BARRINGTON COAST VETS

Newsletter - Spring 2026

Welcome to our newsletter!

We are excited to share with you all our seasonal newsletter, designed to provide you - the animal lovers of the Barrington Coast with tips and advice for all animals - large & small.
This newsletter, we share advice on caring for your animals through Spring, as well as exciting clinic updates, and more...

if you have any suggestions of content you would appreciate reading about please do let us know by dropping an email to the clinic.

Thank you for your continued support.
The team at Barrington Coast Vets



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Exciting Diamond Beach news

DIAMOND BEACH IS GROWING WITH YOU

More space, better patient flow and a clinic designed for the community we now care for.

When Barrington Coast Vets began its next chapter at Diamond Beach, we knew the clinic would need to grow alongside our community. Our Diamond Beach expansion is about creating a more functional, welcoming and efficient veterinary space while keeping the local, personal feel that matters to us. As our patient numbers and services have grown, so has the need for improved consulting, treatment and hospital workflow.





The expanded facility is being planned to give our team more room to examine, treat and monitor patients, reduce congestion through busy periods and create clearer movement between reception, consultation and hospital areas. It also gives us the opportunity to continue refining the way we admit surgical and hospital patients, protect quieter recovery areas and make visits easier for clients with anxious pets or multiple animals.

Most importantly, Diamond Beach remains an essential part of Barrington Coast Vets. The expansion is not about becoming less personal - it is about giving our team the physical space and clinical infrastructure to provide the standard of care our growing client base needs. We will continue to share progress as the project develops, including any temporary changes to access or appointments. Thank you for growing with us, supporting a locally owned veterinary practice and trusting our team with your animals.

Watch this space!

We will share practical updates as the Diamond Beach works progress, including what is changing, how the new spaces will be used and any information clients need before visiting.



The rumors are true...

SOMETHING BIGGER IS COMING TO NABIAC...

A new chapter for Barrington Coast Vets - with horses firmly at the heart of it.

We have been quietly working behind the scenes on the next stage of Barrington Coast Vets, and this spring we can finally start sharing a little more.

Our plans for Nabiac are centred on expanding the level of equine care we can provide locally, creating a dedicated destination for horses while strengthening our mixed-practice services across the Barrington Coast.

The vision is for a purpose-built equine-focused facility with improved spaces for examination, dentistry, diagnostic work, treatment, hospital care and safe horse handling. For our equine clients, that means a future where more procedures can be performed in a controlled clinical environment, while our mobile and on-farm services continue to remain an important part of what we do.
The location also gives us room to think longer-term about yards, stabling, vehicle and float access, and the infrastructure required for a growing equine service.

There is still plenty happening in the background - planning, approvals, design and the practical work required to turn a property into a veterinary facility - so we are not revealing everything just yet. What we can say is that this project represents a major investment in veterinary services for horses in our region.

We cannot wait to bring you along as it takes shape. Keep an eye on our social pages and future newsletters: there will be much more to share soon.

More room...more equine capability...

The same Barrington Coast Vets team - with an exciting new home base for our horse patients is on the way!



Spring Babies

All Things Reproduction - Large & Small

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From planned litters to foaling mares, spring is when reproductive medicine becomes very busy.

Spring is breeding season across many species, and good reproductive outcomes begin well before mating.

For dogs and cats, reproductive planning may include pre-breeding health checks, vaccination and parasite review, genetic or breed-specific screening, timing of mating, pregnancy diagnosis and nutritional advice.



If a pregnancy is planned, early discussion helps us identify risk factors and build a sensible monitoring plan for the dam and litter.



For horses, spring brings cycling mares, breeding soundness work, follicle monitoring, artificial insemination programs, early pregnancy diagnosis and preparation for foaling.

Reproductive ultrasound allows us to assess uterine health, monitor follicles and confirm pregnancy at appropriate stages.



Early pregnancy checks are especially important in mares because twin pregnancies can occur and need prompt veterinary management.

As foaling approaches, owners should also have a clear plan for where the mare will foal, what normal first-stage labour looks like and when veterinary intervention is required.

Across species, the message is the same: preparation matters.

- ☑ Maintain an appropriate body condition
- ☑ Review medications and supplements
- ☑ Ensure vaccinations are up to date
- ☑ Discuss any previous fertility, pregnancy or birthing complications with us

In late pregnancy, knowing what is normal can save valuable time.

Prolonged straining without progress, abnormal discharge, severe pain, exhaustion, a malpresented foal or puppy, or a newborn that is weak or not nursing normally should trigger an immediate veterinary call.







Planning a breeding season?

We can help with

- Pre-breeding examinations
- Cycle timing
- Pregnancy diagnosis
- Foaling or whelping preparation
- Newborn checks for both large and small animal patients.

Spring Alert:



Ticks & Snakes Are on the Move...

Spring on the Mid North Coast means warmer days, longer grass, more time outdoors - and a sharp rise in encounters with paralysis ticks and snakes.

TICKS: TINY, BUT DEFINITLEY NOT HARMLESS

Paralysis ticks are a particular concern in our humid coastal environment, with risk increasing from late winter through spring and into summer. Check dogs and cats thoroughly every day, especially around the head, neck, ears, lips, between the toes and under collars, and make sure their tick prevention is current. Remember: no preventative is 100% effective, so daily hands-on checks still matter.

Early tick paralysis signs can be surprisingly subtle: a changed bark or meow, weakness or wobbliness in the back legs, gagging or coughing, vomiting or regurgitation, difficulty swallowing, unusual breathing or lethargy. If you suspect a paralysis tick, keep your pet quiet, avoid food and water, and call us urgently. Even after a tick is removed, toxin already circulating can continue to cause deterioration.





FOR HORSES AND LIVESTOCK, SUDDEN WEAKNESS, COLLAPSE OR UNEXPLAINED NEUROLOGICAL SIGNS ALSO WARRANT AN URGENT CALL.

AND THEN THERE ARE THE SNAKES

Snakes also become more active as temperatures rise. If you see your pet near a snake, or they suddenly collapse, tremble, vomit, become weak, develop dilated pupils, seem uncoordinated or have difficulty breathing, treat it as an emergency. Keep them as still as possible and transport them to us immediately.



For horses and livestock, sudden weakness, collapse or unexplained neurological signs also warrant an urgent call.

Are Baby Brown Snakes More Deadly?



It's a common myth that baby brown snakes are more dangerous because their venom is "stronger" and they can't control how much they inject.

The reality is a little more interesting.

Research shows that juvenile brown snakes have venom that acts more strongly on the nervous system, helping immobilise the lizards they commonly eat. As brown snakes mature and shift towards mammalian prey, their venom becomes more focused on disrupting blood clotting.

So baby brown snake venom isn't necessarily stronger, it's different.

Smaller snakes also have smaller venom glands, meaning they generally have less venom available than a large adult. And the idea that baby snakes automatically "dump" all their venom? That's a myth too.

The important part: any suspected brown snake bite is an emergency, regardless of the snake's size. If you think your pet has been bitten, keep them calm and call us immediately.

When to make the call to your vet...

Call us if your animal is showing signs of breathing difficulty, collapse, progressive weakness, suspected snake contact, or tick paralysis. Any of these signs should be treated as urgent.

Top tip: Call BCV before travelling so we can prepare for your arrival.

A FEW SPRING HABITS

Keep tick provention up to date

Check you pet for ticks every day

Check them after walks, incl beach adventures







Keep dogs away from known snake areas

Know your pets normal behaviour

We don't want you spending spring worrying about ticks and snakes - just being aware and prepared can make all the difference.

And if your dog comes proudly trotting home from the dunes with something suspicious in its mouth... please don't wait to see who wins! Give us a call.

Similarly, if you're unsure whether your pet's current tick prevention is providing enough protection, have a chat with our team. We're always happy to help you work out what's best for your pet and your lifestyle.



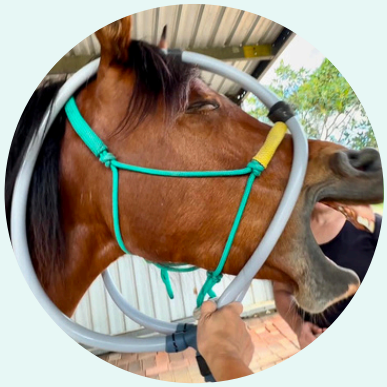
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From the Field with Olga
Spring PEMF Bodywork Report



As the days get longer and the weather warms up, Spring brings more opportunities to get out and enjoy our horses. Shows, competitions, clinics and trail rides are all back on the calendar. Some horses may be coming back from a spell, while others have had a winter of lighter or inconsistent work. Whatever the activity, Spring is a great time to prepare our horses for increased workload, helping them build strength and fitness and feel and perform at their best.



A PEMF session can be a great way to prepare a horse before they begin their new season of activity. I think of this as helping to "wake up" the muscles, tendons and joints after a quieter period. Once they have done some work, another session allows me to observe how their body is responding to the increased workload.

Recently, I worked with a horse returning to ridden work after more than a year off. His owner is preparing him for show season and wanted to support his body as his workload increased. During his PEMF session, I noticed muscle reactivity through his mid-back, gluteal and hamstring areas. By "reactivity", I mean gentle, visible muscle pulsing that is more noticeable in one area or side than the other. These responses help guide where I spend additional time during a session.

Throughout his session, he repeatedly slow blinked, took deep breaths and yawned. As I worked around his neck and jaw, he stretched his neck down and slowly moved his jaw back and forth and from side to side. These are all behaviours I observe as signs of relaxation and release.
Hydration is also important as the weather warms and horses become more active. Water and electrolytes support normal cellular function, circulation, muscle function and recovery.
A gradual return to work, combined with PEMF bodywork, helps prepare our horses for the increased demands of the Spring season.

Olga Long - EquiFit Pulse Therapy - 0414 637 354

From the Farriers Footnotes
Spring Feet

Winter might be a welcome break from the flies, but your horse's feet don't always share the enthusiasm. Wet paddocks, muddy gateways and prolonged moisture create the perfect conditions for two common hoof problems: thrush and seedy toe (white line disease).

Thrush is a bacterial infection that thrives in damp, oxygen-poor environments, affecting the frog and central sulcus. It often starts with a characteristic unpleasant smell before progressing to pain and lameness if left untreated.

Seedy toe occurs when the white line weakens, allowing bacteria and fungi to invade between the hoof wall and underlying structures. Left unchecked, it can lead to hoof wall separation and significant hoof instability.

The good news? Prevention is almost always easier, and far less expensive, than treatment.

A few simple habits can make all the difference:

- Keep horses on a regular farrier schedule (don't stretch those trims over winter!).

- Pick out feet daily, especially after muddy days.

- Improve drainage around feeders, gates and shelters where possible.

- Address any loose or cracked hoof wall early.

- Book a veterinary assessment if you notice a foul smell, black discharge, crumbling frog tissue, hoof wall separation or unexplained lameness.

Healthy hooves are the foundation of a healthy horse. A little extra attention during winter can help keep your horse comfortable, sound and ready to enjoy the warmer months ahead.
If you have any concerns about your horse's feet, the Barrington Coast Vets team is happy to work alongside your farrier to develop the best treatment plan.






FAWNA NSW INC.
FOR AUSTRALIAN WILDLIFE NEEDING AID

For all our Wildlife Warriors out there, we are delighted to include a wildlife update for our region by Kym Kilpatrick (FAWNA Media Spokesperson). Many thanks to Kym for taking the time to write this exclusively for our Barrington Coast Vet community.

Spring has sprung, which for many of us, is the inspiration needed to get back out into the garden.Gardening brings all sorts of pleasures and is known for releasing endorphins, serotonin and dopamine. Plus, of course, it is meaningful exercise, and avid gardeners are fit folk.

There are many reasons why people garden, the desire of being surrounded by beauty, the satisfaction of growing your own produce (which always tastes better and is free of unnecessary chemicals), impressing the neighbours, and in my case, to provide habitat and encourage birds and other small native animals to share my garden space.




Eastern Spinebill

This coming Spring brings a sense of dread, however. Despite our current wet conditions, the BOM is predicting a hot dry summer with increased bushfire risk. And of course, by the time this newsletter is published it is likely that the dreaded avian influenza, H5N1, will be impacting our area. For anyone who cares about our wildlife it is a worrying time.

Australia is rightly known as the 'holy grail' of avifauna, with a wealth of stunning birdlife of over 898 recorded different species from the tiny weebill at 8 centimetres to the emu and dinosaur like cassowary.

Fun Fact: Birdwatching tourism from cashed-up overseas 'twitchers' brings in an excess of 2.6 billion dollars each year into the Australian economy.

In our area we have not only a rich diversity of sea, shore and waterbirds, but also a wealth of 'terrestrial' birds including insectivores, nectar eaters and carnivores such as owls, falcons, kites, hawks and eagles. It's easy to take our birdlife for granted. However, the warning signs are there that for at least some species, extinction is an accelerating threat.

One of the driving forces of the loss of our bird species is, of course, habitat loss. This is where those of us who are gardeners can make a difference, and never under-estimate the power of a lot of relatively small differences adding up to something real and significant (my favourite analogy is that individually I may be a bit of a snowflake, but by joining together with others I can be part of an avalanche).

Getting back to gardening.... Rigidly 'neat' gardens with clipped, often chemically sprayed lawns and tightly controlled imported, non-native border plant species may work at impressing the neighbours, but they will be largely bereft of bird species.

What our bird species need, particularly our smaller birds that are increasingly disappearing from our urban landscapes, are messy multi-story gardens prioritising native plants, preferably those native to the area.

By prioritising native plants, including native grasses, gardeners can create environments that encourage butterflies, native bees and other insects that feed upon these species to grow and thrive. These insects in turn feed the insectivore birds such as fairy wrens, robins, fantails, wagtails, silvereyes and weebills. Allowing native grasses to go to seed will also provide for our finches and other seed-eaters. And, an additional benefit of native grasses, they don't burn with the heat and ladder fuel potential of imported grasses nor have the allergy potential of paspalum and kikuyu (another fun fact, kikuyu throws off cyanide when burnt).



Native species that flower at different times of the year are important food sources not only for native bees, butterflies and other pollinators, but also for our nectar eating or honey-eating bird species.Multi-story plantings that provide thick coverage helps out smaller honeyeaters such as the beautiful Eastern Spinebill that can otherwise be easily bullied, stressed and even preyed upon by bigger more aggressive birds.



Another less fun fact: over 75% of the problem weed species besetting Australia are garden escapees. Six of the most common weeds including lantana, privet and blackberry now cover 20 million hectares of Australia. Introduced aquatic weeds impact on the healthy functioning of our waterways for example Alligator Weed; Leafy Elodea; Fishbone Fern; Water Lettuce and Water Hyacinth.



Some weeds are highly toxic and are known to kill both domestic and pet animals as well as wildlife, for example Mother of Millions, Fireweed, Firesticks, Arum Lily and Morning Glory. African Tulip Tree kills bees. However, research is either non-existent or limited on the impact of most weed species on animals and birds, including of course, our wildlife.



For those of us who crave neat hedges and cottagey-style gardens there are several native species that meet the need and still provide habitat. And, native species of course require less water, less fertilizer and less pesticide, all important considerations in caring for our waterways.



Providing clean water for our wildlife is important and having different birdbaths at different heights will help in the hotter months. It seems, at the moment at least, that our honeyeaters and small insectivores are less vulnerable to H5N1 than our waterbirds and carnivores and they will still need clean water to survive in the hotter months

Any congregation of birds increases their risk of H5N1 as well as other infectious diseases such as Beak & Feather Disease that blight our parrot species.So, this is not the time to artificially feed birds, particularly human food that can compromise their nutritional health and weaken their immune systems. If you do feed, make sure it is supplemental at most, a natural food source and religiously clean surfaces each time — this virus has been found to persist on surfaces for days.

Overseas, cats have proved particularly vulnerable to H5N1, so this is absolutely a time to keep your beloved moggy safe inside. Keeping yourself and your dog away from any sick or dead wildlife is common sense, and, in terms of H5N1, knowing the symptoms to look out for, and reporting suspected cases to the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 is our best chance of limiting the impact of this horrible disease.



Spring Wildlife

Sharing our Coast safely

Our region becomes especially busy for native wildlife as breeding, nesting and seasonal movement increase.

The Barrington Coast and wider MidCoast are home to extraordinary wildlife - from koalas, flying foxes and shorebirds to marine turtles and the unique Manning River helmeted turtle. Spring brings increased movement as animals search for mates, nesting sites, food and safe places to raise young. That also means more wildlife on roads, around properties and along our beaches, waterways and bush edges.

Along the coast, beach-nesting birds are particularly vulnerable to disturbance. Pied oystercatchers, little terns and other shorebirds may nest directly on open sand, where eggs and chicks are extremely difficult to see. Please obey temporary exclusion signs, keep dogs under effective control and give marked nesting areas a wide berth. Around roads, slow down at dawn, dusk and night, particularly in known wildlife corridors. If you find a healthy fledgling bird on the ground with parents nearby, it may not need rescuing; if an animal is injured, entangled, bleeding, unable to move normally or in immediate danger, seek advice.

For your own safety, do not handle snakes, bats or flying foxes, and keep pets away from sick or dead wildlife. Where possible, contain injured wildlife without direct handling and contact a licensed wildlife carer or veterinary team for guidance. Barrington Coast Vets remains committed to supporting wildlife care in our community, and we are continuing to develop our plans for expanded wildlife and marine animal support in the region.

By Emma Swilks

BARRINGTON COAST VETS

We hope you enjoyed reading our Spring newletter.
Thank you for your support, and as always if you have any concern about your animal, don't hesitate to pop in or give us a call.
From our family to yours, sending love and well wishes this Spring.

Emma



Practice Owner & Veterinarian, Wife, Mum to 3 and owner of Horses - Poco, Rhonda, Juke, Hopi and Regarlo, Dogs - Bootsy Collins, Cooper & Cookie, Cats - Lady Winifred & Sergant Fuzzyboots, a Turtle called Franklin, Fish - Nemo & Raphael, Roosters Kevin, Hans & Steve and the Chickens - Ruby, Wednesday Frenchie & Strawberry