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3pm-5pm

## NEWSLETTER SPRING 2010

### WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE OF THE LAWTON AND STOAKES NEWSLETTER IN THIS ISSUE:-

**STAFF NEWS...**How our staff are striving to keep up with the latest medical advances

**WHAT'S NEW...**New equipment purchased to improve the services we can offer

**IN OTHER NEWS...**a new addition bringing you important information from the Veterinary Press

**MEDICAL FOCUS..**Blood Pressure Measurement

**KIDS CORNER...**Louie Forino is this Quarter's lucky winner plus a quiz and more prizes to be won.

**EXOTIC SPOT...**The Pygmy Hedgehog by Jamie Biggs

**STAR PET...**Meet Rosie the Wire haired Terrier

### STAFF NEWS

Martin Lawton has attended the Western States Veterinary conference in February and Lynne Stoakes has been to the British Small Animal Association (BSAVA) Conference in Birmingham in April. These events are important for our Continuing Professional Development and to ensure we keep up to date with all the latest ideas in Veterinary Medicine and Surgery.

Helen our Nursing assistant has applied to Writtle College to study for the new Veterinary Nursing Qualification to start in September. Jamie is now well into his second (final) year of study and Kelly is awaiting the results of her final practical examination before she is officially a qualified RVN.

Joanne one of our reception team has taken some time off for family reasons and we are grateful to Paula, Julie and the nurses for holding the fort during her absence and we are pleased to have Joanne back with us now.

### WHAT'S NEW?

Lawton and Stoakes have been able to donate £120 to The Zebra Foundation thanks to the generosity of our clients buying the 2010 Calendars! Thank you to all those who sent in photos of your pets and for buying the finished product!

The Practice has purchased a new hand held blood pressure monitoring device called a petMAP. This device quickly and simply measures blood pressure and heart rate without causing undue distress to the patient making the readings more accurate. Hypertension (high blood pressure) is a feature of several diseases in our patients and you can read more about these in this issue of our newsletter.



The petMAP blood pressure monitor

Also we now have an addition to our anatomical models in the shape of the canine ear in health and disease to enable us to fully explain the conditions of otitis externa and otitis media and the rationale behind the various treatment options to our clients.

## BLOOD PRESSURE MEASUREMENT IN DOGS AND CATS

**Hypertension** (high blood pressure) is a common finding in dogs and cats although it is usually secondary to other disease unlike in humans where primary hypertension is common. High blood pressure can occur secondary to **diabetes mellitus** (sugar diabetes), **kidney failure** and **heart disease** in both dogs and cats and **hyperthyroidism** (overactive thyroid) in cats.

Hypertension is often not diagnosed until it causes clinical signs. The most common of these is blindness which is a result of detachment of the retinas in both eyes. However hypertension causes damage to many other organs in the body including the heart and the kidneys. These signs often appear suddenly and by the time they are noticed the condition is quite advanced and in some cases the damage may be irreversible.

By routinely monitoring the blood pressure particularly in our older patients using the new petMAP handheld blood pressure monitor we will be able to pick up hypertension in dogs and cats before damage is done to these organs and treatment can be started to prevent these secondary effects.

Your pet's blood pressure can usually be measured during a standard consultation and if you would like your Veterinary Surgeon to measure your pet's blood pressure please speak to our receptionists who will be pleased to arrange this for you.



The PetMAP in use

**Hypotension** (low blood pressure) is less commonly seen in conscious animals, however, it may occur during general anaesthesia. Hypotension can have serious effects on the kidneys and can lead to prolonged post operative recoveries. By measuring blood pressure during surgical procedures we can step in to prevent this happening by modifying the anaesthetic or using appropriate drugs.

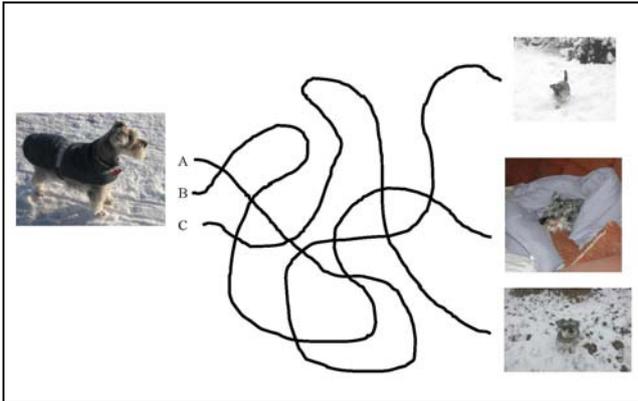
## OTHER NEWS



Spring heralds the reawakening of hibernating tortoises. After the long and very cold winter it is recommended to get your tortoise's health checked as soon as it wakes particularly if you have any concerns. Tortoises should be bathed in warm water and kept warm once they wake up and a heat lamp is recommended for this purpose. They should be eating within a couple of days.

The Health Protection Agency (HPA) together with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Department of Health (DoH) has produced a new guidance leaflet for owners of Exotics following an ongoing outbreak of Salmonella. The outbreak has been traced to the importation of dead mice used as food for the reptiles. As a consequence DEFRA has changed import requirements and currently all imported mice have to be tested for Salmonella. We would like to remind owners of reptiles that they should pay strict attention to personal hygiene when handling their pets and to ensure small children are supervised and advised of the risks. The leaflet is available from the HPA website at: [www.tiny9.com/u/reptile\\_salmonella](http://www.tiny9.com/u/reptile_salmonella).

## KIDS CORNER

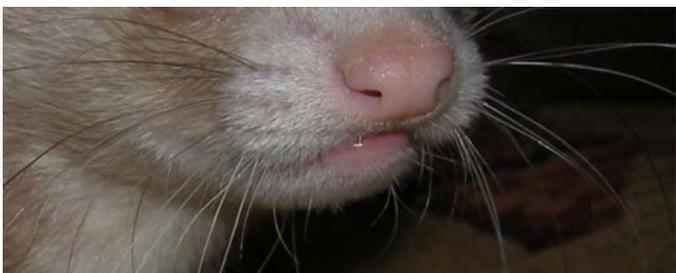


**Congratulations to Louie Forino** who correctly put Bina on the right path (B) to get her home in the warm. Louie wins a £15 WHSmith voucher.

This issue we are pleased to include a picture sent in by previous Kids Corner winner Stephanie Rollison of her Cocker Spaniel “Fern”. We love her pup’s smiley face!



**For this Quarter’s competition** look at the following picture. Can you guess what animal it is? Maybe the clue will help.



**Clue:** My Latin name when translated means “stinking thief”, I have a long thin body and sharp teeth.

If you think you know and would like to win a £15 WHSmith Voucher send in your answer to the surgery. The first name drawn out of the hat on 27th June will receive the prize and will be mentioned in our Summer Newsletter.

## **EXOTIC CORNER by Jamie Biggs**

### **The African Pygmy Hedgehog**



As the name suggests, African pygmy hedgehogs originate from Africa. They can grow to between 5-8 inches in length, and normally weigh between 500-700g when fully grown. In captivity they can live for anywhere between 3-8 years, although 4-6 years is most common.

They are extremely active animals and should therefore be kept in as large an enclosure as possible, a minimum of 2-3 square feet. Large glass fish tanks could be used, as well as reptile vivariums etc. The floor of the enclosure should be lined with newspaper, which can also be covered with a layer of wood shavings to provide a softer base, however this can make soiled areas harder to spot, therefore a good cleaning regime is even more important. Cedar shavings should not be used as they can emit harmful odours when soaked in urine therefore, if shavings are to be used, Aspen are amongst the best. The hedgehog also requires a box in which to hide and sleep during the day, as they are nocturnal animals. The box can be filled with shredded paper so as to provide a warm and absorbent home!

In order to provide the hedgehog with stimulation, small toys designed for cats and ferrets can be provided, along with plastic or cardboard tunnels to burrow through. A large exercise wheel such as for ferrets can be placed inside the enclosure, however the wheel should be solid and not have any gaps in which the hedgehog can trap their feet.

Hedgehogs are insectivorous which means that they would mainly eat insects in the wild. In captivity they can be fed mealworms, but this should not be their sole diet as they are high in fat and lack many essential nutrients. A good quality cat food can be offered, as well as pieces of cooked chicken (boiled is best without the skin), mince, lamb, and occasional small amounts of boiled or scrambled egg. Their food can be scattered and hidden around the enclosure in order to encourage a more natural foraging behaviour! Bread, milk and all dairy products should never be fed to a hedgehog, as they will cause illness. Clean water should be available at all times, and should be changed at least once a day.

## **STAR PET**



This is Rosie our lovely Wired Haired Fox Terrier. She is a rescue dog and is about 10 years old. We have had her for eight months. Rosie's hobbies include walking, sleeping, eating and sitting on your lap. Her favourite pastime is playing and chewing on a ball.



Rosie has had more than her share of medical problems but has proved to be a model patient so all of us at Lawton and Stoakes would agree with Rosie's owner she is lovely indeed!

