



## VILLAGE VETERINARY CLINIC NEWSLETTER

March 2019

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### Letter from Dr Mostert

Welcome to our March Newsletter!

Just when we thought we weren't really going to get a summer the sun turned up the temperature dial and suddenly places with aircon became very popular. For those that don't know, our cat, dog and exotic wards are air-conditioned, so if your pet is in hospital for any reason, rest assured that they are comfortable regardless of conditions outside.

I'd like to say thank you to those clients who have taken out medical insurance for their pets. Recently we have had a run of gastric torsions, weird and wonderful things being eaten and the inevitable bumps and scrapes that our pets often encounter. Fortunately some of these pets were covered by medical insurance so the owners had peace of mind that as we worked to save their pet's life they weren't feeling conflicted between wanting to do what was necessary and worried about surgery and treatment costs. It is well worth investigating.

In closing I'd like to say thank you to all our clients that have used the services of our pet parlour. A well groomed and brushed pet is a more comfortable and happy pet. Tick and flea products work better and clean and happy pets are easier to play and cuddle with, which improves the quality and quantity of time we spend with them.

The feedback that we have had from clients after they have had their pets groomed is overwhelmingly positive. Our parlour is a friendly, happy place, and a pleasure for pets to visit. If your pet has a summer coat in need of some TLC, please call Daphne and she will help you with all you need to know. The parlour number is 031 655 1252

That's it from me.

Warm regards

Dr Craig Mostert

### Medical Aids and Insurances

There are a number of Pet Medical Aids and Insurances available, do your research to select the best option for you and your pet. Medical expenses can be unexpected and frightening, be proactive and be able to provide the best possible care for your pet when the unexpected happens. We recommend the following:

Medipet - [www.medipetsa.co.za](http://www.medipetsa.co.za)

Oneplan - [www.oneplan.co.za](http://www.oneplan.co.za)

### DENTAL SPECIAL FOR APRIL

We are offering

Dental scale and polishes for only

R1 100.00

during April

This includes a free dental evaluation with  
one of our nurses

**For more information please contact  
reception**

### Farewell to Kate

We are very sad to say goodbye to Kate Dobson who has been the welcoming face and voice to many clients and phone callers over the last 10 years.

She has decided its time to move on and is starting a new career in the insurance industry. Kate will be leaving us at the end of this month.

We are going to miss her happy and energetic presence in reception and wish her all the best in her new career.



To book an appointment to pamper your  
pets and get their coats in tip-top condi-  
tion phone Daphne on:

031 655 1252 or 079 626 6927

## What to do at home for feather plucking parrots

- Mist spray daily with decalcified water (ensure the environment is warm). Misting just before leaving keeps the birds busy for the first half an hour after the owner has left, and



reduces allergen load on the feathers.

- Correct dietary deficiencies. Converting the bird to a complete pelleted diet, supplemented with fresh fruit and vegetables, is recommended.
- Eliminate broad allergic irritants from the environment (cigarette smoke, perfumes, incense and cleaning products. Wash hands before handling birds as oily residues from hand creams etc can initiate plucking. Remove birds from the kitchen as aerosolised oil droplets and overheated Teflon can be harmful.
- Ensure daily access to direct sunlight, unfiltered by a glass window (5 minutes at least).
- Ensure birds are getting enough sleep – they need at least 10 hours darkness per night. Remember that birds often wake at the crack of dawn, and will stay awake till the whole family has gone to bed if kept in the family room.
- Ignore plucking behaviour (prevent reinforcement of behaviour), reward the bird for alternative behaviours.
- Treat all wounds (never apply oil based products or products containing corticosteroids)
- Keep daily records – amount of plucking, time of day, food eaten that day, activities surrounding plucking.



When I die, please don't say "I'll never have another dog". Search for the ones who are abandoned and forgotten. Give them a second chance and let them take my place. Honor my life by saving another.



## Spirocerca Lupi

*Spirocerca lupi* is a worm that affects dogs in RSA and some Mediterranean countries. The life-cycle involves a dung beetle and the immature worm is transmitted to the dog when it eats an infected dung beetle (or ingests anything that may have eaten a dung beetle e.g.: birds, lizards, rats, frogs etc.) There are over 780 species of dung beetles in South Africa and many of these serve as the intermediate host of the larvae.



Your dog cannot get *Spirocerca* from eating dog faeces.

### How does it affect my dog?

Once the worm is swallowed and reaches the stomach, it moves up through the walls of the stomach arteries into the main artery of the body, the aorta. It travels up through the wall of the aorta to where it lies adjacent to the oesophagus in the chest cavity and then burrows through the wall of the aorta into the wall of the oesophagus. The worm then forms a nodule around itself to protect it from the immune-system. It lies in this nodule until it matures into an adult worm and starts to lay eggs. These eggs pass from the oesophagus into the dog's stomach and pass through the intestine into the faeces. The eggs are then ingested by the dung beetle and hatch into immature worms inside it and the life cycle continues. Aberrant migration of immature worms can result in the worms forming nodules in the abdomen and spine but this is much rarer than the classic presentation. Parasitic nodules can undergo neoplastic (cancerous) changes over a long period of time.

### What symptoms do I see?

The nodules in the oesophagus can remain dormant for weeks to months before they reach a size that will cause symptoms. *Spirocerca lupi* is also therefore called "the silent killer" as the infection is already in an advanced stage by the time the pet owner notices any difficulties. The oesophagus will not be able to push food down into the stomach therefore one of the main symptoms will be regurgitation.



This differs from vomiting in that the motion is passive and there is usually no retching beforehand. The food is undigested and some dogs may eat the regurgitated food - this often delays the diagnosis as most owners are not aware that the dog is regurgitating its food until weight loss starts to occur. Some dogs will also show excessive retching and gagging without regurgitation. Other clinical signs of *Spirocerca* include difficult/painful swallowing, weight loss, persistent fever, thickened painful lower legs due to bone inflammation and sudden death due to rupture of the aorta - the parasites can damage the aortic wall resulting in an aneurysm which may rupture at any time.

### Diagnosis

The best route is an oesophageal endoscopy (putting a diagnostic camera into the oesophagus under anaesthesia) or taking a chest x-ray to detect any nodules.

If you would like to receive a monthly copy of our newsletter, either by email or post, please advise our receptionists or email Mandy at [accounts@villagevet.co.za](mailto:accounts@villagevet.co.za)

We would also love to hear about any stories you might like to share about your pets or, if you have lost a beloved pet, email us a memorial for our "Old friends and good memories" column.

## Ladybird Pre-school visit

34 children from Ladybird Pre-school visited us on Thursday last week. They were an enthusiastic group of 4 to 6 year olds who thoroughly enjoyed their time at the clinic.



Sister Paula talked to the children about how to look after the various types of pets that form part of our families. She introduced them to a hedgehog, hinged tortoise and our own bearded dragon and gave them a talk on each pet.

There was much excitement and some trepidation when the boa constrictor was taken out of her cage by Dr Odendaal for everyone to touch. Most of the children were eager to feel and touch the snake and she was

certainly the star of the show.

Dr Mostert then took the children on a tour of the clinic showing them amongst other things the x-ray and ultrasound machines and explained what happens to their pets when they have to come into hospital.

Many thanks to Julie Graham from Lazy Lizzard Lodge for the loan of the exotic pets. They were a big hit with the children.

## World Kidney Day

There was a time – not so long ago – when infectious diseases and dietary deficiencies ended the lives of dogs and cats early. But with advances in pet nutrition, antibiotics and sophisticated surgery, our pets now live much longer. However, nothing lasts forever and every organism has its weakest link. In people our hearts are often our weakest organ whereas in dogs and cats, it is often the kidneys that wear out first. Cells of the kidney cannot replace or regenerate themselves as they do in the liver, lungs, bone and skin. There is a slow, but steady, loss of kidney function in all of our pets as they age - so much so, that next to arthritis, chronic renal (**kidney**) failure is the leading cause of illness in cats and significant but lesser degree in dogs.



The first sign that there is a problem is when your pet begins to drink water and urinate excessively. At first, it is normal for owners to ignore this. It might

just be that your dog wakes you up during the night to be let out or that your cat's water bowl had to be filled more than it used to.

But with time, the pet begin to loose weight and become a more finicky eater. About this time, the pet's energy levels tend to decrease. They play less, romp less and sleep more. Generally, their coat lacks the luster it once had. This is often when pets are first taken by their concerned owner to see their veterinarian.

Kidney problems in dogs are common and serious but with quick treatment and a change in lifestyle, many dogs can continue to lead long, normal and happy lives. When you next visit your vet, why not have your pet tested for kidney function. Being forewarned is the best way to ensure your companion is around for much longer.

## The Welsh Terrier

Sturdy, compact, and rugged, with a tight-fitting black-and-tan coat and a rectangular head featuring folded ears and a jaunty beard, Welsh are constructed along the classic lines of Britain's long-legged terriers. They stand about 15 inches at the shoulder, a little larger than the Lakeland Terrier but much smaller than the mighty Airedale.



All three breeds, however, share a family resemblance: An ancient breed called the Old English Black and Tan Terrier is thought to be the granddaddy of these and some other British terriers.

The Welsh Terrier looks like a small Airedale Terrier; it is compact and rugged-looking, with a wiry coat. The head is long, flat and rectangular, with bushy eyebrows, mustache and beard. This breed was originally developed in Wales to hunt otter, fox and badger in their dens and also to hunt with hounds in packs. It is an affectionate and loyal little dog; it makes an excellent family companion.

### Colours:

Black & tan and grizzle. Puppies are born all black. The extremities then lighten gradually, leaving a black "jacket."

### Coat:

Harsh, wiry coat. It needs to have its coat plucked two, three, or more times a year depending upon the condition of the coat. It also requires grooming with a brush and comb a number of times each week. This breed sheds little to no hair.

### Health Issues:

Some lines are prone to skin and eye problems. To minimize the risk of your Welsh Terrier developing any hereditary health issues, you should buy a puppy from a reputable breeder.

### Temperament:



The Welsh Terriers are vigilant, active, cheerful and uncomplicated dogs. It is loving, loyal and hardy. This is a happy, curious, playful, energetic and spunky dog. It is usually patient with children and can

withstand a bit of rough play. Socialization at an early age is a must.

The Welsh Terrier is a little calmer than other terriers. Some are very combative with other animals and some are not quarrelsome at all. They like to swim and some like to dig. This dog needs a firm, consistent, but gentle hand and early obedience training is important. Give this dog constant variety in its training. The Welsh Terrier is untiring, it is always ready to play with a ball and to run and gambol off the leash in the open countryside.



Find us on  
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### Study Pets

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

9	7		8		2		5	6
3					9	2		1
2	1	6			5	3		
					8	4		6
6	5		2		7		9	4
4	3		1	9				
			7	4			6	3
8		3	9					7
7	4		3		1		8	9

	4	3		9	8	1		
		2		5	3	8		7
5		8	7				2	
6					9		5	
	3	4				6	7	
	1		4					2
	7				2	5		4
2		9	5	4		7		
		6	9	3		2	1	

### ANIMALS Crossword

Directions: Use the pictures below to fill in the words across and down in the puzzle.

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2 \_\_\_\_\_

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4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

9 \_\_\_\_\_

		8					1	
			3	4			7	5
	2	7		9				
	8							3
	1							2
8								3
				1		9	5	
2	3			8	7			
	5						4	

### Ocean Life Word Search

Directions: Circle the ocean life words hidden in the puzzle. The words are spelled vertically and horizontally.

o	a	d	c	s	e	p	h	o	t
d	r	i	b	j	c	r	a	b	s
o	c	t	o	p	u	s	e	m	e
l	i	c	r	a	n	z	m	i	a
p	j	e	l	l	y	f	i	s	h
h	t	h	e	w	d	h	t	h	o
i	a	n	w	h	a	l	e	a	r
n	b	i	x	l	e	n	b	r	s
s	t	a	r	f	i	s	h	k	e

**Word Box**

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