

# Lawton and Stoakes

Partners:-

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## NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2015



### STAFF NEWS

Lots of staff news this quarter with three new members of staff to welcome!



Georgie Calixte-Holdsworth has joined our Nursing Team as a first year trainee. Georgie has worked as a Veterinary Nursing Assistant for several years, locuming in various Veterinary Practices. Georgie has a tortoise called Batman and

so is happy to handle some of our more unusual patients. She has taken the decision to re-start her official training with a view to becoming a Registered Veterinary Nurse. She has started her first year at the College of Animal Welfare and we look forward to helping her achieve her aim.

Laura Bouchier joined us at the end of September as a Veterinary Care Assistant. Her main role will be in assisting the nurses care for inpatients and cleaning kennels, cages and equipment. She has a variety of animals at home including cats, bunnies, birds and 2 African Pygmy Hedgehogs. Laura hopes to go on to become a qualified Veterinary Nurse.



patients.

Dr. Moira Kelly is joining the Veterinary team. Moira qualified from Cambridge and has worked in the Galapagos Islands for a few weeks after qualifying. She has also worked in a Wildlife Hospital for several years and enjoyed treating exotic patients in her previous practice and is looking to gain more experience with our more unusual

### STAFF

#### VETERINARY SURGEONS

**DR MARTIN LAWTON** B.Vet.Med;  
Cert.V.Ophthal; Cert.L.A.S; C.Biol; M.S.B;  
D.Zoo.Med; FRCVS

**DR LYNNE STOAKES** B.Vet.Med. MRCVS

**DR NOEMIE MCDERMOTT** B.Vet.Med.  
MRCVS

**Dr MOIRA KELLY** MA VetMB MRCVS

#### RECEPTIONISTS

**JULIE AUSTIN** (Administrator)  
**CORAL WILKINSON**

#### NURSING STAFF

**FIONA GORDON** RVN Head Nurse

**JAMIE BIGGS** RVN

**RACHAEL BROWN** 1st Yr Trainee

**GEORGIE CALIXTE-HOLDSWORTH** 1st Yr  
Trainee

**LAURA BOUCHIER** Nursing Assistant

Lynne and Martin attended the Exotic Animal Veterinary Conference in San Antonio Texas in August and have come back with new ideas for helping our birds (including poultry), rabbits and other small critters. To help with this some new equipment has been purchased (see What's New? This issue). While we were away Dr Noemie McDermott returned for a short while during her maternity leave to take charge of the Practice. We look forward to welcoming Noemie back to the Veterinary team in

## WHAT'S NEW?

The partners have recently invested in more anaesthetic monitoring equipment. We have a new Capnograph in addition to our 2 Capnographs purchased previously. These machines monitor the Carbon dioxide in the expired air of our anaesthetised patients to ensure they are being ventilated properly.

We also now have a 1mm endoscope to add to our collection of both rigid and flexible endoscopes. This piece of equipment will be invaluable in looking into small spaces such as nasal chambers or helping us to place breathing tubes into small patients such as rabbits and ferrets for anaesthesia.



Lynne now has her own magnifying loupes (glasses) with a light source giving a 2.3 times magnified view, again to assist with dealing with some of our smaller patients.

The Partners are always looking for new ways to improve the service that we can offer our patients.

## TICK RECORDING SCHEME

Following on from the article in the Summer Newsletter on Health Risks of Travelling Abroad with your pet Dog we would like to bring to your attention the **Public Health England Tick Recording Scheme**. Any member of the public finding a tick on their pet (or even themselves!) can submit the tick to Public Health England for identification. PHE is co-ordinating efforts to identify tick importations especially the Brown Dog Tick *Rhipicephalus sanguineus*, which can transmit diseases such as babesiosis and erlichiosis. This tick has been found on several dogs returning to the UK from holidays in Southern Europe. The tick cannot survive outside in the UK but could persist over winter indoors and multiply resulting in an infestation. For more information visit [www.gov.uk/tick-recording-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/tick-recording-scheme).



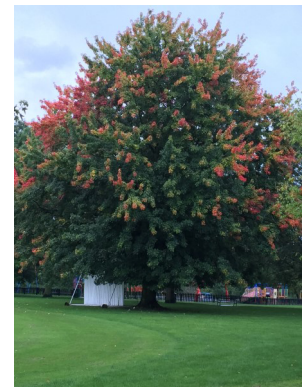
## HIBERNATION TIME!

Just as the trees are changing colour so my tortoises are preparing themselves for their winter rest. As the light levels fade Jasper and Mary have reduced their feeding despite the heat lamps in their greenhouse. Now is the time to give them baths in tepid water to try to make sure they are well hydrated prior to hibernation. Once they have stopped eating completely and I am sure their gut is empty (about one month) I will put them away for the winter. It is important to make sure they stay at a constant temperature between 5-10°C. Traditionally this was done using two insulated boxes one within the other placed within a



building away from predators or the elements. I have 10 tortoises to hibernate and so make use of a Wine Chiller. The temperature is set and the tortoises all are within insulated boxes surrounded by shredded paper.

Whatever method you choose it is vital that only healthy tortoises are hibernated. They need plenty of reserves to make it through the harsh winter weather. We offer Pre Hibernation checks where you can ask the Veterinary Surgeon for advice while we check over your Tortoise. Why not contact our receptionists for an appointment today?





# IS IT MORE THAN JUST BAD BREATH..? DENTAL DISEASE IN DOGS AND CATS

One effect of neglected teeth is obvious to anyone with a sense of smell! The smell is caused by the build up of bacteria in the plaque that forms along the gum-line. But did you know that dental disease can lead to more than just an unpleasant smell?

If left, tartar builds up on teeth and erodes the gum and eventually the bone and ligaments within the tooth sockets. Bacteria can then spread via the blood stream to distant organs causing disease in the kidneys, liver, spleen, heart, muscle and lungs. Research in human medicine has demonstrated the importance of having the patient “dentally fit” prior to procedures such as hip replacement or cardiac surgery in order to improve outcomes.

Conversely, it has to be noted also that chronic kidney disease can increase the severity of diseases of the structures surrounding the teeth (periodontal disease) and that the oral cavity is a common site for tumours.

The chronic pain that is associated with dental disease is often unnoticed by owners as our patients often do not show overt signs of pain that we humans recognise.

## **Why does dental disease have such far-reaching effects?**

The liver and kidneys are responsible for filtering the blood and bacteria in the blood from an infected mouth can settle in these organs. Over time these bacteria set up an inflammatory response that damages these organs and can lead to their eventual failure.

## **What can you do to prevent this?**

Good oral hygiene is important. As most diets given to dogs and cats are not abrasive enough to clear the plaque other means have to be employed. Toothbrushing, where tolerated, is advised as is the use of proprietary dental treats (watch the calories though!). If this fails then annual or even bi-annual scaling and polishing under a general anaesthetic may be required. The old mantra prevention is better than cure is never more important as once the periodontal structures are affected the disease is irreversible. If periodontal disease is present a blood sample to check organ function prior to anaesthesia is always recommended and pre-treatment with antibiotics is often advised.

**The answer**, then is to have regular dental checks. This forms part of our routine annual health examination for vaccination and dental advice should be heeded at that time. Many pet insurances will not cover for dental disease unless preventative measures have been followed as prescribed by your



## INTERNATIONAL CAT CARE

is warning about the risks of household disinfectants containing **Benzalkonium Chloride** to pet cats. This chemical can cause severe burns to the skin of paws and also to the tongue as cats try to clean the chemical off their skin.

Benzalkonium Chloride can be found in numerous products for the house and garden and its effects may not be apparent for many days making it difficult to ascertain the cause.



## STAR PET

**This is Buddy and we think this photo sent in by his owners perfectly sums up his personality! He has a sensitive skin and has had frequent visits to the surgery but he practically drags his owners in and is always so happy to see us! And we enjoy seeing him...but hope that he gets better soon and his trips to the vet will be for routine health checks only!**

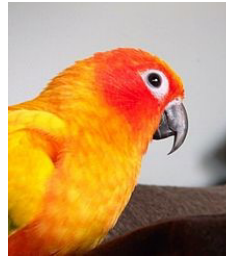
**Well done Buddy you're a star!**



## EXOTIC SPOT by Moira Kelly

### SUN CONURES

Sun Conures (*Aratinga solstitialis*), also known as sun parakeets, are medium-sized parrots of the *Aratinga* genus. Adults can grow to approximately 12 inches long, weighing in at roughly 110g and can live up to 30 years. This bird is native to the coastal and humid forests of Venezuela, Northern Brazil and Guyana in South America. Sadly, loss of habitat in these areas and the capture of wild specimens for the pet trade currently threatens the wild sun conure population and the species is considered endangered.



Sun conures are best known for their playful, noisy attitude and beautiful plumage. They are sexually monomorphic, with very few differences in appearance between male and female birds. Juveniles have a predominantly green plumage and gain their adult yellow, orange and red colouration upon reaching sexual maturity at around 2 years of age.

In the wild these birds live in groups of up to 30 individuals and will spend much of their time foraging for their diet of fruits, flowers, berries and nuts. As such, sun conures are very sociable birds that revel in their owners' attention and can become distressed when left alone. They will often benefit from having another sun conure (or other member of the *Aratinga* family) as a companion. Conures are known for being very noisy parrots and while the sun conure is by no means the noisiest conure, they are very vocal and have a shrill scream as well as imitating people and often learning a few words. Sun conures are ever-playful, easy to train and love being outside of their cage (thankfully they're generally no messier than smaller birds!). Enrichments such as branches and toys to chew as well as the opportunity to forage should be provided as a lack of mental stimulation can be distressing for conures and sometimes lead to feather plucking. Exercise outside of the cage should also be encouraged as pet conures kept in small cages are often prone to obesity and associated health risks.

A complete, nutritionally balanced manufactured specialist diet should be provided as well as a variety of fruits and vegetables. Conures love to spend many hours chewing and chewing-treats as well as toys can be provided to keep their beaks safely preoccupied!

### Help our Wildlife

As winter approaches please spare a thought for our native wild animals. Hedgehogs have been in serious decline over the past few decades. We can help by making a small hole at the bottom of garden fences to allow them to roam and please do check bonfires before striking the match to ensure none have chosen your pile of garden waste as a place to hibernate.

Birds appreciate fresh drinking water and food at this time of year and through the winter. Don't be too hasty to tidy those dead flowers, they provide seeds and insects for birds to feed on.

Frogs and toads also appreciate a place to hide in the winter.

## KIDS CORNER

Can you name the baby animals below? The first one has been done for you.

HORSE



F O A L

C) RABBIT



— — —

A) DOG



— — — —

D) CHICKEN



— — — —

B) PIGEON



— — — —

E) SHEEP



— — — —

Answers: A) Puppy, B) Squab C) Kit D) Chick E) Lamb