

### Opening Hours

Monday-Friday 8am-6.30pm

Saturday 8am-5pm

Sunday 9am-5pm (Closed 12.30-1.30pm)

All consultations by appointment.  
Phone 62884944

Closed Public Holidays.

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## England Versus Australia by Helen Ballantyne

No, not more cricket matches, instead an insight into the differences between veterinary practice here and in the UK taken from the diary of our British locum nurse Helen....

*Today, first day at Weston Creek, went quite well except for a few moments of confusion, mainly because I have never come across a doona, an eski or a pademelon and so required a translator.*

*I entertained the girls on reception with my ignorance because I thought a wombat was the size of a small cat. They all roared with laughter when I told them how happy I was to see a kangaroo on the lawn. The final straw was when I needed guidance as to what species of animal a "Groodle" was. I saw him on the list, realised he needed some medication but given my recent discovery about the size of the wombat, I was nervous as to what type of Australian wildlife might be waiting for me in reception.....I have now realised how popular the 'designer' dogs are here. I'd seen the odd Labradoodle before but never a Spoodle, Groodle or Cavoodle.*

*There are some big differences in the clinical aspects too, some things that I have never seen before, including snake bites, tick paralysis and heartworm. Here cats can be vaccinated against FIV, a service that is not yet available in the UK.*

*One of the biggest things is desexing. It is more common here, and it is unusual to see an entire dog, male or female. As a consequence I have been here six weeks and not seen a single pyometra. A condition that we would probably see once a fortnight at home. Pyometra is a purulent infection of the uterus that will lead to septicemia, but the threat of this condition is eliminated by neutering.*

*So, as well as expanding my vocabulary, I've learnt that its good to desex your pet early. I've also learnt that if a client rings and says that their cat is 'floppy' then puss might have been bitten by a brown snake and we need to see it as soon as possible. I've learnt that cockatoos bite, that wombats are quite big and that Australians really do say 'G'day' and 'grog'. I wonder what I will learn tomorrow....*



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**If you would like to receive this monthly newsletter by e-mail, contact the hospital with your details.**



## Animals Die in Hot Cars by Jenny Stirzaker

If you were asked to sit and wait in a hot car or even on the back of a ute during a hot summer's day, would you? The next time you take your pet out shopping, thinking that you will only be a couple of minutes, forget it! Animals can die quickly in a hot car. To many times we hear about dogs being left alone in the car during the middle of summer and even on hot days during our other seasons. Cats should not be forgotten either, also suffering from heat exhaustion from hot cars. Leaving a window open often won't leave enough air ventilation for animals, especially on a hot day. Having the animals head exposed to the sun during a car trip can also cook them. Dogs on the back of a hot metal ute can burn their skin during the summer.

On an average day in a car, temperatures can soar to 50 degrees within 10 minutes, so you can only imagine how hot it would get in a car during a 'hot' day in Canberra.

If you see an animal that has been locked in a car or a distressed dog on the back of a ute during a hot day, don't hesitate to call the RSPCA or the Police to help free the animal from the car. The animal should have prompt treatment for heat exhaustion at a veterinary hospital.

## Dangers Lurking In The Water by Doris Beck



Every year the months of October to May carry potential dangers in Canberra's recreational waterways. During this time algal blooms can occur, and while many of these cyanobacteria are harmless and often even very useful, some of the bacterial species are highly toxic. The waters are generally checked regularly and assessed for toxic levels and at this time of year warning signs are often posted on our lakes.

The toxic species carry Hepatotoxins (Liver Toxins), Dermatotoxins (Skin irritants) and Cytotoxins (toxins that can kill cells usually in liver, skin or intestine).

If you or your pet are exposed most commonly symptoms of gastroenteritis are seen. These include nausea, vomiting and sometimes diarrhoea. Liver damage may also occur leading to jaundice in some cases. Contact of skin and eyes with the toxin can lead to irritation of the skin and conjunctivitis. Sometimes neurological effects are seen including numbing of the mouth and throat, extending in severe cases to the limbs, dizziness, weakness, loss of co-ordination and muscle paralysis. With large enough

doses poisoning can be fatal, in some cases quite rapidly.

Toxins can be absorbed through inhalation, ingestion or through skin contact. So please check the lake shore for warning signs before letting your dog off lead to play in the water.

