

ARK VETS NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2025

HELP!!! My dog is missing!

It is every dog owner's nightmare... they can't find their

Whether your dog has escaped from the garden, run off on a walk or one minute they were right there and then you turned around and they were gone!

What do you do if the worst case scenario happens?

What to Do If Your Dog Goes Missing:

1. Stay calm and act fast - Begin your search immediately in areas your dog is familiar with.

2. Use their recall word calmly - A frantic tone might scare them further away, this is where we recommend having a whistle recall as the sound will travel further and is non-



I'm lost and I don't know what to do !

New year, new staff member!

For those of you who have not met him already, we have a lovely new addition to the Ark Vets team!

Matthew Woods started in February and will be working as a full time Veterinary Surgeon. We hope that he will enjoy his time here!

Matthew studied at the University of Pretoria, South Africa and graduated in 2020. He then spent one year working in community service in Barberton, South Africa where he mainly focused on primary animal health care in both small and large animals. Matthew moved to Devon in 2022 and worked in mixed practice for just under three years, before moving to small animal veterinary care full time here at Ark Vets.



His main veterinary interests are gastrointestinal transit cases in cats and dogs, cytology and fertility. Outside of work, Matthew likes hiking, golf, cycling, Braai (South African version of BBQ) and sheep!



3. Notify others - Alert local vets, shelters, and nearby dog walkers, and post on local social media groups. Provide your contact information so that you can immediately be reached and set your posts to allow sharing. When your dog is found, update your post to let everyone know the search is over!

4. Familiar scent - Place their bedding or a familiar item of yours in the area they went missing to encourage them to return.

5. Update their microchip - Ensure their details are current and report them missing to the microchip company.

Did you know... Sheep have incredible social intelligence - They are able to remember their mates even after months of separation! This allows them to quickly reunite and warn each other of danger.



Spring advice for baby birds



It's natural to want to help if you see a baby bird alone on the ground or in your garden, but this isn't always the right thing to do. Your decision depends on the maturity of the chick, and whether or not it appears to be injured.

Fledglings have all or most of their feathers and leave the nest just before they can fly. If one is seen away from the nest, it should be left alone and watched from a distance for up to 2 hours to ensure the parents are returning. It is likely the parents are nearby.

A fledgling should only be removed as a last resort, for example if it is injured or it has been genuinely abandoned. If you are unsure, please contact your veterinary practice for advice.



Adder season

Spring is coming and that means adders will become active. Adders are most commonly found on dry sandy heaths, rocky hillsides, moorlands and woodland edges. Adders are not aggressive and generally only bite when provoked. Pets are frequently bitten on the leg, head or neck. Contact your vet practice asap if you suspect your pet has been bitten.

You will usually notice an immediate swelling. If you look carefully, you may be able to spot two small puncture wounds at the center of the bite.



RABBIT DISEASE AND VACCINATION



Rabbits need vaccinations to protect against:

1. Myxomatosis
2. Rabbit Viral Haemorrhagic Disease-1 (RVHD-1)
3. Rabbit Viral Haemorrhagic Disease-2 (RVHD-2)

All of which are often fatal and cause intense suffering to rabbits.

Your rabbits should have their first vaccine at around 5-7 weeks old, and then a booster every year to keep them protected. There is now a single vaccine for rabbits that protects against all three diseases called Myxo RHD PLUS.

Myxomatosis

Myxomatosis is widespread in British wild rabbits. It's a virus spread by blood-sucking insects (fleas, mites, mosquitoes). It can also be spread from rabbit to rabbit contact and via environmental contamination.

It can take up to 14 days for symptoms to appear. Early symptoms include puffy swellings around the face, genitals, ears and eyes, often progressing to a high fever, and eating/drinking become difficult.

The disease is often fatal with no specific treatment, and recovery is rare. Putting the rabbit to sleep is usually the kindest option when infected.

Rabbit (Viral) Haemorrhagic Disease (R(V)HD)

Widespread in Britain's wild rabbits, this is a serious disease, causing high fever, internal bleeding and liver disease.

Like myxomatosis, R(V)HD spreads via direct contact, contaminated objects or environments, and insects.

Often the only sign seen is sudden death.

There's no specific treatment, and although some rabbits can recover from infection, it's fatal in many cases.

Preventing diseases in rabbits

Keep your rabbit healthy and happy by remembering the following tips:

- **Give regular boosters** throughout your rabbit's life.
- **Controlling insects may reduce infection risk.** Deter flies and mosquitoes by using insect-proof screens. Ensure your home and all pets are treated for fleas as advised by your vet. Fleas from cats and dogs can infect rabbits.
- **Regularly clean and disinfect your rabbits' enclosures** and play areas with rabbit-safe disinfectants. Change bedding and litter often. Never use housing or bedding from any rabbits who could have had these infections.
- **Prevent contact with affected domestic rabbits and all wild rabbits.** Don't allow your rabbits to go into any areas where they've been.



Spring dangers to pets!



Easter gives us the chance to spend quality time with our families but spring time can also pose a threat to our pets.

Chocolate poisoning causes lots of pet emergencies especially around Easter time, when Easter egg hunts mean that chocolate is left lying around for them to find. Chocolate contains a compound called theobromine, which can be deadly to cats and dogs. Different types of chocolate have varying levels of theobromine, with dark chocolate containing the most.

Common symptoms of chocolate poisoning include vomiting, diarrhoea, lethargy, an irregular heartbeat, tremors and seizures. Other Easter treats like hot cross buns, contain ingredients like sultanas, raisins, dried fruit, lemon zest and nutmeg, which are all toxic to animals.

Species of poisonous plants during springtime include lilies, daffodils, azaleas, amaryllis, snowdrops, aconite, cyclamen, rhododendron and tulips. While it's impossible to know where your pet is at all times, ensuring your garden is free from these plants will limit their exposure to potentially harmful flora.

Pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers need to be kept in safe, inaccessible places, as these can lead to serious problems if swallowed. In many cases, safer, non-toxic alternatives are preferable and are equally effective. You should also beware of snail and slug pellets, as a toxic compound in the pellets can cause poisoning for pets. If you do notice any signs of poisoning – such as vomiting, drooling, diarrhoea, disorientation or collapsing, contact your vet immediately.

During wet spring months, there are a higher number of slugs and snails which can carry the dangerous lungworm parasite. When your dog explores the outdoors by nosing through undergrowth, drinking from puddles, eating grass, or sniffing around, they may inadvertently ingest or lick slugs, snails, or their slime trails, increasing the risk of lungworm infection.



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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:

- 8:50 - 10:20am
- 11:00 - 12:30pm
- 3:00 - 4:10pm
- 5:00 - 6:30pm (7pm Tuesdays)

On Saturdays our consulting hours are:

- 9:00 - 11:00am

Payment is required at the time of treatment

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

