

Lawton and Stoakes

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Newsletter Winter 2016/17



HAPPY CHRISTMAS!!



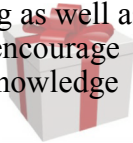
Staff News

Martin attended the American Veterinary Ophthalmology Conference in October. He was able to purchase a new ERG machine (see What's New?) to replace our older model.

Noemie attended the London Veterinary Show and as well as bringing back posters to help with Veterinary Nurse Training she attended lectures on a new interesting development in feline diabetes treatment.

Jamie has completed an online Continuing Professional Development Webinar on White Blood Cells.

CPD is an essential part of Veterinary Nursing as well as for the Veterinary Surgeons and we actively encourage our staff to participate in CPD to keep their knowledge and skills up to date.



What's New?

The Aquarium in the waiting room has completed its renovations thanks to Moira and Jamie. The goldfish who had outgrown their tank (one of whom was over 20 years old) have been rehomed. The tank was then emptied and thoroughly cleaned before stocking with plants and gravel and logs. This was allowed to settle for several weeks before introducing the fish. Serpae Tetra

(*Hyphessobrycon callistus*) and Rummy Nosed Tetra (*Hemigrammus bleheri*) have been chosen as they are good starter fish for the freshwater aquarium. If you look carefully you may just catch a glimpse of the tiny shrimp and snails that are in there too!

On a more medical note Martin has invested in a new Electro-Retinograph (ERG). This replaces the older model. The ERG is used to determine whether the ret-

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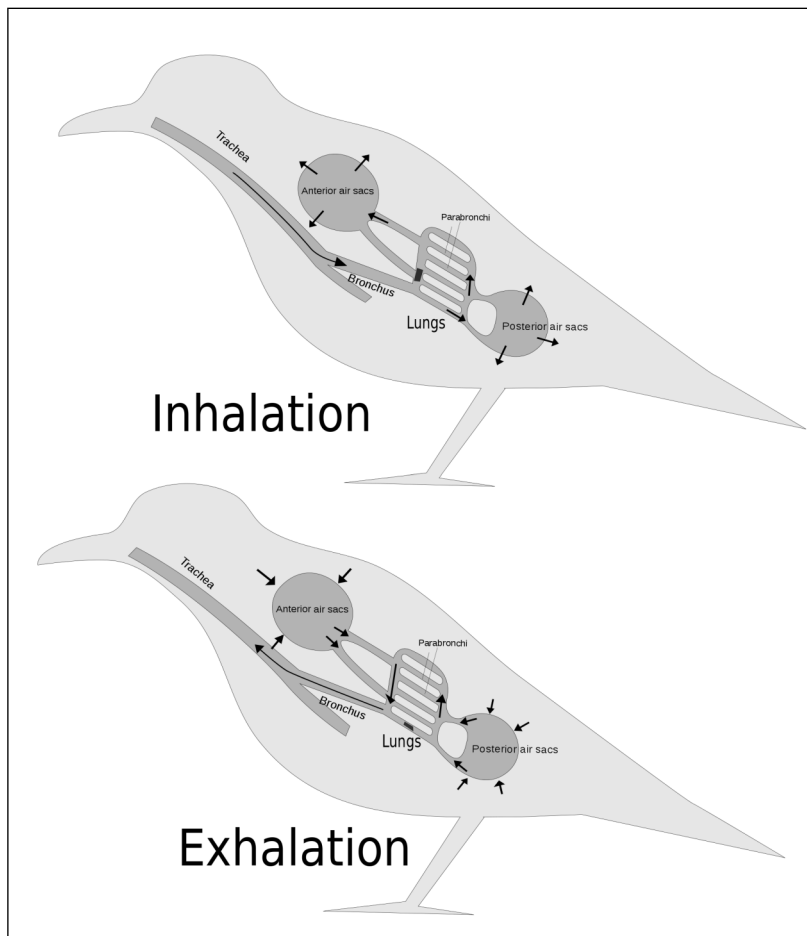
ina at the back of the eye is responding to light. This is especially important to find out prior to performing cataract surgeries. The older model could only work on Computers with Windows pre XP and was rapidly becoming obsolete. The newer model has faster processing and is more accurate and gives a more reliable reading and interpretation of the retinal cells. It is being put to good use already!

An Interesting Case

We were presented recently with a Budgerigar with a swelling over its right shoulder, which had been getting bigger over a two week period. The Budgie was bright and still eating and drinking normally but the owners were aware that it was quieter and not behaving as normal. After darkening the room to enable us to remove him from his cage with as little stress as possible we were able to feel the swelling which was soft and extended from the back of the neck to the breastbone. A hypodermic needle with attached syringe was inserted into the swelling and air was aspirated confirming our suspicion that the swelling was due to a ruptured air sac.

Birds have an amazingly complex respiratory system composed of a pair of small rigid sponge-like lungs communicating with large paired airsacs in the abdomen and also air filled long bones. This system not only helps with keeping the bird light for flight but the airsacs act as bellows for the lungs allowing gaseous exchange on inspiration and expiration and making the bird's lungs 10 times more efficient than mammalian lungs. Rupture of one of these air-sacs can result in air escaping under the skin. This can occur due to trauma or infection in the respiratory system.

Hopefully with time our Budgie patient will heal and the air will slowly be reabsorbed into the body and the swelling will reduce.



The Respiratory System of the Bird is very Complex

Health and Safety

by Laura Bouchier

Health and safety is an important part of a vet practice to keep staff, you and your pets safe! I have just covered this topic at college as part of my First Year Veterinary Nurse Training and I have completed an up to date risk assessment for the x-ray room. This includes all potential risks and hazards such as exposure to radiation, risk of tripping over electrical wires etc. to notify staff of these and what guidelines are in place to minimise these happening. As well as risk assessments, guidelines and operating manuals are put in place and all staff have read these to make sure all machinery and equipment are operated correctly. Risk assessments are a great way of ensuring everyone in the practice is kept safe including your much loved pets!

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS
AND A HAPPY
NEW YEAR TO
ALL OUR
CLIENTS AND
THEIR PETS!**

Rabbit Welfare by Lily Knell

Rabbits are the third most popular pet, but one of the most frequent animals seen with health problems as owners don't understand how important the needs of a rabbit are.

Rabbits diet is the biggest problem that we see. If rabbits do not get the correct diet all different problems can occur, such as dental disease, obesity and gastric-stasis, all which can be related to each other and can become fatal if not treated in time. Rabbits need a constant supply of hay as this helps to wear the teeth down which helps to prevent dental disease. When rabbits get dental disease, it is hard for them to eat, they salivate a lot and drop food whilst eating, it can also be painful, and this could cause the rabbit to stop eating. When rabbits stop eating they can become unwell very quickly as the gut stops moving causing gut-stasis to occur.

Rabbits should only be given a small amount of pellet food and no fruit as fruit is high in sugar and can make your rabbits become overweight. Fresh greens and grass can be given. If rabbits are obese it can be hard for them to groom their back end and they will become mucky, this can cause rabbits to get fly strike as flies will be attracted to the smell, especially in the summer.

Rabbits need lots of exercise, in the wild rabbits would run about 3 miles each day so rabbits need to be running around in a run or somewhere safe for at least 3 hours a day for them to be able to stretch their legs and prevent becoming over weight.

When rabbits don't get a sufficient amount of exercise, their legs and back can get sore as they can stretch them out, it can cause problems such as arthritis, which can become very painful.

Before getting a rabbit you need to read about their needs to ensure that you can provide them



WINTER HAZARDS FOR PETS

This time of year particularly around Christmas time presents many hazards to our pets. Here are some of the common items that can cause problems.

Antifreeze: Ethylene Glycol found in antifreeze causes kidney failure in cats and can be fatal. Early signs are subtle and easily missed. There is an antidote but it has to be given in the early stages.

Chocolate: Contains Theobromine which can cause agitation, excitability and tremors or even convulsions in dogs. It is particularly problematic in dogs with heart disease. White chocolate does not normally pose a risk but milk and dark chocolate are more dangerous.

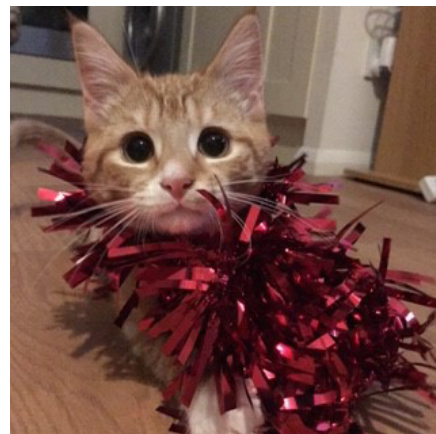
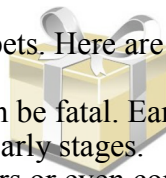
Cough, Cold and 'flu remedies: These contain a cocktail of drugs which can be poisonous to cats and dogs. If you know your pet cat or dog has consumed one of these it is important to let your vet know the ingredients of the product so that the correct help can be given.

Grapes fresh and dried (Sultanas, Raisins, Currants): Even small quantities can be toxic to dogs and of course this includes mince pies and Christmas cake and pudding.

Rock Salt: Pets that have walked on salted (gritted) roads and pavements may lick their feet and ingest large quantities of salt. This can lead to thirst, vomiting, diarrhoea, and lethargy. Ingestion of large amounts can cause convulsions and coma.

Christmas Plants: Holly, Ivy, Mistletoe can all cause upset tummies if eaten.

Foreign Bodies: Your dog may take a liking to the Christmas tinsel or decorations and attempt to eat these causing at least gastric upset or at worst a blockage. Keep small items out of their reach. A few simple precautions can protect your pet from these hazards. Remember that signs may not be seen until sometime after the event but that early treatment is often vital. Call your veterinary Surgeon if you suspect your pet has eaten anything it shouldn't have!



EXOTIC SPOT

The Red Foot Tortoise (*Geochelone Carbonaria*)

These tortoises originate in the wild from South America. They are not endangered in the wild but are covered by CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) Appendix II, which means they may not be exported from their country of origin without a permit. They are commonly kept as pets in the USA and are being bred in captivity. We would recommend that you ensure you only buy specimens that have been captive bred in this country. They grow to a manageable 11-14 inches in length (28-35cm). They should be kept at a daytime temperature of 80-90°F (26-35°C) and no lower than 70°F (21°C) at night.

They should have an outdoor enclosure for when the weather is warm enough which should be solid sided and secure with a shaded area and hide. They need a heated area at night or for when the temperature outside is not suitable and also for winter as this species of tortoise does not hibernate. Ideally they should have 12-14 hours of sunshine per day, which can be provided indoors by providing an artificial UVB light source.

These tortoises prefer a moderate humidity, which can be difficult to provide in our climate indoors. A hide with damp substrate can provide the humidity needed and humidity levels should be monitored. The diet of Redfoot tortoises should include plenty of fresh leafy greens, veggies and fruits. They also like to eat leaves and flowers and the occasional worm or grub. Calcium supplements are recommended, particularly for young, growing tortoises. Water should be supplied in a large shallow dish as they like to climb in to drink and babies should be bathed regularly to maintain hydration.

Redfoot Tortoises have a reputation for being fairly hardy, however, they can be prone to respiratory disease if the humidity levels are too low or too high.



KIDS CORNER



Percy Penguin has been leaving presents all over this newsletter. How many are there?

There are 9 presents