

ARK VETS NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2024



The dangers of passive smoking in pets...

Research has shown that dogs and cats can be exposed to significant amounts of smoke when living in a smoking household. Cats could be affected even more than their canine counterparts. This is because toxic smoke particles settle on their fur and cats could swallow these when they're grooming themselves. Birds in particular have extremely sensitive respiratory tracts so can find cigarette smoke very distressing, while toxins in cigarette smoke can dissolve into fish tanks affecting our fish.

Pets suffer from a lot of the same conditions as humans do from passive smoking:

- They are more at risk of certain types of cancer including lung, nose, mouth and lymphoma.
- Smoke causes breathing problems or make existing breathing problems worse.



Spring has sprung!!



It's natural to want to help if you see a baby bird alone on the ground or in your garden, but this isn't always the right thing to do. Your decision depends on the maturity of the chick, and whether or not it appears to be injured.

Fledglings have all or most of their feathers and leave the nest just before they can fly. If one is seen away from the nest, it should be left alone and watched from a distance for up to 2 hours to ensure the parents are returning. It is likely the parents are nearby.



A fledgling should only be removed as a last resort, for example if it is injured or has been genuinely abandoned.



Just like in cigarettes, most vaping liquids contain nicotine which is very toxic to our pets, and it is advisable not to smoke cigarettes of any kind, including e-cigarettes, around your pets. The main risk from vaping comes from the liquid inside the glass cartridge. This is extremely dangerous because even a small amount of e-liquid can kill. E-cigarettes can be really tempting for our pets, especially if they have an interesting flavour or smell.

Our pets motivate us to do many things that subsequently affect our health. Knowing that smoking is bad for our health may not be enough to make us quit, but knowing that it may have a negative impact on our pet's health just might be the jump-start we need to kick the habit!!

Chickens have really good memories – they can remember and recognise over 100 different faces (human and animal)!!

Osteoarthritis in cats

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a complex condition involving inflammation and degeneration of one or more joints. Cats with OA experience pain and inflammation in various joints that interfere with daily activities.

OA is diagnosed through a thorough physical examination, palpation and X-rays or other imaging technology. **About 90% of cats over the age of 10 years experience OA in at least one joint.**

Once OA is in place, the goal is to manage rather than treat it because OA cannot be cured. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are generally used as the first line of defence against the pain of OA. Nutraceuticals may also be beneficial. Common products include glucosamine, chondroitin, and omega-3 fatty acids.

Please contact your vet if you notice your cat slowing down, or if you think they might have arthritis as there are plenty of ways to keep your cat comfortable.

Signs your cat may be in pain

- Walking stiffly
- Lameness in one or more legs
- Reluctance to go up or down steps
- Reluctance to jump up or down
- Reluctance to play
- Hiding more than usual
- Unexpected aggression towards other cats or humans
- Reluctance to be touched on some parts of the body
- House soiling (if a cat has difficulty getting in/out of the litter box)
- Poor coat condition (because self grooming becomes difficult)



YOU CAN'T SPELL COOL WITHOUT COO !!

There are few animals in the world which elicit as much controversy as the humble pigeon. Often overlooked as a nuisance, pigeons are actually highly intelligent animals that can remember faces, see the world in vivid colours, navigate complex routes, deliver news and even **save lives!**

Pigeons are **incredibly complex and intelligent** animals. They are one of only a small number of species to pass the 'mirror test' - a test of self-recognition. They can also recognize each letter of the human alphabet and even distinguish different humans within a photograph.

Pigeons are renowned for their **outstanding navigational abilities**. They use a range of skills, such as the sun and an internal 'magnetic compass'. They will also use landmarks as signposts and will travel along man-made roads, even changing direction at junctions.

Despite the social perception as dirty and disease-ridden, pigeons are actually **very clean** animals and there is very little evidence to suggest that they are significant transmitters of disease.

LIFESAVERS! Pigeons have long served as messengers. Navy researchers, understanding that pigeons display incredible intelligence, gave them a different kind of task. Project Sea Hunt began with a mission to train pigeons to use their visual abilities to identify red and yellow life jackets in the water. Pigeons have an advantage over humans as they can see ultraviolet. This makes them extremely adept at identifying the life jackets (and the survivors in them). They also managed to accomplish these life-saving tasks with significantly greater accuracy than their human counterparts!

WAR HEROES! During wartime, pigeons were efficient when it came to delivering messages across enemy lines. World War I and II required pigeons on convoys so that they could advise others of sinking ships. They had to navigate through enemy fire at times and would make their way through poison gas with a single mission to deliver their message.



MISSING PETS: 'HEARTLESS' SCAMMERS TARGETING DESPERATE OWNERS

Fraudsters are trawling lost pet forums and demanding ransom payments from owners desperate for their safe return.

A BBC North West investigation found scammers have targeted scores of dog and cat lovers with threatening calls.

They prey on owners by claiming to have their lost pets before demanding cash.

Operation Facade has so far identified more than 200 victims and last year one of the perpetrators was convicted of nine counts of blackmail and one of theft. Police have advised pet owners to be "very wary" when handling calls over missing animals.

"Be very careful about any information that you give them and if you agree to meet them, agree to meet them in a public place and have somebody with you. If you wish to give reward money, please do not give it until you have sight of your much loved pet."

If you have experienced a pet scam and would like to share your story please contact the team

at northwestinvestigationsteam@bbc.co.uk



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OPENING HOURS

We are open between

8.30am-6.30pm on Weekdays with
a late night opening to 7pm on Tuesdays
and 8:45am-midday on Saturdays.

Consultations and Nurse Clinics are by appointment.

On Monday to Friday consulting hours are:

- 8.45-10.30am
- 2.30-3.30pm
- 5.00-6.30pm (7pm Tuesdays)

On Saturdays our consulting hours are:

- 9.20-11.00am

Payment is required at the time of treatment

**We provide 24 hour emergency cover, just phone the usual
telephone number**

Spring dangers to watch out for!

After the long winter months of mostly staying indoors, many of us like to clean our homes and get back outside.

Although these activities can be good for both our physical and mental well-being, they also increase the risk of your pet coming into contact with a number of springtime dangers, such as lungworm, adder bites, ticks and certain poisonous spring flowers and bulbs.