



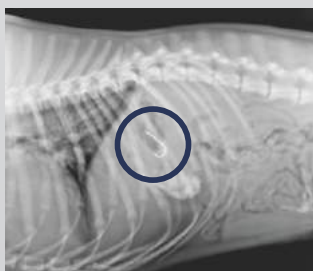
What a Catch!

Our pet of the month this month is "**Rowdy**", a rambunctious one year old Boxer who went fishing recently with his Dad. The afternoon was going really well, until Rowdy decided that the large piece of chicken being used as bait was far too tempting to ignore. After a long cast, he dived into the water and "fetched" the chicken, only to swallow it in one gulp! Rowdy was presented to us with the trace still dangling from his mouth and he was looking very proud of his retrieving effort!



We anaesthetised Rowdy and followed the trace all the way down his oesophagus. X rays showed the hook neatly sitting in his stomach. Thankfully, after having an endoscope passed down his oesophagus, the hook was retrieved and Rowdy recovered none the worse for wear.

Rowdy is looking forward to his next fishing trip and promises to focus on chasing birds instead!



Dry Eyes



Some breeds of dogs (**King Charles Cavalier Spaniels, Cocker Spaniels, Westies, Retrievers, German Shepherds, Terriers**) are very prone to developing dry eyes. Dry eye or **keratoconjunctivitis sicca (KCS)** is a relatively common disease of dogs that causes decreased tear production. It is an immune disorder in which tear production is interrupted by the dog's own immune system, resulting in **dry, itchy, crusty eyes**.

These dogs tend to have recurrent episodes of conjunctivitis and often develop "sleep" or muck in the corner of their eyes every morning.

The good news is that this condition is easily diagnosed using a simple test and treatment is usually very successful, especially if started early.

If you are worried about your dog's eyes, please book an **appointment** on **3353 6999**.

Purring - Why Cats Purr



There is almost nothing more comforting than when a cat jumps on our lap and begins to purr. Ever since the Egyptians started worshipping the cat, philosophers, scientists and cat lovers worldwide have wondered why cats purr. When we hear and feel this purring, we assume that everything is **purrfect** with the cat. But why do cats purr? And what produces this sound?

Purring is a mystery. No one can definitively say which mechanism in a cat creates the purr. Some feline experts believe purring is due to vibrations caused by blood passing through a large vein in the cat's chest. Yet others who have studied purring think it's due to the vibration of the vocal cords when the animal inhales and exhales.

It turns out that cats have special wiring travelling from the brain to the muscles in the vocal cords. Nerve signals that pass through this wiring system cause vibrations of the vocal cords.

While the nerves cause the vocal cords to vibrate, the air forced through them causes the musical hum. Since breathing has both inspiratory and expiratory phases, cats can purr continuously. The problem with this theory, however, is that cats continue to purr even when the nerves to the area of the vocal cords have been injured or damaged.

It is commonly believed that cats purr when content. However, cats also purr when they are severely injured, frightened or giving birth. According to some vets, the original function of the purr was to enable a kitten to communicate with his mother that things are going well. A kitten is able to purr by the **second day of life**, and although he can't meow and nurse at the same time, he can purr and nurse.

Since the purr has lasted through hundreds of generations of cats, there must be a survival mechanism behind its continued existence. Researchers believe that **self-healing** is the survival mechanism behind the purr. There is extensive documentation that suggests that low frequencies, at low intensity, are therapeutic.

Animal behaviourists believe that when cats purr under stressful circumstances, they are reassuring or comforting themselves, much as humans may sing to themselves or hum when they are nervous. Frightened cats may purr to communicate submissiveness or non-aggressive intentions. A feral cat may purr to signal that he is not planning to attack and other cats need not feel threatened. Older cats may purr when they play or approach other cats, signalling that they are friendly and want to come closer.

Regardless of the underlying reasons, *I am so glad that cats purr*, it is one of life's pleasures to have a content cat purring close to you as you stroke it!



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