward based strategies it is possible to get a reliable recall.

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

By Bree D'Arcy (Vet Nurse)

Thank you to all our clients who supported my Australia's Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser for The Cancer Council. I hope you enjoyed my home baked biscuits and slices. With your help I raised well over \$300 which will go towards funding research to find a cure for this ever increasing, often life threatening disease. I have a personal reason for hosting a fundraiser for cancer research every year as I lost a close family friend to bone marrow cancer at the age of 17.



Our Website

www.svh55.com.au

Phone: 02-9949 1288

Fax: 02-9949 6364

e-mail: rob@svh55.com

Get Your Pets Ready for Winter

Winter has arrived and it's time to consider the special needs of your pet.

Health Check - Whether your pet is young or old, it's worth taking them for a health check with your vet, just to ensure that they are fit and healthy. Make sure they are up to date with injections, flea and worming treatments and ask your vet to check for any signs of arthritis.

Keeping Warm - The cold weather affects your pet the same way it affects you. Even though they are covered in fur and hair, the chances are your pet is cold too. Heavier cats and dogs can stay warm for longer, as they have more body mass and fat to insulate them. However lighter, shorthaired breeds and greyhounds don't have the body fat or hair to help them stay warm, so it's worth buying them a special coat or providing them with a heat pad to rest on.

Cosy Nights - If your dog sleeps outside, now's the time to ensure they have adequate shelter and warmth. Raise any outdoor shelter off the ground and ensure the entrance is turned away from the wind. You might want to consider putting down extra bedding – and check the bedding every day to ensure it isn't damp, wet or mouldy. Even if your dog normally sleeps inside, make sure their bed isn't in any draughts and is somewhere nice and warm.

Mobility & Arthritis - Older cats and dogs can be greatly affected by cold weather. If they have arthritis, it will worsen in cold weather, so ask your vet for advice. **Hill's Prescription Diet j/d for dogs** is formulated to slow the progression of arthritis, relieve their discomfort and improve their mobility too. Hills j/d is clinically proven to help dogs walk, run and jump better in as little as 21 days. Arthritis will be exacerbated if your pet is overweight.

NEWSFLASH – Hills j/d for cats will soon be available. Please ask our staff for more information.

SPECIAL OFFER—Present this voucher when purchasing a bag of j/d to receive a 10% discount.

Limit one bag per customer, valid until 15th September 2011
Not redeemable for cash.

Osteoarthritic protection

In our last Howler we discussed how Glyde can help offer your dog relief from the discomfort of osteoarthritis. For more details on how this product works take a look at www.glydefordogs.com



Ask Dr Henny

Q: What should I do if my dog has diarrhoea?

A: In my experience as a dog owner and vet, most “diarrhoea” in dogs is self-limiting (ie should resolve of its own accord). Maintaining a bland, strictly controlled diet for 2-3 days should solve the problem. Ensure your dog is wormed regularly and if diarrhoea persists, then veterinary attention will be required and type, colour, presence of blood and frequency of toileting can help localise the cause.

Q: What foods could make my dog sick if he eats them?

A: There are many “human” foods that may make dogs unwell if they eat them. This is because their digestive system operates quite differently to our own and they are unable to metabolise them effectively. Foods to avoid your dog ingesting include: chocolate, grapes (and therefore sultanas), macadamia nuts, onion, capsicum, ham (and ham bones). It is also important they do not have access to human medications such as paracetamol, aspirin and anti-biotics. If you know your dog has eaten any of these items, please contact us as soon as possible as, depending on time frame, we may be able to induce vomiting and prevent any long term damage to their kidneys.

Q: I found a lump on my dog's side – should I be worried?

A: Yes, all lumps should be examined and investigated. Most will be benign, often fatty lumps and can be easily diagnosed by taking a few cells via a fine needle and examined under the microscope. Any lumps that grow or change appearance rapidly, or are painful when touched, should be checked as soon as possible.

Q: Is there anything you can put in the garden to deter cats from toileting there?

A: A large rottweiler will certainly do the trick!! But you could also try laying fresh orange peel in the garden beds – this can help deter cats from using the garden as their preferred toilet space.

If you have any questions you would like answered by our vets, please feel free to email them to vets@svh55.com



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The Howler
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