

AUTUMN 2019

Pet behaviour month, tick cases and wonderful success stories.

This April, we are helping our clients combat common behaviour issues with their pets, including dogs, cats and birds. Did you know that 20% of our dogs and cats at home suffer from a mental health issue? Keep a look out on our social media pages for great tips and advice that may help you and your pet. In this issue we take a look at some of our amazing recent success stories, and sit down with one of Hunter Animal Rescue's top animal carers, Leanne, to hear all about what it takes to be a local animal rescue carer.

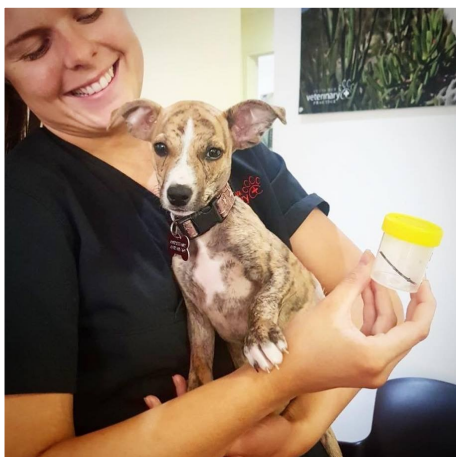
Amazing success stories

Zosia & Rocket

We've had some extremely brave patients in lately, with very peculiar problems to solve.

ZOSIA

Little Zosia had a rough start in life.



ZOSIA WITH NURSE ERIN

She developed an unusual abscess on her side that kept reoccurring. Our vets performed surgery on her to investigate and we found a 3cm long stick that had become lodged inside her, stuck under her skin! It was successfully removed before it penetrated into her chest wall and she is now feeling better than ever.

ROCKET

Rocket the Guinea Pig came to see us due to a sore leg. X-rays showed us that he had a fracture, which would need to be stabilised in order to heal. With a patient this tiny, we had to improvise a little and found that a paperclip was just the trick to splint the leg. We put his little leg in a cast and now months later, the leg has completely healed and is as good as new.

ROCKET



Tick Cases over the years

Do preventative tick products work? We look at the paralysis tick cases over the years along with the emergence of preventative medications.

Over the last few years, there has been a lot of focus for pharmaceutical companies to create tick preventative medications for domestic pets. We have seen many new releases including long lasting collars, top spots, tablets and chews. The greatest advancement recently has been a long lasting product for cats, being Bravecto topspot, which we had not seen in the past from any company. This got us thinking. With these great advancements in preventative products, and longer lasting products (which means less chance of owners forgetting treatments), we looked at what effect this had on paralysis tick cases in the region.

We hoped and hypothesised that we have treated fewer patients for

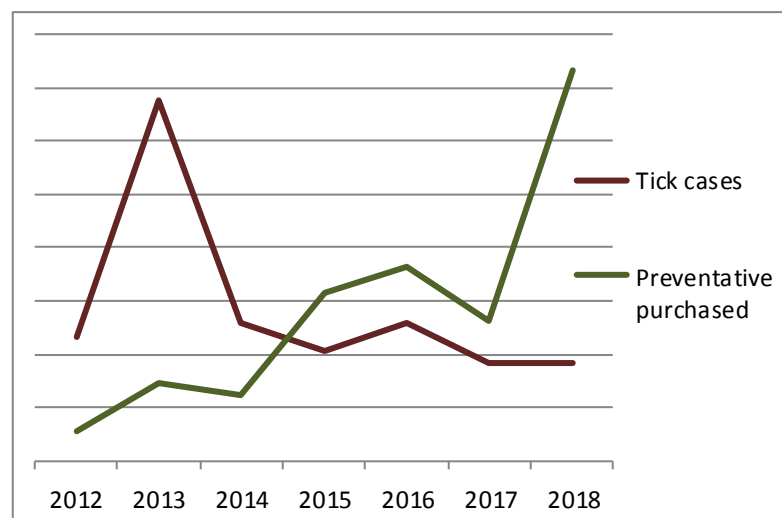
tick paralysis due to more affordable products, their wonderful efficacy and regular compliance by owners.

SO WHAT DID WE FIND?

As you can see by the graph below, since 2012, the proportionate use of innovative and quality tick products (such as Bravecto, Nexgard, Simparica, Comfortis etc), has sky rocketed, and with it, we see a decline in the tick cases that we have treated. So far in 2019, we are delighted to say that we have treated no tick cases. Many of our paralysis tick cases that we treated in the past were cats, as they tend to roam, and there was so little available on the market for them. However since Bravecto topspot for cats was released in 2018, cases have declined.

It is important to

note that all animals treated for tick paralysis were not treated or up to date with a prevention product. This further shows all the products' efficacy and reliability to ward off these harmful parasites from your pet. We hope that we keep seeing advancements in this area, and tick-related illness continuing to decline.



New
Bravecto
top-spot for
cats.
Prevents fleas
and ticks for
3 months!



Goes on and on



LONGER
PARALYSIS TICK &
FLEA PROTECTION
IN ONE SPOT-ON

Becoming a Foster Carer

A chat with one of Hunter Animal Rescue's leading foster carers.

There's no doubt that being a foster carer for animals would be a very rewarding job, however it definitely comes with its share of challenges. We sit down with one of Hunter Animal Rescue's (HAR's) leading foster carers, Leanne, to ask about her experience as a carer.

When did you begin your work caring for rescue animals? How and why did you get into this line of volunteer work?

"I became a foster carer with HAR in January 2011. I had previously adopted a kitten through HAR and

thought we could help out by fostering a few kittens. Well, it seems fostering can be quite addictive as we have had over 700 kittens and more than 100 dogs and puppies find new families via our home."

As you know, FVP do a lot of work with HAR, and know what a great organisation they are. How has it been working with them?

"Fostering with HAR continues to be a very rewarding experience. Of course there are times of sadness but all the success stories far out-way those sad days. The HAR fostering community is a very professional and supportive group of people who all work together to find great outcomes for so many helpless animals."

What would you say is the greatest challenge that you face being a small animal rescue carer?

"Definitely sickness. So many animals arrive in care both unwell and unloved. Many hours of intensive care go into these little ones and they wouldn't have the

great outcomes that they do without the support from Paul and his crew at Fletcher Vets. "

How do the rewards compare to these challenges?

"To see an abandoned or abused animal happy and healthy in a loving home is the ultimate reward."

"The need for foster carers is huge"

What advice would you give to someone who has been thinking about becoming an animal rescue carer?

"The need for foster carers is huge. We can only bring an animal into care if there is a family that is willing to open their hearts and home. Sometimes the amount of animals in need is overwhelming but I don't focus on the big picture, I just try to make a difference in my little corner of the world."

We would like to thank Leanne for telling her story. If you would like to become a foster carer or to learn more, please contact HAR directly or us at our clinic on 49556670.



Five of Leanne's rescue kittens

Myxomatosis

Unfortunately, Easter is an awful time of year for rabbits, as this is commonly when we see Myxomatosis. This disease is painful, fatal and without a cure. It kills over 50% of wild and domesticated rabbits.

Myxo was introduced to Australia in 1950 to help control the population of wild rabbits and hares. The virus causes swelling of the eyes and ears, tumours, fever, fatigue, and death. It is contracted through contact with an infected

rabbit, but primarily spread via mosquitoes or fleas who have fed on an infected rabbit.

If you think your rabbit has contracted Myxomatosis, we urge you to have a vet see them immediately. Prevention is the only option, therefore we recommend using the following tips:

How to stop Myxomatosis:

- **Monthly flea prevention:**

Revolution is a safe and effective prevention medication to use against fleas. Ask us which size would be best for your rabbit.

- **Mosquito proof the hutch:**

Mozzie proof netting is a *must* if you have an outdoor rabbit, to

prevent them from biting and infecting your bunny. This can be purchased from local hardware stores.

- **Bring them inside:**

At dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are the worst, bring your bunny inside, just to be sure.



pet **behaviour** month

April 2018



Come on in for your **FREE** booklet
with information about pet
behaviour and managing anxiety



Who thinks that their pet may be experiencing some sort of mental health related issue? 🧐

This could be anything ranging from separation anxiety, barking, and aggression, to going to the toilet where they aren't meant to, or having skin and coat issues.

Well don't worry because you are not alone. Recent studies have shown that approximately 20% of domestic pets in

Australia suffer from a mental health related problem.



This April, we are focusing on these mental health problems to help you and your pet live a more comfortable life. Pets are very perceptive, and generally speaking the more stressed you are, the more anxious they become.

"20% of pets suffer from a mental health related problem"

Veterinary behaviourist Caroline Perrin from Sydney Animal Behaviour Services, says that "Treating behaviour problems and mental illness in animals is at the forefront of veterinary medicine. It is one of the latest specialities to develop because it is the most complex. Anxiety in pets is a silent

epidemic and treating broken minds is just as important if not more important as fixing broken bones or treating cancer or diabetes."

DOGS

It's normal for dogs to experience anxiety as it gives them the ability to prepare and respond to a threat. Anxiety can lead to significant physical changes such as an increased heart rate and blood pressure and it's believed these changes contribute to the emotion of fear. Responding to threats is normal behaviour but when a dog can't cope with small changes in any new or unfamiliar situations it may develop an anxiety disorder. One response to anxiety is aggression. Anxiety and fear can lead to phobias, which can cause a dog acute, ongoing distress.

CATS

Anxiety and fear is the normal automatic response that prepares the cat to either freeze, flee or fight, depending on the threat. Phobias are an abnormal, excessive and instant response to fear, even when there is nothing to be fearful of.

Responding to threats is vital to a cat's survival but if your cat is exhibiting fearful behaviour in normal situations, it may require help.

**BIRDS**

Pet birds can show signs of anxiety in response to things that we may not consider to be dangerous, such as a new cage, new furniture or new people. Ongoing fear can be detrimental to a bird's physical and mental health. Your bird can exhibit both subtle and obvious responses to situations that cause it anxiety. It may freeze or fidget or employ their 'flight' or 'fight' defence mechanisms. As your pet usually can't fly away, it will instead, move away or hide. A 'fight' or an aggressive response is a huge problem for you, your bird and any other household members, including pets.

Come in and see us for a free behaviour guide and to discuss how we can help with your pet's behaviour issue. Follow along on social media for great tips and solutions throughout the month.