

ARK VETS NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2024

Things that go BANG in the night...

The fireworks 'season' (it's sadly not just one night anymore!) is fast approaching and if your pets find the bangs and flashes frightening, it can be an extremely stressful time for all the family. However, there are many ways in which you can try to keep the peace in your home – even if it is anything but peaceful outside!

As Halloween approaches, here are some top pet tips!

Be mindful of hazards. Costumes and decorations may be inviting for animals to chew and chase. Do not take your dog trick or treating, it can be scary and it's best if they are left in the comfort of their own home. Do not force your pet to dress up—some pets are completely fine with it, but others are not, please do not force them to do this. Trick or treat goodies- please don't let your pet have access to your treat bag! Some people celebrate with fireworks so be mindful that you may see or hear these over the Halloween weekend. Keep pets safe and secure.

Be aware that your own doorbell might be going off more than usual!



Make sure pets are inside well before darkness falls. Lock the cat flap and take dogs for a long walk during the day to tire them out. Don't forget any outside pets like rabbits or guinea pigs! Covering their cages with a thick blanket can muffle the noises.

Making a den inside for your dog is a great idea. Any small space will do – cover it over, put their bed inside, add a few treats and encourage them to rest in it. It will help with feelings of security and block out the noise. Putting the tv on and closing the curtains will disguise the sounds and will help to make things seem as 'normal' as possible.

For very stressed pets, come and talk to us about how we can help. Calming supplements or anti-anxiety pheromones are a gentle, but effective, way to help them relax at this stressful time.

We are offering a 10% discount on all calming products purchased October–December!



Please don't forget to check your bonfires for hibernating hedgehogs before lighting them on fireworks night!!



Autumn awareness!

A few things to look out for this season....

Don't forget to keep up with your flea protection! Turning on the central heating means our homes become their ideal environment when it's too cold for them outside. Harvest mites and ticks also thrive at this time of year and we are happy to advise you on how to prevent problems.

Watch out for acorns and conkers! For some dogs they can seem like fun play things or tasty snacks. However, they are poisonous, causing nasty tummy upsets, and can potentially lead to dangerous blockages in the intestines.

Wild mushrooms are common in Autumn and can be found in woodlands, parks and even your own gardens. If your canine companion tends to Hoover up objects on a walk, you need to be aware of poisonous species of fungus. Some wild mushrooms can be lethally toxic to pets and as they tend to spring up overnight in wet, mild weather, they can be hard to avoid.

Poisonous varieties include: Angel's Wings, Funeral Bell, Death Cap, Fool's Funnel & Fly Agaric.

Autumn presents many potential hazards to pets, including the consumption of Halloween chocolates and sweets.

While many people are aware of the danger chocolate poses to dogs, the same danger also applies to cats. Other sweet treats, especially those containing xylitol (a sugar alternative found in sweets, gum and chocolates), is also a significant risk to pets this season.

A popular addition to our houses and doorsteps this Halloween, pumpkins may end up being eaten by pets. Pumpkins can contain extremely bitter tasting compounds. Generally, if the pumpkin is shop brought it is not bitter tasting and accidental ingestion of plant material may only cause a mild gastrointestinal upset.



Love knows no colour...



Superstition has given black cats a lousy rap, which has made it harder for them to find homes. As veterinarians, we're here to tell you that the myths and superstitions are far from fact. These sleek, mysterious felines make excellent pets, and the only unlucky thing about them is living life without one. There are many reasons to consider adopting a black cat.

It's hard to believe, but black cats are overlooked because of their colour!

It's a problem shared all over the world. And yet black cats have as much to offer as any other cat. Through no fault of their own, they are overlooked, as most people tend to choose 'prettier' coloured cats. Even black kittens are the last to be adopted, while their more colourful siblings are chosen first. And so, black cats spend longer in foster care, waiting for someone to see past their colour... The outlook for a black, adult cat in a rescue centre is therefore bleak.

In some countries black cats are seen as lucky, but in the main it seems they are rejected on a superstitious basis; that they are somehow unlucky or a 'witches cat'. Added to that, black cats can be difficult to photograph so their pictures never do them justice.

As important as it is to help black cats through both adopting them to reduce their risk of euthanasia and debunk the fear that plagues them, it is also important to adopt responsibly. Before adopting, you should always make sure you understand the responsibility that comes with it. Cats have an average lifespan of 15-20 years—that's a long time! Before adopting, you should make sure that you can commit to caring for your pet for their entire life.



Additionally, you should ensure that you're able to provide veterinary care, medical treatment, vaccines, spay/neuter, testing and emergency services when applicable.

Lastly, make sure that you have adequate time to dedicate to your new friend. It's a common misconception that cats do not need much care or attention. While it is true that cats are fiercely independent, they are still a living and breathing animal. Make sure that you will have a work, social and home life balance that ensures you have dedicated time to be home with your pet and play with them to keep them active, happy and healthy. We know black cats are just as wonderful as any other, with exactly the same needs – to be loved and cared for. If you enjoy the company of cats whatever their colour, please consider adopting a black cat.

Opening up your home (and heart) to a black cat gives a loving animal a second chance at life!



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OPENING HOURS

We are open between

8.30am-6.30pm on Weekdays with
a late night opening to 7pm on Tuesdays
and 8.45am-midday on Saturdays.

Consultations and Nurse Clinics are by appointment.

On Monday to Friday consulting hours are:

- 8.45-10.30am
- 2.30-3.30pm
- 5.00-6.30pm (7pm Tuesdays)

On Saturdays our consulting hours are:

- 9.20-11.00am

Payment is required at the time of treatment

We provide 24 hour emergency cover, just phone the usual
telephone number

Fantastic Foxes & how to find them

In the upcoming winter months, the fox breeding season will begin. At this time of year, most young foxes are now fully grown, and we often see animals dead on the road as they start to disperse to find a territory. They are also easier to see in urban areas as the nights start to draw in. There are concerns about possible declines in foxes in Scotland and in rural areas. Please help the **Mammal Society** to find out how they are doing by going on an evening walk with their **Mammal Mapper App** and share what you see. You can also record field signs using the App so you don't necessarily have to see a fox. Fox scat (poo) is highly variable but is often pointed, very dark in colour and has a characteristic musky odour. As winter approaches you may find fox tracks in mud and snow. Footprints of a trotting fox usually form a straighter line than those of a dog and can be distinguished from dogs by drawing a line between outer and inner two toe pads, like this:

You can help the Mammal Society monitor our friendly foxes by logging sightings with their new mammal mapper app:

www.mammal.org.uk/volunteering/mammal-mapper

