

Shake it off!



Spring 2022

News

Hands up those of you who have been the target of a wet dog body shake? Oh yes, if you are standing close to a dog whose coat is full of water then you are in for a bit of a drowning!

In a few seconds your dog can shed 70% of the water from their coat, whether after a bath or a swim in the sea. A built in hairdryer!

A dog's skin is loose, so it can amazingly twist and whip around increasing in speed as it does a body shake. Dogs are great at getting dry quickly with this natural reflex, which comes from their wild dog ancestors who needed to stay dry, as being heavily wet for too long was a matter of life or death. Water sits in the coat and creates poor insulation, which causes a dog's body to quickly lose heat and drain energy reserves. So it was very important for wild dogs to keep dry to help them survive.



Dry Body Shakes These get rid of dirt, loose hair and parasites....another throw back to ancestors who slept outside on the dirty ground. Stress can be another reason... maybe from a visit to the vets!

A good body shake, eases tension and resets the body allowing the dog to say 'pew that's all over now, time to move on'.

After an excitable playtime with another dog.....helps again to reset their emotions. **Feeling uncomfortable**.....a good shake does the trick.

Following a nap.....gets the body going particularly in the morning after a long sleep. A bit like us when we have a good stretch after rising from bed!

All in all take a leaf out of your pet's book. A body shake helps a dog move on to a better state of mind and a reset of emotions..... **so let's all have a good shake!**

Welcome to our New Vet...

Thom Ridgers BVSc BSc(Hons) MRCVS who joined the veterinary team at our Crookham Park Clinic in November 2021. We asked Thom a few questions about his work as a vet and life experiences.

So Thom what inspired you to become a vet?

I've always been fascinated by nature and the natural world, and enjoyed science at school and college. My friend's father owned a vet practice, so at 16 I did my work experience there, which was very enjoyable! I completed a degree in Bio-Veterinary Sciences at the Royal Veterinary College in London in 2016 before studying Veterinary Science at the University of Bristol, graduating in 2021. I might be interested in specialising one day..... maybe dermatology or internal medicine, but for now I'm continuing to learn and develop my skills.

.....and favourite part of being a vet? I enjoy helping owners and teaching people how to best care for their pets. It is rewarding knowing that an animal will be well loved and have a good life, as well as helping owners feel confident that they are doing their part towards this too.

Have you worked for any animal charities?

I went to Romania shortly before my first degree to see the stray dog problem first hand, and worked at a charity dog shelter for two weeks in -10°C in January! It was very eye opening to see how other countries treat their pets and how veterinary practice is done elsewhere. I found the experience very grounding as it taught me just how lucky I am, and highlighted the privileged lifestyle I have had in comparison to many others.

Any unusual stories to tell?

When I was a member of the RVC Anatomy Club, I dissected a range of unusual species that included a swan, boa constrictor, tortoises and an egg-bound grass snake. My dissection of the grass snake was plastinated and put in the RVC anatomy museum.

www.stkittsvet.co.uk

Tell us about your pets.

I have two 10-year-old Burmese cats called Rocco and Simba who are real characters, and I believe they think they are dogs! Both follow me around the house and 'talk' a lot, as well as going for walks around the block with me and devouring lick-e-lix. I also have goldfish called Sushi, Inky, Blinky, Pinky and Clyde!

.....and finally any hobbies?

I enjoy foraging, fishing, scuba diving, cooking and I play guitar. I'm very interested in mycology and nature and also enjoy long bike rides, plus trips away to explore new cuisines!



Hartley Wintney

01252 844044

Mon to Fri 8.00 - 19.00

Sat & Sun 8.30 - 16.00

Crookham Park

01252 913990

Mon to Fri 8.30 - 19.00

Sat 8.30 - 16.00

Sun at Hartley Wintney

Firgrove

01252 877799

Mon to Fri 8.00 - 19.00

Sat 8.30 - 12.00

Sun at Hartley Wintney

Basingstoke

01256 844944

Mon to Fri 8.00 - 19.00

Sat 8.30 - 16.00

Sun at Hartley Wintney

24 Hour Emergency Cover



New Cat Chipping Law

Information on the gov.uk site reports that **microchipping your cat is to become mandatory**. The government are currently reviewing the dog microchipping laws too, and then both will be enforced at the same time.

Once law, **cat owners will need to microchip their cats before they reach 20 weeks old**, plus the details stored and kept up to date on a microchip database.

Many lost unmicrochipped cats never get reunited with their owners and are rehomed from rescue centres. Also owners are often unaware of their pets being injured in road traffic accidents. Please don't wait for it to become law. Just call us and book your appointment now. It's quick, simple and a permanent means of identification for your pet. For further information visit www.gov.uk/government/news/cat-microchipping-to-be-made-mandatory



Long in the Tooth

Bugs Bunny may have two very long front teeth as part of his cartoon character, but in the real world of rabbits, overgrown teeth can be very painful and unpleasant for your pet!

The molars and premolars are known as the cheek teeth. A rabbit's teeth grow continuously, but the grinding, chewing and rotary action of the upper and lower cheek teeth while eating, help 'wear down' the length. If for some reason this action does not happen from maybe a wrong diet or their teeth are misaligned, then problems occur.

Signs to watch out for

Unable to chew/not eating ● Weight loss ● Runny eyes
Nasal discharge ● Drooling ● Abscess ● Mouth cuts

Rabbits don't just eat carrots!

An important part of your rabbit's diet is hay and grass, which help grind down the teeth. This food also provides a high source of fibre to assist the digestive system. An all in one pellet food is better than a mix.

We can discuss in detail exactly what is best to feed your rabbit to help stop dental problems occurring. Bring your rabbit along, so we can check over their teeth to ensure all is in order.

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What I find is mine!

Your pets are inquisitive creatures, so to play with and taste what they find is just too exciting to ignore! This curiosity though, could cause problems for your pets, as there are potential hazards out there!

Poison is a harmful substance that your pet may ingest or absorb through their skin. It can cause anything from a minor stomach upset to heart and breathing problems, and sadly could be fatal.

Signs of poisoning include

**Drooling - Frothing - Panting - Twitching - Muscle tremors
Breathing problems - Vomiting - Diarrhoea - Fits - Lethargy
Increased heart rate and temperature**

Suspect your pet has ingested or absorbed a poisonous substance?

1. **Immediately** contact or go to your vet.
2. Unless told by your vet, **do not wait** - time is vital.
3. Try to identify what, when and how much.
4. If possible take the pack/source of the poison with you.

Old Food A small food bin for council collection or a compost heap; decomposing food produces mould, which releases poisonous mycotoxins. Ensure your pet cannot reach the bin or compost!

Chemicals Spring creates DIY jobs - terrace, BBQ and glass cleaners, bleach, paint solvents, varnishes and wood preservers include chemicals that are potentially dangerous to your cats and dogs. Substances on their coats can be ingested when grooming.

Rat/Mice Bait Many varieties are **highly dangerous**, e.g. one type prevents clotting of the blood. If your pet should ingest this, it can cause internal bleeding, which may only become visible as your pet worsens and begins to pass blood in their urine or faeces. Other signs include vomiting, diarrhoea and bleeding from the nose. **Metaldhyde** in snail/slug pellets is also extremely toxic to animals.

Safety Comes First

- Read safety instructions on home, garden, DIY and car products.
- Provide 'animal proof' storage.
- Remove pets from working area. Also keep your cat or dog away from areas recently treated with chemicals.

Become familiar with the types of products and natural problems that cause poisoning. We are also available for advice.

