



## **INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF ANIMAL PROFESSIONALS**

### **NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2019 EDITION**

Dear Members,

I need to start with some good news! **ISAP is 10 years old!!!** We started at the end of November 2009 and can't believe that 10 years have gone by. Many of our original members are still with us but now no longer students but full members. It is so rewarding to run an organisation like this which supports animals around the world and promotes education. And it is only education that stops animals to be ill-treated.

This has been a difficult year in many respects. There are so many fires and floods and other natural disasters in this world! Although people are terribly affected by those, it is pictures in the media of burnt Koalas, burnt dogs while owners were at work and their house burnt down and many other suffering animals that really bring the message home that we need to do more for our planet. Even fish and turtles in the oceans aren't safe from pollution. EVERY animal is affected these days. And all of this can only be changed through educating people that this planet can be run differently. If only politicians would listen!

We are heading into winter here in Britain and forecasts tell us it will be a bitterly cold one with lots of snow. They tell us this every year but one thing is for sure, we don't need any more rain!!! What a year it has been.

I wish all of you who celebrate Christmas a peaceful time and hope that you will all have a wonderful 2020!

With best wishes

Brigitte

## **SHOULD YOU GIVE ADVICE OVER THE TELEPHONE OR ONLINE**

In my work as a Canine Behaviour Specialist, my initial contact with people is usually on the phone. The conversation will typically be 15 – 30 minutes during which I will ascertain their family circumstances, housing arrangements and perceived problem with their dog.

Most ‘problems’ that people are having with the behaviour of their dog can be immediately improved by:

Adequate containment (fencing or shutting gates or doors!)

Appropriate exercise

Interactive play (retrieve games are great, but hide and seek with the owner hiding is good too)

Reliable recall (by means of a reward EVERY time)

Appropriate chew toys to distract, entertain and tire the dog

Household cleanliness (! – yes, sorry!) and scent repellents

In most instances people can make an immediate start to prevent the behaviour occurring and make a start at ‘extinguishing’ a habit by not allowing it to occur.

In some cases, the above freely offered advice, will be sufficient for the owner to continue a happy contented life with their pet.

The one rule I stick with is the advice must be practical for the owner to achieve, and based ONLY on rewarding the dog.

Should we do this?

For:

May save a dog’s life

Advice is harmless, it’s never going to make matters worse

Against:

May not gain sufficient information to assess the problem – in which case, don’t give any advice.

You don’t get paid (ah well, that’s life)

I am in favour

I am going to plant myself firmly in the ‘pro’ camp. I am keen on saving dog’s lives and family relationships and, if people are happy with a basic fix, then that’s fine by me.

But

WHAT ABOUT ONLINE, OR ‘SKYPE-TYPE’ CALLS (other providers are available☺)

Using this medium it is possible to help someone who may live a long way away from an experienced, qualified professional.

Online lesson requirements

Owner needs additional person to manipulate smartphone to provide trainer with a view of the actions of the owner and the dog's reactions

Adequate internet connection, access to outdoors and indoors.

Inform owner of any 'equipment' needed (whistle/harness)

Pre-record videos to share that show how to adopt the technique needed to manage the dog's unwanted behaviour

And here's a (short) case study

Dog is: Border collie with barking and lunging behaviour towards other dogs

Prerecorded Video is: Demonstration of how to turn the dog away from the 'stimuli' (other dog/car/cat etc.) by teaching the dog to turn on the inside of the owner. This method effectively 'blocks' the dogs from contact, impresses the owner's leadership 'credentials' and escapes the situation by heading off in the opposite direction. Repeated use of the procedure will calm the dog to the point where they will ignore the 'stimuli'. The technique also improves the dog's respect for the owner.

Result of lesson

Owner successfully learned technique, with careful prompts to perfect timing.

Dog became more manageable and self-controlled over a period of weeks in consistently applying the technique

Article by our German Ambassador Xenia Dirksen

### **Feline Tooth Resorptions**

As a non-medical practitioner for cats I had heard about this disease already, but I did not realise to which extent cats are affected, until this year, when consecutively all of our 5 own cats were diagnosed with it, even our youngest who just turned 4 this year!

It all started when my tabby "Huggy", an adopted domestic short hair, aged 9, underwent a standard dental clearance at the end of last year. Our family veterinary surgeon told me afterwards, that some of his teeth had crumbled during the procedure which left her puzzled. I started to research the cause. Rather quickly "FORL" (feline odontoclastic resorptive lesions, feline dental lesions, today among experts simply "tooth resorption") became our headline of 2019.

It turns out that (at least here in my region of Germany) most "standard" small animal vets seem to not be aware of its' frequency of occurrence and more sadly do not even recognise it when they see it. This is even worse if you know that tooth resorption is a very common condition: studies conclude that an estimated 60 % of all cats aged 5 and more are affected.

The cause is unknown yet. Activated odontoclasts dismantle the tooth structure, until at some stage the pulp cavity is open and the nerves remain unprotected. Sometimes inflammatory processes are involved.

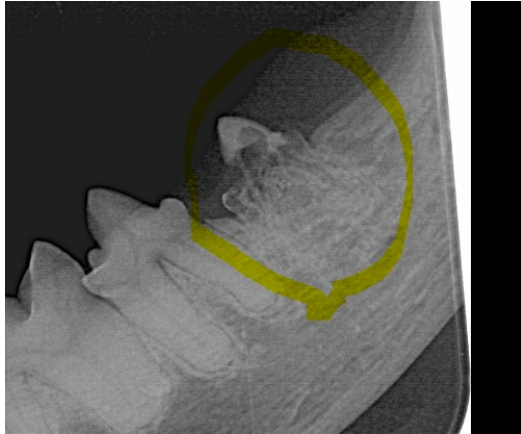
As we know, cats are masters of the art of hiding pain. The only symptoms the caretaker might notice are:

- bad breath

- chewing on one side only, sometimes whilst holding the head inclined
- swallowing kibbles without chewing
- preferring wet, soft food to dry food.

Due to the involved chronic pain, changes in behaviour like e.g. aggression can be a symptom as well, which should be kept in mind by feline behaviourists when consulted.

Tooth resorption can be diagnosed only by means of a full-mouth intra-oral radiograph.



The x-ray shows that the root of the tooth has been dissolved already.

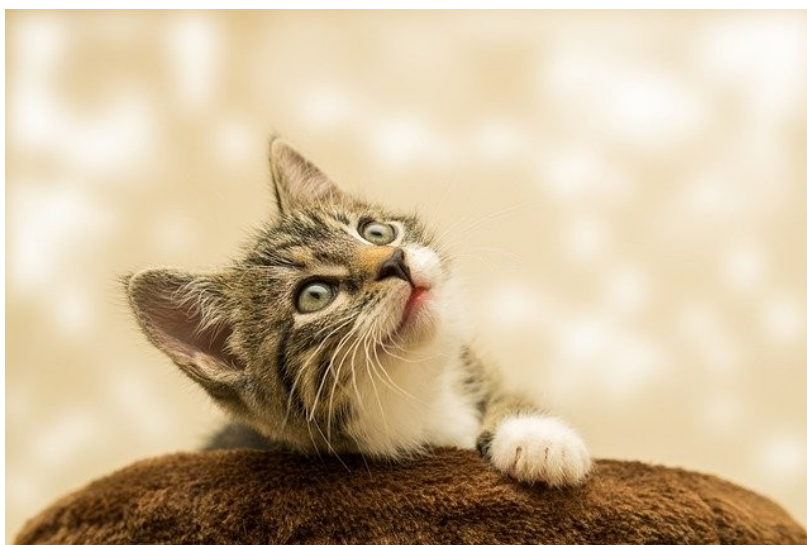
The equipment needed to perform this x-ray is not yet widespread. Luckily after phoning all vet clinics in the area, it turned out that only 20 minutes away, a veterinary practice had acquired this modern device only a year ago. The owner had been urged to do so by one of his young employees who is specialised in dental surgery.

Do you let your family doctor check your teeth? Once or even twice per year we go see a dentist, so why not our cats (and dogs), too!

One by one during the last months, the vet checked all five of them. Affected were between 2 and 4 teeth. Of course, they need to fast 12 hours in advance because the examination and treatment are done under anaesthetic.

The only available and effective treatment consists of extraction of the effected teeth. In some cases, if the root has been destroyed already, only the crown will be removed. Afterwards affected cats should be checked upon once per year.

## **A kitten as a Christmas present? Better not.**



We are at Christmas time and the race for gifts has begun, we are all looking for the perfect gift to give to the people we love, and someone is thinking that the perfect gift could be just a little furry friend. Why should it be wrong to give a kitten to someone we love? Let's see together some reasons why this choice could be wrong and, in many cases, harmful both for the animal and for the person receiving it:

1) Adopting an animal is a very important decision that needs to be considered and taken with awareness, based on one's own possibilities and wishes, so it can become a big problem for a person to have a kitten that was not absolutely foreseen and maybe not even really desired. An animal at home carries responsibilities, costs and changes in lifestyle, it is a profound change for the whole family, so it is a choice that should be taken only and exclusively by those directly interested and not by outsiders.

2) Gifting a kitten to a child may seem a beautiful gesture, but it actually hides several problems: you risk transmitting the wrong message to the child that the animal is comparable to an object, like the toy found under the Christmas tree. Furthermore, a child does not yet have the tools to adequately deal with the physical and psychological health of an animal, so parents must be aware that the care and responsibility of the animal will be borne by them. Giving an animal to a child with the aim of making him/her responsible can put the child in great difficulty and the animal in serious danger, because they have not been given the right tools to understand the importance of living with another individual; it's not letting him/her find the cat under the tree and telling them "now he's your responsibility" that you help a child grow up. By now also psychologists and educators agree in saying that the best teaching that can be given to a child happens through the good example on the part of the parent, it will therefore be much more useful to make the child participate in a path of conscious choice of adoption, educating them prior to the correct interaction with the animal and giving them the possibility of gradually learning, through the example given daily by adults, what it means to take care of another living being and to respect his needs.

3) In the hurry to find a kitten to give away by Christmas, you risk making a little thoughtful choice and adopting (or worse, giving to others) a cat that is absolutely not suitable for that specific family in that specific context. Let us remember that we are dealing

with living beings endowed with personality and thought, not with inanimate objects. Furthermore, the search for the "gift" focuses mostly on puppies, but December is not usually a month of litters and, if it were, the kittens still have to stay with their mother until the end of the weaning period.

4) Bringing a scared and lonely kitten into a house where Christmas and New Year's Day are celebrated? A hell! An adoption is already a very stressful experience for the animal, if it then happens in a chaotic period like that of the holidays it really becomes an infernal experience for the poor animal.

So what can we do to satisfy our need for good deeds over Christmas? What could really be a nice gift for everyone, humans and animals? Here are some ideas:

1) If we really have the desire to welcome a feline companion into our lives, let's go to a shelter and take the time to choose the animal best suited to us and our lifestyle, and maybe wait for the end of the holidays to bring him home and devote all the time he will need to settle in without the added stress of relatives, friends, Christmas choirs and bingo games.

2) We can make a donation to a local cat shelter/rescue, so as to guarantee an extra warm blanket and maybe a veterinary visit, a vaccine, a bit of good food for all the guests at the shelters.

3) Let us give ourselves or give a loved one a training and knowledge path with experts in the animal sector to learn more about the characteristics of their animals and, perhaps, to prepare themselves in a conscious way for a good adoption, with particular attention to children who will be very happy to learn new things in anticipation of welcoming a new friend at home or improving coexistence with family animals!

4) We can adopt a host animal from a shelter/rescue at a distance, many structures offer this possibility and it is a great resource for the structure that can thus guarantee a better quality of life for the animal adopted at a distance.

5) Let's take the time to go to the local cat shelter to bring our help, there is always need for it!

Article by Debe Coe, our Cat specialist in the UK



## **Bringing Wild Back into the UK**

One project that has been intriguing me for a while now is the proposal for the re-introduction of the Eurasian Lynx (*Lynx lynx*) back into the UK by The Lynx Trust UK, a group of conservationists dedicated to seeing the wild cat roaming our countryside once again. Eurasian Lynx once thrived within the UK, but are thought to have become extinct here around 1,300 years ago after human hunting for both sport and their pelts depleted the numbers to such an extent that the population could not recover.

Over the past few years, the Lynx Trust have been working hard to identify possible release sites, holding consultation meetings with local communities and conducting surveys to ascertain the overall public reception to the idea of the re-introduction of the wild cat. After receiving a positive response by local residents to their scheme, an application to the Government's conservation agency, Natural England, was submitted. However, despite plenty of supporting research data material, media coverage and a general air of confidence that a licence would be granted, the proposal was rejected by Michael Gove (the then Environmental Secretary of State) in November 2018.

The document had proposed to release 6 wild lynxes (2 males and 4 females) obtained from Scandinavia into Kielder Forest near the Scottish/English border in Northumberland. This forested area encompasses an area of around 250 square miles and contains hundreds of free-roaming roe deer, the population of which has increased exponentially without the presence of a natural predator. Without the fear of predation, the deer have tended to 'loungue' within areas of the forest for longer periods of time resulting in over-grazing - some areas have even had the vegetation stripped away entirely. This is obviously of concern as it leads to a less abundant and bio-diverse ecosystem. If released in Kielder, the lynx would soon become the top predator within the area. Usually consuming around 1-2kgs of meat per day, the lynx would naturally prey upon the roe deer keeping their numbers in check and the sheer presence of the cat would ensure that the deer never lingered within one place for too long which would allow the over-grazed areas to rest and recover resulting in an improved and healthier ecosystem balance. The introduction of the lynx could also be of financial benefit to the area with the chance to see a wild cat potentially bringing in increased tourism along with associated opportunities for the hospitality and merchandising industries to take advantage of.

The adjoining landowners to Kielder consented to the proposal, agreeing that the lynx could be let loose on their land. It was suggested that prior to release, the cats would be radio-collared to allow scientists to study their movements and behaviours as well as the monitoring of their effect upon the local deer population and sheep farms. But, unfortunately, this is where the main opposition to the proposal lies. There is no doubt that the lynx would be attracted to the nearby sheep which would be seen as easy, slow prey. It is also natural for local sheep farmers to be anxious regarding the loss of their flocks and the impact that this would have on their livelihoods. The National Sheep Agency (NSA) whose job it is to safeguard sheep farmers and their flocks, are greatly opposed to the proposal put forward by the Lynx Trust. Even though Lloyds of London have come on board with the project and are offering financial protection to the farmers so that they can be compensated for any lost sheep, it could well be the NSA that has the greatest influence upon and thus determines the decision regarding the future of the lynx in the UK.

The Government's reasoning behind the rejection of the initial application covered two main points – firstly that not enough assurances had been given in relation to the possible impacts of the release of the cats and secondly, the suitability of Kielder Forest as a release site. It was suggested that further assessment of both was required before the matter could be considered further. So, during 2019, the Lynx Trust have carried out further research as well as identifying 3 more potential trial



release sites within Scotland. Once again consultations have been held with the local communities and sheep farmers with the outcome proving positive. The Trust is now almost ready to submit their new application after the General Election has been held, at which point we will know who is in Government and who will hold the position of Environmental Secretary to allow the application to move forward.

Hopefully with the backing of Lloyds of London, this time the application will be a success and a licence granted. Then should the release at Kielder be a success, it could lead to the further release of additional cats into the Scottish Highlands as well other parts of the UK.

So, a little bit about the beautiful Eurasian Lynx ....



Taxonomy:

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Class:	Mammalia
Order:	Carnivora

Photograph by Bernard Landgraf

The Eurasian Lynx is one of the top 3 predators residing within Europe and is the largest of the lynx species. A medium sized cat, the Eurasian Lynx weighs between 15-28kgs, is around 90-130cms in length (head and body) and stands around 60cms tall. With a light body and long legs (hindlegs shorter than the forelegs), the cat can have a 'gangly' appearance and as with all the lynx cats, the tail is short with a black tip. Each of the ears is furred with a lighter central spot on the rear of them and the instantly recognisable long black tufts at the tips. Eurasian Lynx fur tends to be dense and will range in colour from a pale grey to a red-brown dependent upon climate (and thus environment). Markings can range from vivid spots which are more distinct upon the lower limbs to having pale, sparsely distributed and barely visible spots. Winter coats tend to be thicker and paler in colour and the paws are heavily furred; which is advantageous when hunting in snow as they have the function of acting as 'snow shoes' providing the cat with stealth, an even distribution of weight, insulation and traction.



The Eurasian Lynx, as evident by its wide distribution, is able to adapt to live within a range of habitats but mainly tends to favour temperate forested areas with open areas being avoided. Despite this though they can, and do, exist in rocky and desert areas that have little vegetation to provide either camouflage or attraction for their favoured prey.

The Eurasian Lynx is the only member of the lynx family that specialises in the hunting of ungulates; and is quite capable of taking down an adult red deer weighing up to 200kg. The diet though tends to consist of the smaller species of ungulate or younger individuals of the larger species. The main prey across most of their geographical range is roe deer where the populations of the two animals overlap; although during the warmer months smaller prey such as hares, rabbits and larger birds may be increasingly consumed due to their abundance. The Eurasian Lynx is primarily crepuscular although periods of diurnal hunting may occur during the colder winter months. To kill, the cat has been known to jump on the backs of larger prey to bring them down, but smaller prey is despatched via the typical felid bite to the neck.

The Eurasian Lynx is a shy and elusive cat, and like most other felids tends to be solitary with individuals only coming together during the mating season which occurs during the months of February and April (with litters being born May to July). The home range sizes are usually larger for males than females, being up to 1,800 square miles for males and up to 1,150 square miles for females, dependent upon location and resources available. Both sexes will mark and defend their territory with fights between males being recorded as vicious and occasionally fatal. Gestation lasts around 74 days before a litter of 1-4 kittens are born. Kittens tend to fight amongst themselves during the ages of 5-9 weeks and can cause injury and even death to each other: scientists still do not understand the reasons for this behaviour between siblings. Kittens reach full independence at around 9-11 months, with an average lifespan in the wild being 18 years.

The IUCN Red List categorises the Eurasian Lynx as 'Least Concern' with a stable population currently residing across much of Europe and Asia, including Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, India, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kazakhstan, Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Mongolia, Nepal, North Macedonia, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Unfortunately, like many animals across the world the Eurasian Lynx does face continuing threats from loss of habitat due to human population expansion, logging of trees and harvesting of wood within their natural environment as well as poaching. It is sad that even today their pelts are used in clothing and they are hunted for sport. The Eurasian Lynx also faces the loss of its ungulate prey due to human over-consumption of meat.

It would be an amazing achievement for the Trust to have their licence granted and for 2020 to see these amazing cats once again gracing our landscape; something they haven't managed to do since the 700s.

Sources:

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[www.panda.org/our\\_work/wildlife/profiles/mammals/eurasian\\_lynx/](http://www.panda.org/our_work/wildlife/profiles/mammals/eurasian_lynx/)

Hunter, L, (2015), Wild Cats of the World, Bloomsbury Natural History, London and New York

### **Article by Beth Babbin, our Ambassador for South Africa**

I do know that this is supposed to be the season of goodwill but unfortunately this time of year is in many ways a time of sadness. The only thing that lightens the load is that following two years of drought we had above average rain last month and have had a week of good soaking rain to start December. Just amazing how the garden has suddenly changed and plants and especially trees that were considered to be dead are once again showing some signs of life – the apple trees are in blossom now instead of in September and the big old oaks seem to be greener than ever. It is just so unfortunate that not all the affected areas have been as lucky as we are and are still having to rely on water being brought in in tankers and every other conceivable container and some places are flooded with the residents losing all their belongings. It has been bad for the humans but so much worse for all animals, not just the domestic dogs and cats – they are always at the bottom end of the supply chain and are unable to voice their needs. This is multiplied many times when our temperatures are close to 40°C and in one area a temperature in excess of 50°C was recorded.

The high temperatures and the lack of rain probably made me more grumpy than usual and my dislike of so many of the supposed 'rescue' bodies and so called 'sanctuaries' was higher than ever – added to this are the results from many of the 'service dog' providers and the medical fraternity for their recommendations. A puppy so often seems to be the solution to all problems. I know that January and February will bring an increased number of calls looking for assistance with problem puppies and adult dogs.

The take a second puppy to keep the other one company still persists and more often than not the two are of the same sex. There is nothing to guarantee that the

two are going to get on with each other and in many cases they are faced with an older dog already in the home who also has likes and dislikes. Adult dogs are placed in homes where their behaviour is unacceptable and they are returned, only to be homed again with the same result – little or no information appears to be gathered regarding the actual problem relating to the initial handing in of the dog and the same mistake is repeated. In so many instances the dog is not naughty, nor does it have a behavioural problem – it is just performing the job for which it was bred. It is usually the case of the wrong breed in the wrong home.

Random calls that I have had this week include – “please help, I have two cocker spaniel bitch puppies that came from xxxxxxxx and I cannot stop them fighting – they are 12 weeks old. The breeder said that taking the second one would be a good idea”. Another is, friends gave my son a puppy for Christmas but our old terrier cannot tolerate the new puppy and has already bitten it resulting in a visit to the vet – can you help?

I currently have a dog with its owner in obedience training – he suffers from an illness, and the dog has apparently been trained to react to monitor certain changes, was purchased at great expense. The dog that has had little or no obedience training appears to be very weak and has no confidence – this coupled with being with its owner 24/7 has resulted in a severe case of separation anxiety. Whilst the dog may be of medical assistance it is not able to behave in a socially acceptable manner and is creating another set of problems for the handler.

Another call, from a previous pupil who trained his pitbull at my facility about 3 years ago. He, the owner, has been diagnosed as having panic attacks and the psychiatrist has advised him to get a puppy to help him through the process – this notwithstanding the fact that the man works from home and his existing dog is with him day and night. I have to question the merits of getting another dog. (This especially with the breed of dog already in the home).

A mother recently contacted me – her child is autistic and based on the medical advice they bought him a puppy. He hates the animal and abuses it – what must she do? Another call in a similar vein was regarding two 10 week old Jack Russell puppies bought for a severely disabled child that are attacking him. And so the list continues.

In all of the above, little or no thought is given to the animal – they are expected to just adapt and get on with the job.

A large number of dogs that have trained with me have over the years been used to visit the elderly, children’s homes and hospitals – these dogs have been subjected to in many cases an overdose of attention but they have been able to cope with it due to their natural temperaments and disposition. Other dogs, some belonging to the same owners, have not managed as well and have immediately been withdrawn.

I do not believe that animals are given sufficient thought – they in many cases are serving a useful purpose but are they not being deprived of a normal life? Maybe this is the origin of the saying – a dog's life.

Article by Anjani Gurung, a member of our team in Nepal.



A warm Namaste to all the members of ISAP!

Himalayan Animal Rescue Trust enters its tenth year of service for the animals of Nepal in 2020. This decade long journey has been a roller coaster ride where we have learnt a great deal of life lessons and at the same time, had the wonderful opportunity to share our knowledge and provide services to the animals and the people in Nepal. Here, we present to you a brief summary of all the work that team HART has accomplished in the last five months.

### **RESCUE DIARIES:**

More than **85** dogs have been treated for various illnesses in Pokhara and Bharatpur – the two working bases of HART. The rescues included skin problems, open wounds, maggot infested wounds, fractures, hit and run cases, Transmissible Venereal Tumor (TVT), gastrointestinal infections and distemper.





The bigger part of the rescues involved skin problems, mainly canine scabies, also known as mange. The dogs with skin conditions are usually boycotted in the community because of their scary appearance and unpleasant smell. Many are still unaware that skin problems are completely treatable most of the time. But since skin conditions require a long term treatment for complete recovery, we have initiated a '**community involvement strategy**'. The idea behind this is to raise awareness as well as indulge the members of the community in taking care of the dogs around them in a shared work basis. HART provides all the necessary medications for the dog and it is the community's responsibility to feed the medicines along with food and water to the sick dog. Through regular follow ups through phone calls and weekly visit, we have found this method to be very effective.



## HELPING THE DOGS OUTSIDE THE WORKING BASES THROUGH SATELLITE NEUTERING PROGRAMMES

In the past, culling was a common procedure applied even in Nepal for the management of street dog population. But in the recent years, and after the Supreme Court accepted it as inhumane and forbade the municipalities to do so, many of the local governments have been looking for alternative ways to solve this problem. HART collaborates with municipalities in organizing satellite neutering programme in their respective areas to help with the street dog management. All the dogs that are neutered are identified with an ear notch, treated for any existing wounds and vaccinated against rabies. The latest collaborations have been detailed below:

S.N.	MUNICIPALITY	NUMBER OF DOGS NEUTERED
1.	Bhadrapur Municipality	201
2.	Arjundhara Municipality	201
3.	Birtamode Municipality	112
4.	Bhimeshwor Municipality	108

5.	Jiri Municipality	91
6.	Simara Gujara Municipality	38
7.	Salleri Municipality	153
	Total	904

Our team is currently working in yet another 3-weeks long camp in Pathri Sanischare Municipality, Damak Municipality and Kamal Gaunpalika, all lying in the eastern belt of Nepal. Apart from these, the regular neutering work in the two working bases has been continued in between the camps.

### **RABIES AWARENESS PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN**

During our neutering camps, we also run animal welfare and rabies awareness programme for the school level students with an aim to impart valuable information on rabies, how it is transmitted, first aid and anti-rabies vaccinations for humans and dogs. The students are also taught about dog behavior- differentiating between safe dogs (happy dogs) and unsafe dogs (dogs that can attack) by studying their body language. The programme is conducted in three phases.

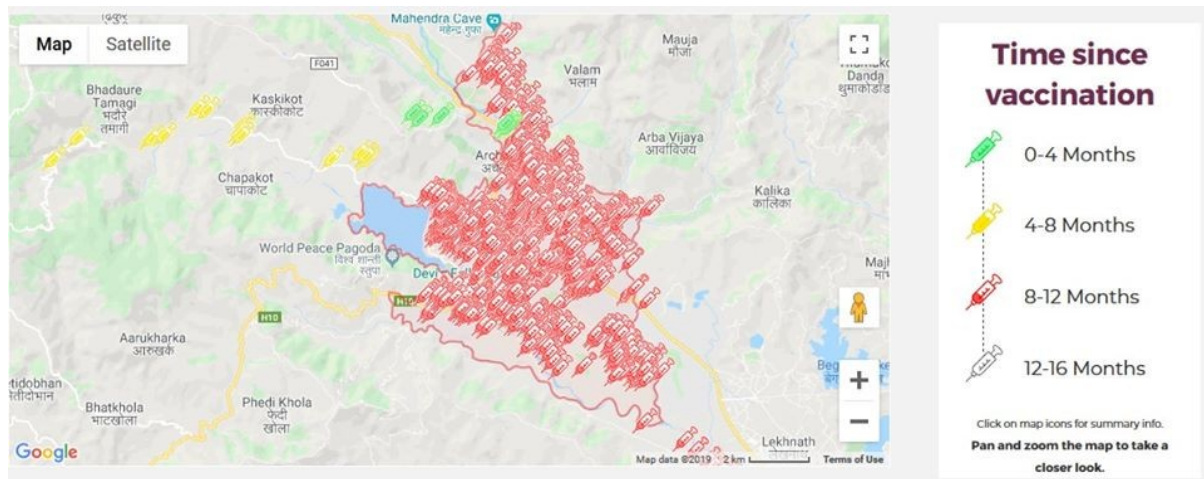
- i. The students are given a set of questions related to dogs and rabies to assess their knowledge on the matter.
- ii. Once the questionnaire is completed, the students are then taught through projector about rabies, dogs and first aid.
- iii. The students are then given a second set of questions to assess the learning.



This year, we have taught more than 1,529 students through our school awareness programmes. After the programme, each student is provided with a booklet that consists of all the important truth and facts about rabies, all information that has been taught in the presentation so that they can share it with their other friends and family.

### **MASS ANTI-RABIES VACCINATION CAMPAIGN:**

Once the team gets back from the camp, our next campaign is the annual mass anti-rabies vaccination camp for the street and community dogs of Pokhara. Rabies is a real threat in Nepal and its existence increases the importance of vaccination in the area. HART has been organizing the vaccinations each year to ensure the safety of the dogs and the people. Last year, the vaccination coverage in main areas of Pokhara was over 75%. However, there is still a lack of awareness among the public and we have found that many owners are unaware about the vaccination due for their pets. The MARV also gives us an opportunity to inform the owners about the vaccination.



There is so much to be done in Nepal for the animals, whether they are street, pet or domestic. Change is slow but we are positive that it is directing in the right direction. The increasing concern from the municipalities as well as the local public for the humane management of street dogs is commendable and we are trying our best to help them and the dogs together.



Article by Yukiyo Cabrini, our Ambassador for Japan

## Sleeping may affect learning ability in dogs.

There are many reasons why training doesn't go the way owners plan.

Perhaps a dog may be too tired especially after vigorous exercise, a dog may have been just fed so too full to be motivated, there may be underlining medical issues, the dog may be in pain, or could be that the dog is not getting enough sleep.



Most dogs sleep for 12 to 14 hours a day depending on age, breed, their activity level and health status.

Dogs' sleep pattern is very similar to us humans. However, humans spend about 25 percent of night in what is referred to as Rem sleep where dogs spend about 10 percent. That is the one of reasons for them to nod off during the day to make up for Rem sleep.

During Rem, or rapid eye movement, sleep, the brain is very much active and dogs are thought to dream. Rem sleep also plays a role in learning and memory. The brain pulls together pieces of information they have already acquired and packages them into memories that can be used in the future. So, when they have a good sleep, they can perform more effectively whatever has been learnt prior. For working dogs, it could be a wide variety of job-specific skills, and companion dogs could be basic skills to successfully live alongside humans.



Also, research suggested that an increase in sleep depth after learning. Dogs learn a task, which alters their brain activity during sleep, they then perform better on the task.

“This suggests that the newly acquired information is re-processed and consolidated during sleep” researchers concluded. However, if dogs don't get enough sleep, they become irritable, disoriented or unable to focus normally, very similar to humans when they suffer sleep deprivation.

### Resource

Dr Becker (2019) [How much sleep should your dog get?](https://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2019/02/08/dog-sleep.aspx)

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Yukiyo Cabrini CAB, A.Dip.CBM, MISAP, MICB, MICAN

Article sent in by Amina Abaza, our Ambassador for Egypt

## **Camels treated cruelly in Egypt's main market despite activists' outcry**

Traders at Egypt's largest camel market outside Cairo continued to sell cattle at auction every Friday, despite recent reports of animal cruelty.

Animal rights organization PETA and the Society for the Protection of Animal Rights in Egypt have drawn attention to how camels are treated in Birqash, a small village located 50 km northwest of the capital.

SPARE founder Amina Abaza told Efe that three merchants were detained after the organization filed a complaint, noting more arrests were expected to take place now that the situation had been flagged to Egyptian authorities.

However, hundreds of camels were still being beaten to move them from one place to another and forced onto vehicles to transport them with one leg tied up to prevent them from escaping.

Abdel Wahab al-Wagih, a merchant from southern Egypt who has been in the business since he was a child, denied that the three arrests had occurred and said the camels were not mistreated.

"We do not hit camels here. They are very dear to us," he said.

The prices of the camels auctioned off were between 12,000-16,000 Egyptian pounds (\$700-1000).

Camel herders, some of whom are young, guide the animals with sticks and shouts, but this seems normal when it comes to controlling hundreds of cattle that mostly end up at the slaughterhouse.

Mohamed Metwally, another merchant who imports camels from Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia, said that the government came to Birqash but "saw that nothing was happening".

"The media exaggerated," Metwally said, referring to animal abuse allegations that were accompanied by photos showing wounded animals.

Mohamed Abdel Aal al-Sherif said when he saw some foreigners he made hand gestures, invited them to drink tea and showed that his camels are receiving a "five-star" treatment.

“These arrested people were stupid, they hit the camels in front of the cameras, and then they came and took them away,” he added and said that this has been a family business over the past five centuries.

He also downplayed the fact that authorities have set up surveillance cameras to monitor any animal abuse.

Two of the cameras are set up at the main entrance of the Birqash market.

The measures, announced by the authorities over the past few weeks in the wake of the animal rights activists’ outcry, do not seem to have sorted out the situation in Birqash, where camel herders have unquestionably applied the same method.

Abaza said that she returned to the market in October for the first time and witnessed that “they have not stopped hitting the camels.”

She said she tried to intervene but could not do anything, so she decided to call the authorities. EFE-EPA





## Animal Minds

*Celia A. Richards BPsychSc., GradD ABM, ADip FBM, ADip CBM, FISAP (beh)*

Ambassador for Australia

Sometimes humans forget we are animals too...

We share the planet with many amazing non-human animal-beings that battle to survive in an ever-changing habitat and environment. We

sometimes forget that all animals like us must breathe, drink, find food to eat and have a safe shelter to call home to survive. We sometimes forget animals must raise offspring in an often-hostile world where vital resources are in short supply.

It is a hard life. Yet, what wild animals do own is freedom: Freedom to roam, freedom, to think, freedom to dance, run, skip, hop and play, — freedom to be. An animal's life is simple; unlike their human counterparts who live complex lives with complex thought processes living the consequences thereof.

Some scientists in the past thought animals were stupid, some scientists still do—but they are wrong! Animals are not robotic machines without feelings, emotions or intellect. They do not live an existence merely based on response to cues in their immediate environment as previously thought. It was widely believed that to insinuate any other animal apart from humans possessing feelings, emotions or any human trait was falling foul of anthropomorphism (giving human emotions or traits to non-human animals or objects). Anthropomorphism was a sin in many scientists' minds and very unscientific. But not so much now.

Modern day scientists, thanks to neuroscience are beginning to accept that perhaps animals do indeed “think” and have feelings and emotions, albeit slightly different between species based on existence and experience. They recognise the fact that animals possess emotions like humans because of similar neuroanatomical structures and neurochemical pathways observed in the brain.

Emotions are distinct from feelings. The primary emotions of joy, sadness, fear, anger and disgust and frustration are experienced by many animal kind. Emotions are believed to be an evolutionary survival trait to emoter us to act on the emotion experienced. Emotions are also important for group dwelling animals, especially social animals to interact and behave accordingly. Feelings, are subjective to each individual animal based on many factors. It is difficult to measure feelings of the entire animal kingdom. Humans can investigate feelings by spoken language and attempt to understand why a person is acting in such a manner. However, even humans have language barriers based on culture and background.

As discussed, animals are not stupid. Some animals could be said to be even smarter than we humans. There are many accounts of animal-beings demonstrating intelligence.

Waiting at traffic lights at a busy intersection in Western Australia crows were observed sitting on top of the traffic lights watching the lights change colours. Eventually, when the lights turned red they flew down and dropped a whole nut in the middle of the road and flew back to the top of the lights and waited for the lights to turn green. On turning green the cars sped over the nut crushing it. The crows waited patiently for the lights to turn amber and then flew down and ate the crushed nut. On the light turning red it was subsequently replaced with another one. The crows then flew back to the top of the traffic lights and waited for the lights to change colours so they could eat and replace their nuts. The exercise was repeated over and over until the crows were satiated. Clever crows.

We know that wales can exhibit such emotions as; anger, fear, frustration and joy including self-awareness. The reason being, research has identified wales possess Spindle cells (more than us)

which are linked to the limbic region in their brain (like ours) implying wales show social organisation and demonstrate empathy. (Crawford, 2013).

According to the great Dr Jane Goodall a world-renowned primatologist; children chimpanzees demonstrate behaviour much like grieving human children presenting with clinical depression. These poor primates are utterly distraught at the loss of their mothers. The pain is indescribable as they paint a picture of pain and despair. Their little hunched bodies rock to and fro with soulless fixed eyes staring unaware of their surroundings. The grief can be so strong—sometimes death is the only release, so sad. (Goodall, 2007).

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## Enjoy Christmas day with your dog.

**By Jackie Murphy G. Dip ABM / A. Dip CBM / MISAP (Beh) / MEST (QTLS)**

With the run up to Christmas now on countdown to the big day, we thought that a few tips on the special day will help your dog enjoy it too.

**Food and Treats:** if you are buying some extra special treats for your dog, then keep the ones that your dog has on a regular basis as new treats may upset your dog's tummy. Giving your dog, a Christmas dinner may seem that you are sharing a mealtime with your dog, but sudden changes in meals or adding a meal may upset his digestive system.

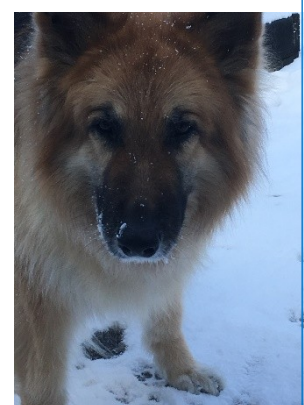
**Christmas food and treats from visitors:** make sure that visitors are aware that any treats they give to your dog, is checked with your first. Many people are unaware of the dangers of treats or your dog's digestive system, plus too many treats can cause sickness and/or diarrhoea.

**Special Presents:** purchasing a present that your dog loves or a new toy that perhaps they played with before is all part of the festive package. Mental stimulation is the key to prevent boredom and it also helps bond with your dog, so look for toys that help stimulate your dog's brain.

**Attention:** Christmas day can be hectic with family/friends visiting, so make sure that you spend some time with your dog. For example, walking, playing, some fun tricks to show the family.

**Safety tips:** keep vigilant during the festive period to avoid your dog from stealing food that could be poisonous for your dog. Other hazards can include children's toys (small ones can be swallowed), some may include batteries and can cause harm to your pets.

**Fireworks:** some people may have fireworks over the festive period and new year. Make sure that you take the same precautions as you do around bonfire night to keep your dog safe, calm and happy.





# The Spirit of Christmas Present

By Darryl Potter, Ambassador for Gibraltar

Rescue is hard everywhere in the world and every time you open FB or your Whatsapp another dog needs rehoming and another one.....it is never ending, it also seems that human cruelty also is limitless with the amount of abandonment of puppies and dogs suffering daily. Because of all this and more a few of us got together to try and make Christmas a little bit different for some rescues in the area. A decision was made to make the human yearly Christmas shoe box appeal pertinent to rescue dogs and posted on FB. In no time GBC the local tv station called us to be interviewed to talk about the appeal. We had already started filling some boxes of our own so we took one down to be filmed with a list of possible items that could be included in the boxes. After three or four showings on TV and a broadcast also on radio our FB started getting serious numbers of likes, shares and many comments ranging from “great idea” to “I have five boxes for you” and because it had been said we would pick up from designated areas it seemed to become instantly appealing to ppl. Suggested items ranged from flat collars, leads, blankets, towels, toys, treats, wet food pouches, dry food, balls, dog shampoo to even books that volunteers could use read to dogs in rescue. Our thoughts also were that cardboard boxes would be the best way to present the gifts as they can also be used for enrichment in the shelters and also as nose work, scentwork receptacles for later use or for sniffathon or sniffari games as we like to call them plus they’re more easily recyclable.



No box was too little or too large to fill and it seemed that imagination was no problem either as donations have been knitted, sown, crafted and built too. So far we have picked up about 40 boxes and lots of other products like food, blankets, towels, food and water bowls etc. and it has become a bigger project than firstly expected but extremely welcomed nonetheless. The boxes have slowly been taken across the border into Spain as the rescues are in nearby Spanish area as none are based in Gibraltar plus it would have taken a van to transport and possibly a customs check would have ensued on the boxes because of the amount there were. A deadline was set for the 13th of December and still boxes are being collected to a view of next weekend being delivered to a few rescues. The smaller rescues have been pinpointed for delivery to because we don't have enough for the bigger ones that hold hundreds of dogs and also get more donations from people than smaller ones do plus we would as previously explained like to use the boxes for enrichment purposes which can be easier managed in a smaller rescue. I would like to add that although not much was truthfully expected from the appeal we have been overwhelmed with the amount of not only boxes but well wishes, support and extreme kindness and love that have gone into these boxes by the general public which does give us some faith in humanity.





# Is my dog talking to me?

By Dimosthenis Mouriadis, Ambassador for Greece

Communication is important to all living organisms. Either they live on earth, or fly in the air, or live in the waters, they have developed communication patterns that enable them to promote their survival. They send information to members of their species or counterparts and also receive information from others.

Members of the same species communicate their intentions towards other members, give clear information about their own identity, information about the surrounding environment that is of a great value from a survival point of view. Information can be conveyed as visual, tactile, vocal, olfactory signals.

For us human, things are more different when it comes to communicate our feelings, our needs and our emotions. We have developed a unique ability to “speak” and express all these and far more complex emotions.

So if the question for many dog owners is “Is my dog talking to me?” then the answer is Yes. Our dog is definitely talking to us in every possible way. He communicates his enthusiasm, his happiness, his anxiety, his displeasure, his anger, his fear. He is using his body posture, and his senses to explain to us what is wrong and what is confusing him. But can we listen?

So for us trainers the question is “Can you understand what your dog is telling you?” A misunderstanding in communication can easily lead our dog to fearful or even aggressive behaviours. A common example of this is our need to express our love towards our dog by holding him into our arms. An insecure dog may signal his displeasure by turning his head away, by performing a quick licking and maybe by even growling. Many owners may keep on doing it. By ignoring our dog and the way he “talks” to us we may face another more tensed growl or even a bite. The relationship is then shattered.

Calling our dog to “come” on a walk, may sometimes mean that the dog will not come right back to us, if this involves a cautious approach as there are other dogs present. The dog will start slowing down to become more friendly towards the other dogs and then when the situation is relaxed he will come to us. Many see this as disobedience and start yelling to their dog or even punish him. How unfair this may be!!!!

Dogs avoid conflicts. Their need is to relax the environment and solve the dispute. In that way they ensure their survival. We have to learn how to observe the behaviours of our dogs and how to see these behaviours as a way of communication. Co existing with dogs and being able to exchange information with each other is not only important. In many cases it seems as a Magical ability. A hole new world in front of our eyes.