



# HIGHland Veterinary Hospital

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## September 2020 Newsletter

### Hello and Welcome to This Month's Newsletter

The birds are singing, and nature is going through its renewal stage after the cold winter. We can look forward to longer days with warm breezes that will tickle your pet's ears, causing them to race around acting goofy! But winter has not given up the fight, at least not yet. There are bound to be some surprising cold snaps thrown in just to let you know that winter has the power to chill pets to the bone so do not be taken off guard!

Many animals start to lose their winter coats, shedding their excess hair all over the place. Some dogs such as Labradors can lose handfuls of hair at a time. This can be frustrating for the homeowner, who seems to spend most of the spring season on the end of a vacuum cleaner. To overcome this problem, give your pet a regular, thorough grooming several times a week to help them to get rid of their excess hair - it will also help prevent hair balls in cats! Try out our awesome new Hydrobath for your dog. With warm water and a warm blow dry what's not to like?

Spring is a time of romance for many species of animals. It is a sad fact that many kittens and puppies are euthanised each year due to the insufficient numbers of available homes. Spring is a good time to think carefully and act now to de-sex your animals to avoid the heartache that comes from an abundance of youngsters having to be put down. The operation is quick, and your pet will recover from the operation in a day or two. Pets who have been neutered or spayed (desexed) prefer to stay at home rather than roam in search of a mate, where fighting or traffic injuries become a common concern from pet owners. [Click here](#) for more information.



### This month we cover the following topics.

- ❖ Anaesthesia free dental surgery- the truth about this procedure
- ❖ Preventing cats from catching birds
- ❖ Case study- Ted's Persistent Right Aortic Arch.
- ❖ Adopt a pet
- ❖ Possession aggression
- ❖ The Battle Against the Flea
- ❖ Spring flowers can be toxic to pets
- ❖ A bit of a laugh

Warmer weather means your pet will be eager to get outside and go exploring! However, be cautious of buzzing insects. Curious cats and dogs can be **stung by bees** if they stick their nose a little too close. If your pet gets stung, your best course of action is to give us a call and describe your pet's symptoms. Like humans, animal allergic reactions differ in severity, so as soon as you notice that your pet has been stung, act fast to avoid any further complications.



Explore our Website by [Clicking here!](#)

### CASE STUDY – ‘Vicious’ (now renamed Ted), and his Persistent Right Aortic Arch.

Vicious is the exact opposite of his name; he is a sweet, loving pup hence his name change. He has a rare health condition which is a defect from birth. He cannot keep solid food down. In utero, some of the heart-based blood vessels wrap around the oesophagus and after birth, they shrink away. For Ted, this adjustment did not happen, so he has only been able to keep down a slushy mix which has hindered his growth. Any solid food is vomited up. Open chest surgery is required to cut the Aortic Arch and free up the oesophagus so the food and water can go down. It is risky surgery, and the earlier in life it is performed the better. Food goes down by wave motion (peristalsis waves). The channel can get damaged due to this condition. So, there is a lot to consider. Recovery can also be a challenging time and he will be on pain killers for the duration. For this fascinating procedure,

Click [HERE](#) to view the procedure!



For the latest news and events, check out our [Facebook Page](#) by [Clicking here!](#)

## PREVENTING KITTY FROM ATTACKING BIRDS THIS SPRING

If your cat is an outdoor cat, then come spring what with all the nest building and baby-raising birds around, kitty will be on the prowl to nab an unsuspecting meal. If you do not want to see your doorstep decorated with feathers and bird body parts, here are a few tips from our team to give the birds a fighting chance. First, fasten a bell to your cat's collar. The noise of the bell will alert any nearby bird to your cat before kitty has a chance to pounce! But cats can learn to prowl without belling the bell, so you may need to use 3 or even 4 bells to overcome this.

Make sure your cat is well-fed which can help reduce their hunting urges. Corral your cat during their feeding hours. Usually, it is around sunset or sunrise which are the prime feeding times. Make sure your cat is inside during these times to give the birds a chance. Elevate bird feeders and avoid feeding the birds on the ground. In fact, the more elevated the better as cats can leap much higher than you can imagine; we have seen them snatch a bird from a branch! Placing the seed in an elevated feeder will possibly give the birds enough time to see the cat approaching even if your cat is a climber.

**POSSESSION AGGRESSION IN PETS.** When a pet exhibits possession aggression over an object, it can be quite alarming for the owner. Suddenly your placid dog or cat is all teeth and growling when you go near something that they consider being of value to them. Punishing this behaviour rarely works and in fact, it can make the pets behaviour even worse. Treats, a food bowl and food, toys or even their owners - these are all valuable resources to your furry friend. So, what can you do? For dogs, [you can talk to us](#) and we can help you connect with an expert who will guide you.

Teaching the 'Drop it' cue will help if you start early training. Never punish the growl – it often results in a bite! Do not play with a cat or dogs' food, don't fiddle with their chews, and don't pat them while they eat! Leave them to eat undisturbed because food is important to many animals. Managing the home environment will help. Can you block off an area, so they do not have access to a valuable item? As an example, if your dog steals items from the laundry, close off the laundry, or put the basket up out of reach. If your pets fight over a bed, give them a bed each, or if your pets fight when eating, separate them to a 'safe' area for each animal so that they understand the other will not steal their goods. There are many ways to retrain your pets, too many to tell you here. But if this is a problem for you, go online and google 'Possession aggression' or 'Resource Guarding' and you will find a lot of valuable suggestions to help you through this behavioral problem.

**THE RETURN OF THE FLEA.** To be honest, the flea never ever goes away. In winter it may be less invasive, but come spring, it is ready to party! The flea is smart and can survive almost anything; they eat sparingly, move quietly, and reproduce aggressively. This blood sucking bug is impossibly persistent, and once your pet is infected, the fleas are hard to get rid of. The best prevention is regular flea treatments for your pet all year around. Within 30 minutes of a flea bite, your pet will be scratching itself silly. Regular checking for fleas and frequent brushing will help your dog or cat. Keep the yard, outdoor furniture, inside the house, furniture, rugs, and bedding clean. Year around prevention from fleas is the best strategy to avoid an infestation. Check with us as to what product is best for your furry best friend. Fleas can lead to many health issues for the pet, including allergy dermatitis. Treatment can be expensive, while prevention is easy and there are many choices for the discerning pet owner. Our Wellness Plans include treatments for fleas and ticks - check these out by [clicking here](#). If you have any questions, we are here to help.



Courtesy of The Golden Oldies Animal Rescue.

### FREE HIGHland App

Use our free HIGHland App to book appointments, check out our pet health library, or even sign up for our new Newsletters coming in October. You can now get our Cat, Dog or both Newsletters!

### Follow us on

[Instagram](#) 😊

### A Bit of A LAUGH.

The difference between cats and dogs! 🐾

*A dog will tilt their head and try to understand every word you say. Whereas a cat will ignore you and take a nap*

*Dogs will bring you your slippers. Cats will drop a dead mouse in your slippers!*

*When you come home from work, your dog will be happy and lick your face. Your cat will still be mad at you for leaving in the first place!*



**ADOPT A PET** – There are so many pets waiting for their forever home. Can you give them the love and security that they desire? From puppies and kittens, all the way up to senior pets, there is a pet waiting somewhere patiently for you to find them. Let us know if you are looking for a pet as we often know of pets who need rehoming, or animals that have just had a litter. Call us at the HIGHland Veterinary Hospital on Ph 02 4872 1144 or we can do a health check on a new pet to ensure they are healthy - [click here for our wellbeing services](#).

Other places to call include the The Golden Oldies Animal Rescue.

Please contact them on 0403 265 498 or go online to [their website HERE](#).

You can also call the NSW RSPCA adoptions on 02 9770 7555 and find the closest center nearest you. These places have a wonderful variety of pets who will make wonderful additions to your family. Save a pet, get a friend for life!

### \*\*CHANGES TO OUR NEWSLETTER\*\*

Next month we have a major change to our newsletter. Thanks to you all for your great support! Because of your wonderful support, we are going to have two newsletters, one for dog owners, and one for cat owners. You can sign up for either one (or both) to receive valuable information about your pet. We have so much information to share, that fitting it all on the one newsletter has been difficult. From October on, our newsletters will offer information that is tailored to cats or dogs. Sign up this month (via our HIGHland App, Facebook, or Website) and we will have our redesigned newsletter winging its way to you for October!!

### ANAESTHESIA FREE Dentistry – NOT RECOMMENDED!

To perform anaesthesia free dentistry on pets is not appropriate, as a comprehensive examination, diagnosis, and treatment cannot properly proceed while an animal is conscious. The welfare of the animal is compromised, and operators endangered when an animal reacts to any pain. Furthermore, anaesthesia free dentistry (or any surgical procedure) on a fully conscious animal is likely to affect the welfare of the animal having negative psychological and behavioral consequences. Parts of the dental examination process requires the patient to be motionless (e.g. radiographs). It also helps if they are insensible to noxious stimuli – for example – periodontal probing. Periodontal disease, which is the most common disease in cats and dogs, requires that the subgingival areas be cleaned. This can be an uncomfortable and sometimes painful procedure. The expectation that your cat or dog will remain motionless while this goes on is unrealistic. They do not understand what is happening, and the sounds can frighten them causing them to react violently, biting and scratching anyone within reach. If the subgingival area is not cleaned, but only the calculus (tartar) that is visible on the teeth is removed, bacteria will remain in the gum area with the potential to lead to systemic disease such as cardiac or renal disease. To put a pet through the fear and pain of a procedure without anesthesia is unethical; See our [dentistry services here](#).

### SPRING FLOWERS CAN CAUSE SERIOUS POISONING TO PETS.

As spring settles in, we are all tempted to get out into the garden and freshen them up. Be aware that many things in the garden are toxic to animals, such as fertilisers which can contain a variety of additives such as insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides. Mulches, snail baits, and rodent bait are also hazardous to pet health. Those beautiful flowers that we all love can deliver a knockout blow to your cat or dog. Daffodils, Tulips, Lilies, Azalea, Kalanchoe, Crocus, Marigold, Hydrangea and even some ferns can become a seasonal hazard for pets. Vomiting, unsteadiness, and excess drooling are some of the signs of an affected pet. If a pet has ingested a toxic plant and is affected, please bring them into us so we can help them. Keep in mind that some flowers and plants can be fatal for pets, so do not hesitate if your pet is showing signs of poisoning – get them to us asap.