

## Spring in Bloom!

Spring is here and the flowers are starting to bloom! No doubt many of us are looking forward to spending more time outdoors with our four-legged friends and having lovely spring flowers in the house. As nice as they look, it's really important to remember that curious pets may mistake them for a sneaky sweet-scented snack.



(Poisonous Flowers)

Some plants are perfectly safe for our pets, while others may just cause a mild tummy upset. Many others can be highly toxic and even life-threatening, so being able to identify poisonous plants is very important!

Spring flowers that are poisonous to our pets include: Crocuses, Tulips, Azalea, Hyacinth, Snowdrops, Lillies, Daffodils and Geranium. Not all pets are affected in the same way by toxic plants- a plant may affect one pet very seriously but cause no symptoms in others. To keep our pets safe, its best to avoid poisonous plants altogether, regardless of how toxic they are.

Don't forget that your pet can dig up bulbs and seeds from underground! If you suspect that your pet has eaten something they shouldn't, please get in touch with the practice as soon as possible.



## Is Your Rabbit Vaccinated?

Just like other pets, rabbits benefit from vaccinations and health checks to help keep them fit and healthy. The two main diseases that can be fatal if not vaccinated against are:

**Myxomatosis** is a severe viral disease which effects rabbits. It is spread rapidly among wild rabbits, having effects on the eyes, skin, lungs, liver and genitals. It is easily passed onto pet rabbits through blood-sucking insects such as ticks, mites, fleas and mosquitos, so it is important even indoor rabbits are vaccinated against the virus to! Symptoms include; ocular discharge, swollen eyes and genitals, lethargy, anorexia and pyrexia.

Whilst vaccinated rabbits can still catch a mild form of myxomatosis, the recovery rate is good.

**Viral Haemorrhagic Disease (VHD)** is a highly infectious and often fatal condition, which largely affects wild rabbits, but can spread to domestic rabbits. This virus attacks the internal organs causing them to bleed internally. It is spread through direct contact between rabbits or via contaminated hutches, bedding or food. Symptoms of the virus include, lethargy, difficulty breathing, loss of appetite, bloody discharge from nose or mouth and pyrexia.

Vaccinating your rabbits will protect them and help prevent further outbreaks. There are two strains of the virus, RVHD 1 and RVHD 2. RVHD 1 is the more aggressive strain with a very high mortality rate. RVHD 2 is often fatal, although from studies some rabbits have recovered with veterinary care.

If you would like more information or advise on rabbit vaccinations and further ways to help prevent the spread of disease, please contact the practice.

## Easter Opening Hours

Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b>	CLOSED
Saturday 30 <sup>th</sup> March	8:30am-12:30pm
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup> March	CLOSED
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> April <b>EASTER MONDAY</b>	CLOSED
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Open as Normal



If your pet is on any long-term medications, please ensure that these are ordered with at least 48 hour's notice.

In cases of emergencies outside of our opening hours, please call 01606359789 and you will be transferred to VetsNow, our out-of-hours service provider.



## Parasite Control

As winter recedes and the weather starts warm up, it's a good idea to keep up to date with your pet's parasite treatment, as they start to enjoy the milder climate.



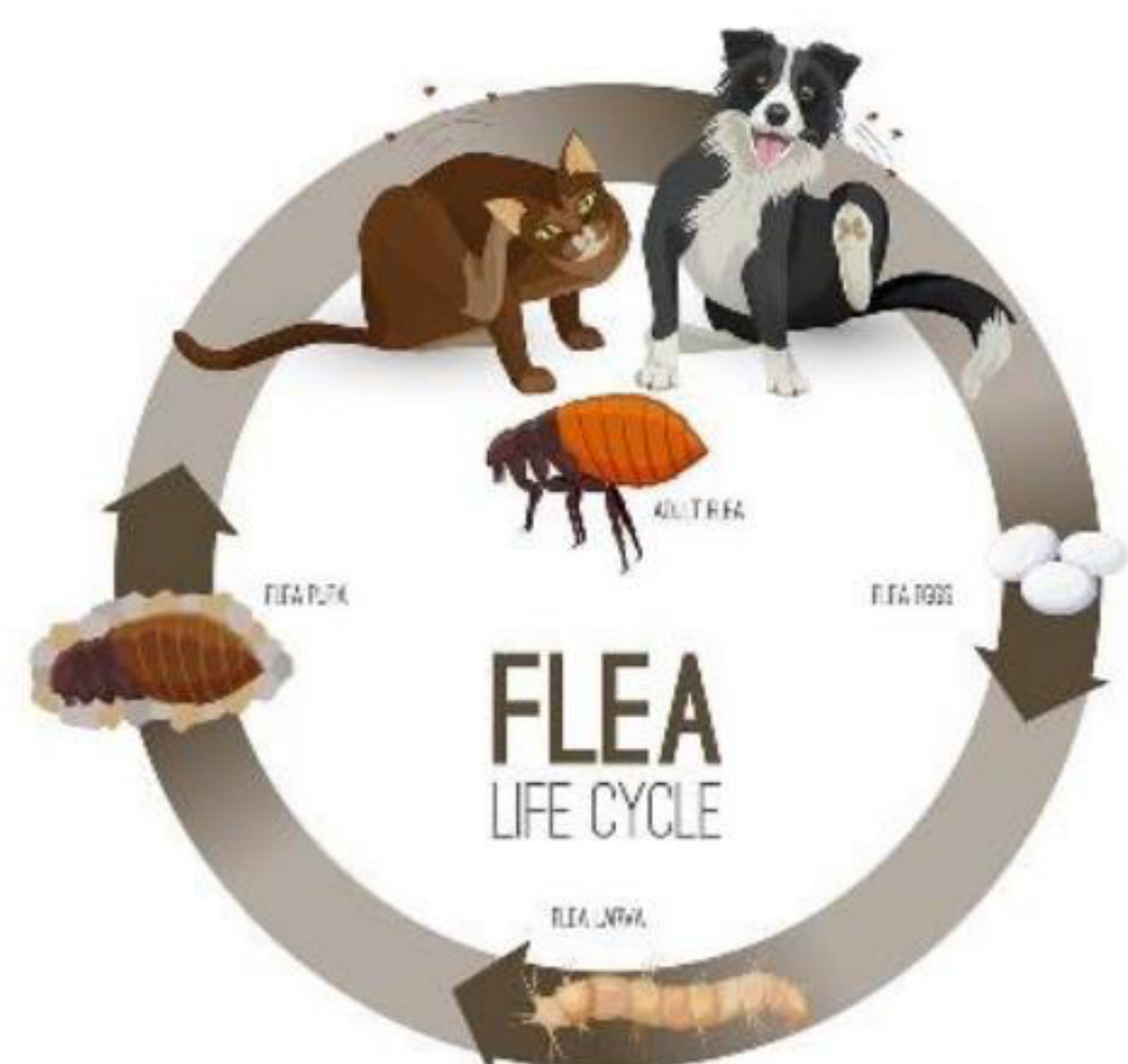
## Veterinary Nurse Awareness Month

**Fleas** love the warmer damp weather, where they can survive outside and be carried into the house. Any dormant flea eggs from last year rapidly hatch into adult fleas, in the optimal environment. Adult fleas will jump onto passing pets and feed from them, where their bites can be itchy, often causing skin rashes and hair loss.

**Ticks** are most active March to October, typically living in woodlands and long grasses. Unlike fleas, ticks are not itchy and once attached onto a passing pet, they will feed off them for days. Ticks require removal with a special tool, which will not crush or stress them. If the tick gets stressed, it can increase the risk of disease transmission.



The best way to prevent fleas and ticks is by supporting your pet with year-round parasite treatment with veterinary licensed products. If you would like further information on parasite prevention, please ask a member of the team.



The month of May marks Veterinary Nurse Awareness Month (VNAM). Launched in 2005, the tradition pursues, and we continue to dedicate May to recognise and celebrate the skills Veterinary Nurses bring to the Veterinary profession. RVN's (Registered Veterinary Nurses) play a fundamental part in the clinical team here at Northwich Vets and we would be lost without them. Our nurses are highly skilled and continue to further educate themselves by gaining additional certificates, merit awards and diplomas in areas of interest.

We would like to say a BIG thankyou to all of our fabulous nurses for the hard work they put into practice every day!

## NWV Star Patient

This season's star patient award goes to **'Roczen'** the 3-year-old French bulldog.

Roczen visited the practice for a castration procedure and widening of his nares.

French Bulldogs and other brachycephalic breeds suffer from a condition called **'BOAS' Brachycephalic Obstructive Airway Syndrome**. One of the factors that contributes to BOAS in French Bulldog's is stenotic nares (narrow nostrils). Other factors of BOAS include, over long or thickened soft palate, tracheal hypoplasia (narrowed trachea) and abnormal turbinate's (scrolls of bone in the nose).

Prior to surgery, Roczen would have found breathing through his nose difficult due to his narrow nostrils. Narrow nostrils= reduced airflow, so, opening them up would allow for more oxygen flow and reduce his respiratory effort. He recovered well from the surgery and is healing brilliantly. His owner has noticed a huge difference in his breathing, reporting that he now has less effort and is quieter when sleeping.

In practice, it is recommended to carry out the widening of the nares at the same time as neutering, to minimise the number of anaesthetics that a patient requires. Widening the nares also limits the impact that the condition has on the rest of the upper respiratory tract.



(Roczen's nose after surgery)



(Roczen's nose before surgery)

## Charity Trip to Cape Verde



We're excited to announce that Patrick, Freya, and Ellie, will be heading to Sal, Cape Verde in April to conduct a crucial neutering campaign.

They'll be teaming up with the charity 'The voice of forgotten dogs of Sal, Cape Verde' to improve the welfare of animals on the island. Since 2020, the charity has been working tirelessly to control the population and provide essential care to the forgotten animals.

Every donation, no matter the size, will make a huge impact in helping us to provide much-needed supplies and support to this deserving cause. Together we can make a difference to the lives of these less fortunate animals!



Donate Here or visit <https://www.gofundme.com/f/neutering-campaign-for-dogs-of-sal-cape-verde>