

## Summer Newsletter 2009/2010



### Practice News

In the thirty years that we have been in practice on the Far North Coast of New South Wales, Spring and Summer have consistently been the busiest periods of the year. Apart from the normal day to day caseload, the warmer weather heralds the arrival of paralysis ticks, snakes and the hatching and breeding of fleas. It goes without saying that an "all hands on deck" approach is adopted by the staff (apart from David's trips to the Gabba and SCG for the cricket tests against the West Indies and Pakistan).

During the University holidays this year, we will be hosting three veterinary science students on clinical placements. They will assist in the day to day routine of the hospital, whilst gaining valuable clinical experience to further their careers. This year Christopher Knox from the University of Queensland, Sarah Zhang from Murdoch University, Perth, and Troy Laidlow from James Cook University, Townsville are on placement with us during December and January.

We are open for normal business hours over the Christmas/New Year break, and our out of hours service will operate on the public holidays. Please refrain from feeding your dog any Christmas "no nos" i.e. pork/ham (especially fat), cooked bones and chocolate. Treat him to a new toy instead.

### Dry Spring Weather: ? Less Ticks/More Snakes

During the Spring this year we have treated less cases of tick paralysis than in previous seasons, hopefully due to diligent daily searching of pets and use of preventative measures. The dry weather experienced in the district has also helped by reducing ground cover vegetation and tick numbers.

Conversely, the dry Spring weather is perhaps the reason for a significant increase in the number of venomous snakebite cases that we have treated in the last few months. During prolonged dry spells snakes migrate from their normal habitat in search of water. Another point of interest is that over the last few years the percentage of black snake envenomations has increased.

Due to the influx of cane toads in the district during the 1980's the goanna and black snake populations were decimated, due to the fact that both of these species preyed upon canetoads, whilst the eastern brown snake avoided canetoads as a source of food. It would appear that the canetoad population in the district has declined, perhaps due to the drier conditions of the last few years.

I have no scientific data to prove the above theories, and they remain based purely upon hearsay and personal observations.



### New Products

Fleas are a major problem for dogs in this district. These blood-sucking parasites are found everywhere - even in your own home. **Comfortis** is a new no fuss way to protect your dog against fleas. The beef flavoured chewable tablets give fast acting month-long flea protection. Controlled trials demonstrated 100% effectiveness just four hours after treatment and sustained efficacy for 28 days post treatment. Furthermore, **Comfortis** won't rub or wash off, making it the perfect choice for dogs that are regular swimmers or for those that are bathed frequently. For further information go to [www.elancopet.com.au/products/comfortis.cfm](http://www.elancopet.com.au/products/comfortis.cfm)





13. Tie the little sucker's front paws to rear paws with garden twine and bind tightly to leg of dining table, find heavy-duty pruning gloves from shed. Push pill into mouth followed by large piece of filet steak. Be rough about it. Hold head vertically and pour 2 pints of water down throat to wash pill down..
14. Consume remainder of scotch. Get spouse to drive you to the emergency room, sit quietly while doctor stitches fingers and forearm and removes pill remnants from right eye. Call furniture shop on way home to order new table.
15. Arrange for RSPCA to collect mutant cat from hell and call local pet shop to see if they have any hamsters.

If the above story is familiar may we suggest Profender spot on all wormer.



For further information please see our Winter 2009 newsletter.

***At this time may we extend our warmest wishes to you all for the festive season, and wish you all the best in 2010.***

