



Animal Care Australia

NEWSLETTER

The Animal Care Expert

Animal welfare by the experts - those who keep, care for
and breed animals





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[Animal Care Australia](https://www.animalcareaustralia.org.au)

"Animal Care Australia acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we reside, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present."

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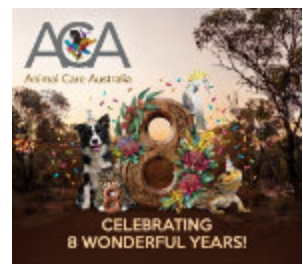
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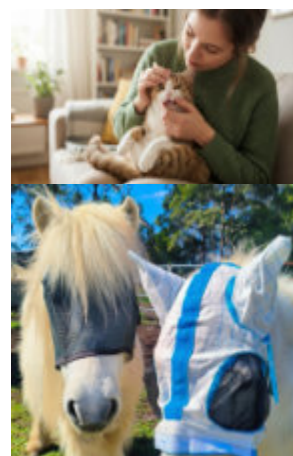
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The Animal Care Expert is expanding.

Invitation: We are inviting you to have your news included in the newsletter. We are opening up the newsletter to our members and supporters. If you would like to have your articles* or even your Club's events included and promoted in ACE, then simply submit them to us via our email address.

The Animal Care Expert Blog:

Our animal care experts' articles and up to date news from Animal Care Australia is here:

animalcareaustralia.org.au/ace-blog/

*Articles printed at the discretion of the editor and/or Committee.

Editor: Michael Donnelly - President

Email: aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au



Important Pet News

Australia:

Federal and State Authorities are continuing to respond to H5N1 Virus (Bird Flu)

H5 bird flu is a virus that mainly affects birds.

It is the serious bird flu strain that has been circulating globally.

While there are no detections in poultry, there are ongoing confirmations of the spread to local wildlife - both birds and mammals.

The current risk of bird flu to people in Australia is low.

What you can do to help:

- ✓ Avoid touching sick or dead birds and other animals.
- ✓ Record what you see by taking a photo or video from a safe distance and noting the location.
- ✓ Report it by calling the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888

For more information: birdflu.gov.au

Animal Care Australia will strive to keep guidance up to date – however it is best to also follow the official government information pages.

Animal Care Australia has produced some downloadable posters for you to share on social media or place into your member associations newsletters etc.



(Image: Microsoft Copilot)

These will be updated as necessary, and updates will be shared on our [Facebook Page](#).

Currently, our concentration is on the primary pet species that could come into immediate contact with the virus, however if the need for information regarding other pet species is required, we will expand the downloadable posters.

Website: [H5N1 webpage](#).

H5N1 Bird Flu – Practical Precautions for Australian Aviculturists

By: Sam Davis, Bird Representative.

HEADLINE ARTICLE:



H5N1 bird flu continues to spread among Australia's wild birds.

As at 4 pm AEST, 21 August 2026, Australia had recorded 297 confirmed H5 bird flu events in wild birds: 182 in South Australia, 86 in Victoria, 11 in New South Wales, 10 in Western Australia, seven in Tasmania and one in Queensland.

As H5N1 bird flu is confirmed in more locations and species, authorities have advised that it will no longer be possible or necessary to test every species in known areas of transmission or every bird involved in an investigation. Reporting will instead be targeted to provide a clear picture of the national situation and identify significant developments. This means confirmed-event numbers will increasingly understate the actual number of infected wild birds.

Australia is the land of birds. We see birds in all environments, from heavily populated urban centres, rural areas, rainforests and even in our drier desert regions. Our amazing birdlife is found in densities not seen on most continents, which sadly makes this outbreak a significant risk to a substantial number of species.

Despite our large and widespread wild bird population this does not mean that private avicultural collections are at high risk of infection. ACA considers the risk to most avicultural collections to remain low if the sensible biosecurity precautions recommended in this article are implemented. The objective is to reduce the opportunities for H5N1 to move from infected wild birds into captive collections.

Bird flu does not easily spread to people, and no infections of the H5N1 strain have been reported in people in Australia. Bird flu infections in people are rare. When people get infected, it is usually after close contact with infected birds. Do not handle sick or dead birds, particularly wild birds - this is your best protection.

For most aviculturists the key biosecurity precautions are straightforward: prevent wild-bird faeces entering aviaries, protect drinking water from contamination, avoid sharing water at bird gatherings, quarantine new and returning birds, keep waterfowl separated, and maintain good hygiene and pest control.

Covering aviaries

Australian aviculture differs from that in many cooler countries. Parrots, finches, doves, quail and other birds are commonly maintained in substantial outdoor aviary complexes incorporating sheltered areas and exposed wire-mesh flights. These structures are well suited to the Australian climate but can allow wild-bird droppings and contaminated rainwater to enter the aviary.

Animal Care Australia continues to recommend covering exposed aviary flights with a solid, impermeable roof where H5N1 presents an immediate risk. South Australian and Victorian aviculturists, particularly those located near watercourses, are advised to do this now. Aviculturists elsewhere should consider how their aviaries could be covered should the virus become established locally.

Suitable materials include clear polycarbonate and suitable UV-stabilised reinforced plastic sheeting. Shade cloth alone is not sufficient because it does not prevent contaminated water or faecal material passing through. Roofing should extend beyond the aviary walls approximately 150 mm where practicable, or down the sides of the aviary approximately 300 mm. The aim is to reduce wild bird contamination entering through the roof or sides, while adequate ventilation and protection against excessive summer heat must be maintained.

The purpose is straightforward: prevent potentially infected wild-bird faeces from entering the aviary from above. Feed and drinking water should also be protected from contamination by wild birds.

Rainwater used for drinking

Many Australian aviculturists deliberately use rainwater for their birds. It is often preferred to treated town water and is readily accepted by many birds. H5N1 does not mean that rainwater must be abandoned, but roof-collected rainwater needs to be considered as another possible pathway by which the virus could enter a collection.

An infected wild bird can deposit faeces on a house, shed or aviary roof. Rain can subsequently wash this material through gutters and downpipes into a rainwater

tank. Research on avian influenza viruses shows that it can persist in freshwater for extended periods, with survival strongly affected by temperature and water conditions. Storage in a rainwater tank for long periods should not be relied upon to make potentially contaminated water safe.

Where treated town water is available, temporarily changing to town water may be the simplest and safest option when H5N1 is circulating in the local area. Properly operated municipal drinking-water treatment and chlorination are effective against avian influenza viruses.

Where rainwater continues to be used, contamination should first be reduced at the source. Keep catchment roofs and gutters clean, reduce opportunities for wild birds to roost on catchment areas where practicable, use an effective first-flush diversion system, and keep tanks sealed, screened and properly maintained. These are all standard recommended practices for using rainwater for human consumption.

Treating rainwater

Boiling is a simple and practical treatment option for many private aviculturists. Experimental work demonstrates that H5 viruses are readily inactivated by heat. Water heated above 75°C for a period exceeding 5 minutes is considered sufficient to inactivate the virus. A normal electric kettle brings water to approximately 100°C and, when allowed to cool naturally, remains at elevated temperatures for considerably longer. Rainwater can therefore be brought fully to the boil and then allowed to cool naturally in the kettle or in a clean, covered container before being supplied to birds.

For larger collections requiring substantial quantities of water, an appropriately designed filtration and UV treatment system may be more practical. UV treatment provides disinfection without adding chlorine or substantially changing the characteristics for which many aviculturists prefer rainwater.

Chlorination using sodium hypochlorite (bleach) is also effective at inactivating H5N1. However, many aviculturists specifically use rainwater because their birds prefer it to chlorinated town water, so routine chlorination may be less desirable. Ordinary sediment or cartridge filtration alone should not be relied upon to inactivate H5N1.

Treated water should be kept in a clean, covered container.

Bird sales, shows and expos

Bird sales, shows and expos remain an important part of Australian aviculture. The presence of H5N1 in Australian wildlife does not in itself mean these activities need to cease. Some simple changes in practice are, however, sensible.

Do not share drinking water between birds, cages or exhibitors. At some events it has been common practice to use a common watering container or water source between cages. This practice should be avoided. Each cage or group should have its own clean drinking-water container and water supply. Drinkers and other equipment should not be transferred between unrelated birds without first being thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

Feed, utensils and equipment should similarly be managed to minimise opportunities for material from one group of birds to reach another.

Misinformation – a concern for clubs

Some clubs have expressed concern that, despite the relatively low H5N1 risk associated with properly managed bird sales and shows, such events may attract criticism or misinformation about the risks to birds or people. Animal Care Australia does not consider this, by itself, a reason to cancel properly managed avicultural activities. Clubs should instead ensure that appropriate biosecurity measures are in place and clearly communicate those measures to exhibitors, members and the public. Animal Care Australia has a range of suitable posters and flyers that could be printed and prominently displayed at the entrance and within the venue.

Good biosecurity is not only important for protecting birds; it also enables clubs to demonstrate that their events are being conducted responsibly and in accordance with current disease-risk advice. Decisions about cancelling or postponing an event should be based on the actual disease situation and relevant government advice, rather than speculation or misinformation.

Quarantine birds returning from sales and shows

Quarantine has always been good avicultural practice and becomes even more important with H5N1 present in Australia. Both newly acquired birds and your own birds returning home from a sale, show or expo should be quarantined before being returned to the main collection.

The recognised flock-level incubation period for high pathogenicity avian influenza is 14 days. Experimental H5N1 studies in susceptible passerines and budgerigars also demonstrate that disease generally develops relatively rapidly. Zebra finches experimentally infected with H5N1 suffered 100% mortality within five days in one study, while affected budgerigars were generally moribund or dead within approximately two days of the onset of clinical signs. Other passerine studies have similarly demonstrated rapid disease and mortality, although susceptibility varies between species and virus strains.

The available evidence therefore indicates that finches, parrots and similar susceptible aviary birds are highly unlikely to remain healthy, long-term carriers of H5N1. A bird that remains alive and completely healthy after an effective 30-day quarantine is consequently very unlikely to be carrying an active H5N1 infection.

The columbid family – pigeons and doves – requires somewhat different consideration. Infection may not always result in obvious symptoms or rapid death in these birds, and infected birds may survive while shedding virus for a period. However, available experimental evidence indicates that shedding is generally relatively short-lived and does not indicate prolonged H5N1 carriage. A 30-day quarantine period therefore remains a reasonable precaution.

Animal Care Australia recommends a 30-day quarantine period. This provides a substantial margin beyond the recognised H5N1 incubation and acute infection periods and, importantly, quarantine is not only about H5N1. The longer period also provides protection against other avian diseases that may take longer to become apparent.

Waterfowl require additional care

Waterfowl are different and should not be treated in the same way as parrots and finches. Ducks, geese and other waterfowl are important natural hosts of avian influenza viruses and can sometimes be infected and shed virus while showing few or no obvious signs of disease.

Waterfowl should therefore never be housed in the vicinity of birds being quarantined following a sale, show or purchase. More generally, aviculturists keeping waterfowl should exercise additional caution and, wherever practicable, separate waterfowl from other aviary birds and manage their water, equipment and husbandry independently.

Rodents and insects

An effective quarantine area must also consider rodents and insects. Physical separation of the birds achieves little if rats, mice, flies or other potential vectors can move freely between the quarantine enclosure and the main collection.

Rodents can potentially contribute to avian influenza transmission as mechanical vectors and, under experimental conditions, some mammalian species can become infected with H5N1 and shed virus. Insects, particularly flies, can also mechanically carry contaminated material. Current Australian avian influenza planning recognises these potential pathways.

Good quarantine practice should therefore include effective rodent and insect control. Keep spilled seed and waste under control, prevent rats and mice entering bird areas, control flies and other pest insects, and do not allow waste or contaminated equipment to provide a pathway between the quarantine area and the established collection.

Manage the quarantine area last

Feed, water and service the main collection first and quarantined birds last. Wherever practicable, quarantine equipment including feed containers, drinkers, cleaning equipment and footwear should not be shared with the main collection.

After servicing quarantined birds, wash your hands thoroughly and clean or change contaminated footwear and clothing before returning to the main aviary area. This helps protect the established collection and is also sensible personal hygiene when dealing with a zoonotic influenza virus.

Keep the risk in perspective

H5N1 is now present in Australian wildlife and aviculturists need to take it seriously. The appropriate response, however, is preparedness rather than alarm. For most private avicultural collections, the risk remains low if straightforward precautions are taken.

Cover exposed aviaries where appropriate. Protect feed and drinking water from wild-bird contamination. Where H5N1 is circulating locally, consider changing from rainwater to treated town water or appropriately treat rainwater before use. Do not share drinking water at bird sales, shows and expos. Quarantine newly acquired and returning birds. Keep waterfowl away from quarantine and, where practicable, separate from other aviary birds. Include rodents and insects in the biosecurity plan. Service quarantine birds last and maintain good personal and equipment hygiene.

Australia's private avicultural collections contain large populations of parrots, finches, doves, quail and many other native and exotic birds. Some of these collections also maintain significant populations of native species that are threatened in the wild or have disappeared from parts of their former range. Protecting these collections is important both to individual bird keepers and to the longer-term conservation value of Australian aviculture.

BIRD FLU CAN AFFECT CATS. PROTECT THEM. KEEP THEM SAFE.

Extra species information by Animal Care Australia

It can infect cats through contact with infected birds or contaminated environments.

SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR

Seek urgent veterinary attention if your cat shows any of the following:

- Sudden lethargy or weakness
- Loss of appetite
- Fever
- Coughing, sneezing or difficulty breathing
- Discharge from eyes or nose
- Vomiting or diarrhoea
- Neurological signs (tremors, incoordination, seizures)
- Sudden death without illness or collapse

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CAT

- Keep cats indoors or fully contained on your property
- Use secure cat runs / catios and enclosed outdoor enclosures
- Prevent hunting of birds
- Do not let your cat catch or eat wild birds
- Wash hands after handling birds or bird droppings
- Report sick or dead wild birds to relevant wildlife authorities

Note: Unless future positive detections are announced within Australian poultry there is currently no risk from feeding your raw poultry product.

WHY CONFINEMENT MATTERS NOW MORE THAN EVER Free-roaming cats are at a much higher risk of exposure to H5 bird flu. Keeping your cat indoors or safely contained significantly reduces exposure and injury risks. Cats need secure housing and care now more than ever.

YOUR CHOICES TODAY WILL SECURE THEIR TOMORROW.



This is important for cats in most states/territories as the virus continues to spread. So get prepared now to keep your cats healthy, happy and safe.

Need help transitioning your cat indoors or creating a safe space? Send us an email and our Cat Representative can provide more information. Email:

[**cats@animalcareaustralia.org.au**](mailto:cats@animalcareaustralia.org.au)

BIRD FLU TIPS FOR DOG WALKERS.

To protect your dog and prevent the spread of H5 bird flu, always keep your dog on a leash in coastal, wetland, or park areas. Actively steer them away from dead or sick wildlife, feathers, and droppings. The virus can be transmitted to mammals that scavenge or hunt infected birds

Actionable Tips for Dog Walkers

- **Keep Dogs Leashed:** Maintain strict control of your dog, especially near beaches, wetlands, or estuaries where migratory birds congregate. This prevents them from chasing or catching sick birds.
- **Avoid Scavenging:** Prevent your dog from sniffing, mouthing, or eating any dead or sick birds, marine life, or other wild animals.
- **Clean and Disinfect:** Wipe down your dog's paws and wash their bedding when you get home. It is a good practice to wash your own hands and clothing with soap and warm water immediately after returning.

When to Call the Vet

If you suspect your dog has eaten or come into direct contact with a sick bird, keep them separated from other animals or children. Monitor closely for the following symptoms and consult your veterinarian immediately:

- Difficulty breathing or coughing
- Neurological signs like tremors, seizures, or uncoordinated movement
- Swelling around the head, neck, and eyes
- Lethargy, diarrhea, or a sudden fever

Note: Unless future positive detections are announced within Australian poultry there is currently no risk from feeding your dog raw poultry product.

YOUR CHOICES TODAY WILL SECURE THEIR TOMORROW.

This is important for dogs in all states/territories as the virus spreads. So get prepared now to keep your dog healthy, happy and safe.



Animal Care Australia has produced documents and posters that can be downloaded from our dedicated [H5N1 webpage](#).



Australian Government

What is H5 bird flu?

H5 bird flu

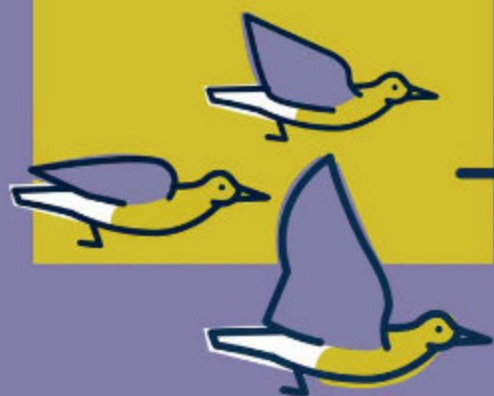
is the most serious type of bird flu.

It mainly affects wild and domestic birds, but can also infect some mammals. It has killed millions of animals worldwide.



How it spreads and the impacts

H5 bird flu can infect and kill wild birds.



It can spread to other birds and some mammals. Human infection is rare.



This can impact food supply, the environment and the economy.



If you see sick or dead animals

- Avoid** contact and keep your distance
- Record** date, time, location and take photos
- Report** to Emergency Animal Disease Hotline

1800 675 888



Find out more at
birdflu.gov.au or scan the QR code.



Animal Care Australia turns 8 years old.

Born in the midst of the failed consultation on proposed changes by the NSW Department of Primary Industries to the Animals in Pet Shops Standards & Guidelines document amending the Protection of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979 (POCTA), members from multiple organisations came together to discuss their concerns over the ever increasing lack of consultation from Government departments and the strengthening of animal rights voices and their influences over our governments.

The Pet Shop saga as it became known took high priority, with all parties agreeing more needed to be done to stop the DPI proposal and to provide both State and Federal Governments with an organisation that would and could responsibly advocate best welfare practices for all pets in Australia.

Within weeks meetings were held, encompassing representatives from animal organisations across a range of species, including, cats, dogs, birds, reptiles, rodents, rabbits, horses and more - all agreeing to join together and form Animal Care Australia, with new members joining every month.

Today, we are a national animal welfare organisation, recognised across the country by all levels of government.

Tomorrow, we will keep doing what we do best. Representing you. Encouraging and educating better animal welfare outcomes, reducing and preventing the suffering of animals.

We thank you for your support.





Animal Care Australia is now a Registered Charity

Animal Care Australia is honoured to announce that we are now officially a registered charity — a milestone that strengthens our mission and deepens the impact of every supporter who stands with us.

For our donors, this recognition is more than a status change. It is a formal acknowledgement of the work you have already helped make possible: relieving the suffering of animals by promoting genuine, evidence-based animal welfare across Australia.



💛 Why this matters to our supporters

Your contributions have always fuelled our advocacy, education, and community engagement. Becoming a registered charity means:

- Greater reach and influence — Our voice in animal welfare policy is now backed by formal charitable recognition.
- Stronger accountability — Donors can give with confidence, knowing ACA meets national standards for transparency and governance.
- Expanded capacity — We can grow programs that directly improve animal care, welfare education, and responsible animal keeping.
- Increased impact — Every donation now goes even further in supporting our mission to prevent and relieve animal suffering.

🐾 Our purpose remains clear

Animal Care Australia exists to ensure that animal welfare is shaped by those who care for animals every day. As a charity, we will continue to:

- Promote best-practice husbandry and responsible animal keeping
- Advocate for fair, effective, and transparent welfare legislation
- Represent the diverse communities who work hands-on with animals
- Champion welfare standards grounded in compassion, knowledge, and lived experience

☀️ A message to our donors

This achievement belongs to you as much as it does to us. Your support has helped Animal Care Australia grow from a passionate advocacy organisation into a nationally recognised charity dedicated to improving the lives of animals.

Together, we are building a future where animal welfare is informed, compassionate, and truly centred on the needs of animals.

Animal welfare is animal care.

And today, that care has been recognised at a national level.

Charity Register link: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/charity/charities>



Behind the Scales: What Working with Reptiles Has Taught Us About Animal Welfare

By: Joanne Payne - Reptile Representative

There is something about reptiles that can make them very easy to misunderstand. They don't bark when they're bored. They don't scratch at the door asking to go for a walk. They don't need to be taken outside several times a day, and many reptiles are perfectly happy spending much of their time quietly going about their business. But quiet does not mean low-maintenance, and calm does not mean "set and forget."

Over the past little while, we have had several reptiles come into our care looking for new homes. Their stories are all different, but they have something important in common: sometimes the reality of keeping a reptile doesn't quite match the expectations people had when they first brought one home.

The tiny hatchling that doesn't stay tiny

One of the most common situations we see involves carpet pythons.

A tiny hatchling can be incredibly appealing. They are small, relatively inexpensive and don't take up much room. It is easy to look at that little snake and think, "I've got plenty of space for that." The problem is that the little snake doesn't stay little. Those tiny hatchlings grow into large, powerful snakes that need an enclosure appropriate for their adult size, room to move, appropriate heating and lighting, a suitable environment and an owner who is prepared for many years of commitment. We currently have some larger snakes that came into care after their owners realised, they simply didn't have the capacity to provide the space they needed. And that is an important part of responsible animal ownership: recognising when an animal's needs are greater than what you can realistically provide.

Reptiles aren't "set and forget"

We often hear the idea that reptiles make easy pets because they don't require the same amount of attention as a dog or cat. There is some truth in the fact that reptiles don't need constant human interaction. But this can sometimes lead to the misconception that they don't need much care at all. They absolutely do. A reptile may spend hours sitting quietly under a heat source. It may not appear to be doing very much. But behind that quiet behaviour is a carefully balanced environment involving temperature, humidity, enclosure design, nutrition, hydration, hygiene and opportunities for natural behaviours. A reptile doesn't necessarily need more attention from us. It needs us to pay the right kind of attention.

Sometimes life changes

Not every reptile that needs a new home has been neglected or unwanted. We currently also have a pair of bearded dragons in our care who were originally rescued from a situation where they weren't being properly cared for. They were given another chance but later came into our care again following a relationship breakdown. Life happens. Relationships change. Families move. Circumstances change. Finances change. People's ability to care for an animal can change too.

Responsible reptile ownership isn't about promising that life will never change. It is about making sure that when circumstances do change, the animal's welfare remains the priority. Sometimes that means asking for help. Sometimes it means surrendering an animal. And sometimes, finding a new home is the most responsible thing an owner can do.

The children grow up — but the reptile keeps growing

Another pattern we see is children becoming fascinated by reptiles when they are young, only for that interest to fade as they get older. The snake, however, doesn't lose interest. It keeps growing. It still needs feeding. It still needs an appropriate enclosure. It still needs its environment maintained. And it may still be with the family for many years. This is why choosing a reptile should never be based solely on how cute or manageable the animal is *today*. The question should be:

"Can we provide what this animal will need for its entire life?"

What reptiles have taught us about welfare

Working with reptiles has taught us that animal welfare isn't always obvious. A reptile won't necessarily tell us that something isn't right in the same ways a dog or cat might. We have to learn to observe them, understand their natural behaviours and recognise what their environment is telling us. Good reptile care isn't about making a reptile behave the way we want it to. It is about understanding the animal we have chosen to care for. And sometimes, the most welfare-focused decision isn't keeping an animal at all costs. It is recognising that it needs more than we can provide and making sure it gets the opportunity to thrive somewhere else. Because behind every scale, every enclosure and every quiet pair of eyes is an animal with needs that matter.

Reptiles may be quiet companions, but they are never "set and forget" pets. They are a commitment — sometimes for decades — and they deserve owners who are prepared to grow with them.





Cats & Fleas: What Every Cat Owner Should Know

By: Michelle Grayson - Cat Representative



Fleas are one of the most common parasites affecting cats, and even indoor cats can become infected. These tiny insects may be small, but they can cause major discomfort, skin problems, allergic reactions, anaemia in kittens, and even spread tapeworms.

Understanding how fleas live, spread, and survive is the key to protecting your cat and your home.

What Are Fleas?

The most common flea found on cats is the cat flea (*Ctenocephalides felis*). Adult fleas survive by feeding on blood and can jump incredible distances, allowing them to move easily between animals and environments.

A single flea infestation can quickly grow out of control because fleas reproduce extremely fast.

The Flea Life Cycle

Fleas go through four life stages:

1. Egg

Adult fleas lay eggs on the cat after feeding. A female flea can lay dozens of eggs every day. These eggs fall off the cat into carpets, bedding, lounges, cracks in flooring, and other areas around the home.

2. Larva

The eggs hatch into tiny larvae that avoid sunlight and hide deep in carpets, furniture, and bedding. They feed on organic debris and flea dirt left behind by adult fleas.

3. Pupa

Larvae spin cocoons and become pupae. This stage is extremely hardy and can survive for weeks or even months while waiting for the right conditions to emerge.

4. Adult Flea

Adult fleas emerge from the cocoon when they detect warmth, vibrations, or movement nearby. They immediately look for a host animal to feed on and restart the cycle.

Under ideal conditions, the entire flea life cycle can be completed in as little as 2–3 weeks.

Signs Your Cat May Have Fleas

Common signs include:

- Excessive scratching or grooming
- Tiny black specks in the coat ("flea dirt")
- Hair loss or scabs
- Red or irritated skin
- Restlessness or discomfort
- Visible fleas moving through the fur

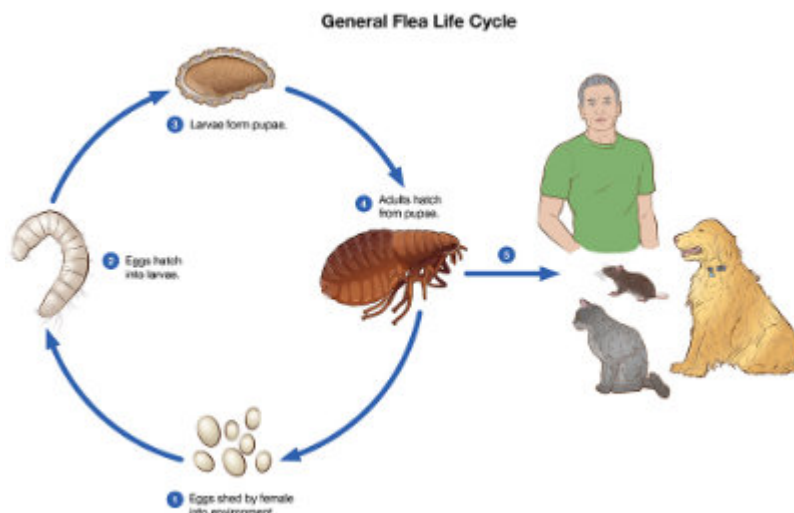


Photo: <https://www.cdc.gov/fleas/about/flea-lifecycles.html>

- Pale gums or weakness in kittens (possible anaemia)

Some cats develop flea allergy dermatitis, where even a single flea bite can trigger intense itching and skin inflammation.

How Cats Catch Fleas

Fleas are extremely common in cats and dogs, even in very clean homes or well-cared-for pets. They can be picked up from:

- other animals
- outdoor environments (parks, gardens, strays)
- even shared spaces like boarding or grooming facilities
- tracked inside on our shoes or clothing

So having fleas doesn't mean you are a bad pet owner. It just means exposure happened & you need to treat the problem now that it exists.

Why Treating the House Matters

Only a small percentage of fleas live on your cat. Most of the infestation exists

in the environment as eggs, larvae, and pupae.

That means successful flea control requires treating:

- Your cat
- Other pets in the household
- Bedding and blankets
- Carpets and rugs
- Furniture and hidden corners

Vacuuming regularly and washing bedding in hot water can help reduce flea numbers.

Flea Prevention

Modern flea preventatives are the safest and most effective way to protect cats. Options include:

- Spot-on treatments
- Oral medications

- Flea collars prescribed for cats
- Combination parasite preventatives

Always use products specifically designed for cats. Some dog flea products contain permethrin, which is highly toxic to cats.

When to See a Vet

Veterinary advice is important if your cat:

- Has severe itching or skin wounds
- Is losing weight or acting lethargic
- Has pale gums
- Is a kitten with fleas
- Continues getting fleas despite treatment

Early treatment can prevent serious complications and keep your cat comfortable and healthy.



As we head into Spring 2026, we looked back at Petcover claims from 1 September to 30 November 2025 to uncover some of the most commonly claimed conditions across dogs, cats, horses and exotic pets, and how much treatment could cost.



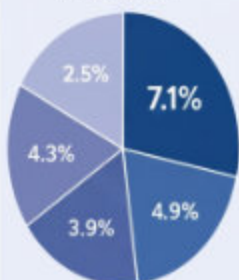
Dogs: Skin allergies lead the way

Spring can bring increased exposure to environmental allergens, making itchy skin and irritation something for owners to watch.

TOP CONDITION

7.1%

of dog claims



Top Spring 2025 dog claims

		% OF CLAIMS	AVERAGE	HIGHEST
1	Skin allergies	7.1%	\$839	\$14,471
2	Lumps	4.9%	\$2,105	\$14,444
3	Arthritis & joint disease	4.3%	\$1,124	\$12,757
4	Ear infections	3.9%	\$737	\$6,677
5	Anxiety	2.5%	\$517	\$4,077



Highest dog claim: \$14,471
(Skin allergies)



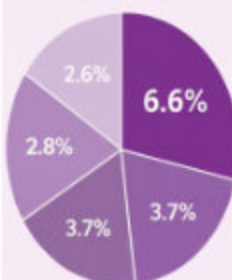
Cats: Joint problems top claims

Arthritis and degenerative joint disease topped our cat claims. Because cats can be good at hiding discomfort, subtle changes in jumping, grooming or mobility can be worth watching.

TOP CONDITION

6.6%

of cat claims



Top Spring 2025 cat claims

		% OF CLAIMS	AVERAGE	HIGHEST
1	Arthritis & joint disease	6.6%	\$735	\$4,883
2	Urinary tract infections	3.7%	\$955	\$2,894
3	Vomiting	3.7%	\$956	\$5,374
4	Hyperthyroidism	2.8%	\$1,275	\$10,417
5	Heart murmurs	2.6%	\$1,083	\$2,126



Highest cat claim: \$10,417
(Hyperthyroidism)



Horses: Lameness stands out

Lameness dominated horse claims, with undiagnosed lameness accounting for 12%. It also produced the largest individual claim among the leading conditions across all four species at \$33,659.

TOP CONDITION

12.0%

of horse claims



Top Spring 2025 horse claims

		% OF CLAIMS	AVERAGE	HIGHEST
1	Undiagnosed lameness	12.0%	\$4,134	\$33,659
2	Forelimb lameness	10.4%	\$2,259	\$8,547
3	Gastric ulceration	9.3%	\$1,663	\$5,309
4	Colic - obstruction/blockage	6.6%	\$4,754	\$12,964
5	Lacerations	4.9%	\$4,146	\$12,756



Highest horse claim: \$33,659
(Undiagnosed lameness)



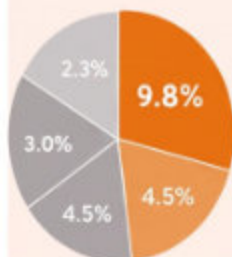
Exotic pets: Gut stasis tops the list

Gut stasis was the most commonly claimed condition among exotic pets. Changes in appetite, droppings or activity can be important warning signs that shouldn't be ignored.

TOP CONDITION

9.8%

of exotic claims



Top Spring 2025 exotic claims

		% OF CLAIMS	AVERAGE	HIGHEST
1	Gut stasis	9.8%	\$1,130	\$2,367
2	Anorexia & lethargy	4.5%	\$3,349	\$6,928
3	Reaction to vaccine	4.5%	\$483	\$1,779
4	Diarrhoea	3.0%	\$414	\$781
5	Upper respiratory tract infection	2.3%	\$2,762	\$4,918



Highest exotic claim: \$6,928
(Anorexia & lethargy)

Our claims data shows that the most commonly claimed conditions aren't always the most expensive. With individual claims among these conditions reaching more than **\$14,000 for dogs**, **\$10,000 for cats**, **\$33,000 for horses** and **\$6,000 for exotic pets**, keeping an eye on changes in your pet's health can make all the difference.

If something doesn't seem right, always seek advice from your veterinarian.

Unexpected pet treatment can be costly and difficult to save for. Pet insurance can make all the difference, giving you **peace of mind when you need it most.**

[Get a quote!](#)



Date: September
2026



Dear Pet Diary,

My name is Shelby, and I almost never got the chance to have a happy life.

When I was only five weeks old, I was living in a place where nobody wanted me. One day, a lady came to collect another kitten. She saw me sitting there all alone. My owner said that if she didn't take me straight away, I would be thrown in the gutter and shot.

I didn't understand what that meant, but I know now that it meant I needed someone to save me.

The lady took me home and called her friend, asking if she could take care of me. That friend became my mum.

As soon as I arrived at my new home, I was taken to the vet. I was





checked over, microchipped,
immunised and wormed.



For the first time in my little life, someone
cared enough to make sure I was healthy and
safe.



Then I met my new family. There were five children
who all wanted to cuddle me and tell me how
beautiful I was. There were also lots of other animals
living there, but everyone welcomed me. I quickly learned that this house
was full of love.

As I grew a little bigger, Mum took me back to the vet again. This time,
I was desexed. I wasn't very impressed about the whole thing, but Mum
said it was important to keep me healthy and safe. By then, I knew that
every trip to the vet meant I was being looked after and loved.

I have lots of favourite things. I love sleeping on the children's beds,
especially when I can curl up right next to them. I also love the
heater. In fact, I love it so much that I lie so close to it that
everyone jokes that I smell like I'm cooking!





I don't get to wander outside on
own, but I do get to go on adventures
wearing my lead. I love sniffing around the
garden, chasing leaves and exploring all the
interesting smells.



But the very best thing that ever happened to me
was meeting my best friend, Burt.

One day, Mum brought home a tiny newborn lamb called Burt,
named after Adam Lambert. He was small and needed lots of care. I
decided straight away that he needed a friend, and that friend would
be me.

Burt and I did everything together. We ran around the house, played
games and snuggled in front of the heater. We were an unusual pair—a
little cat and a little lamb—but we didn't care.

As Burt grew bigger and moved up to the horse paddock,
Mum still made sure we could spend time together. She
would put my lead on and take me up to visit him. We
would play together just like old times.





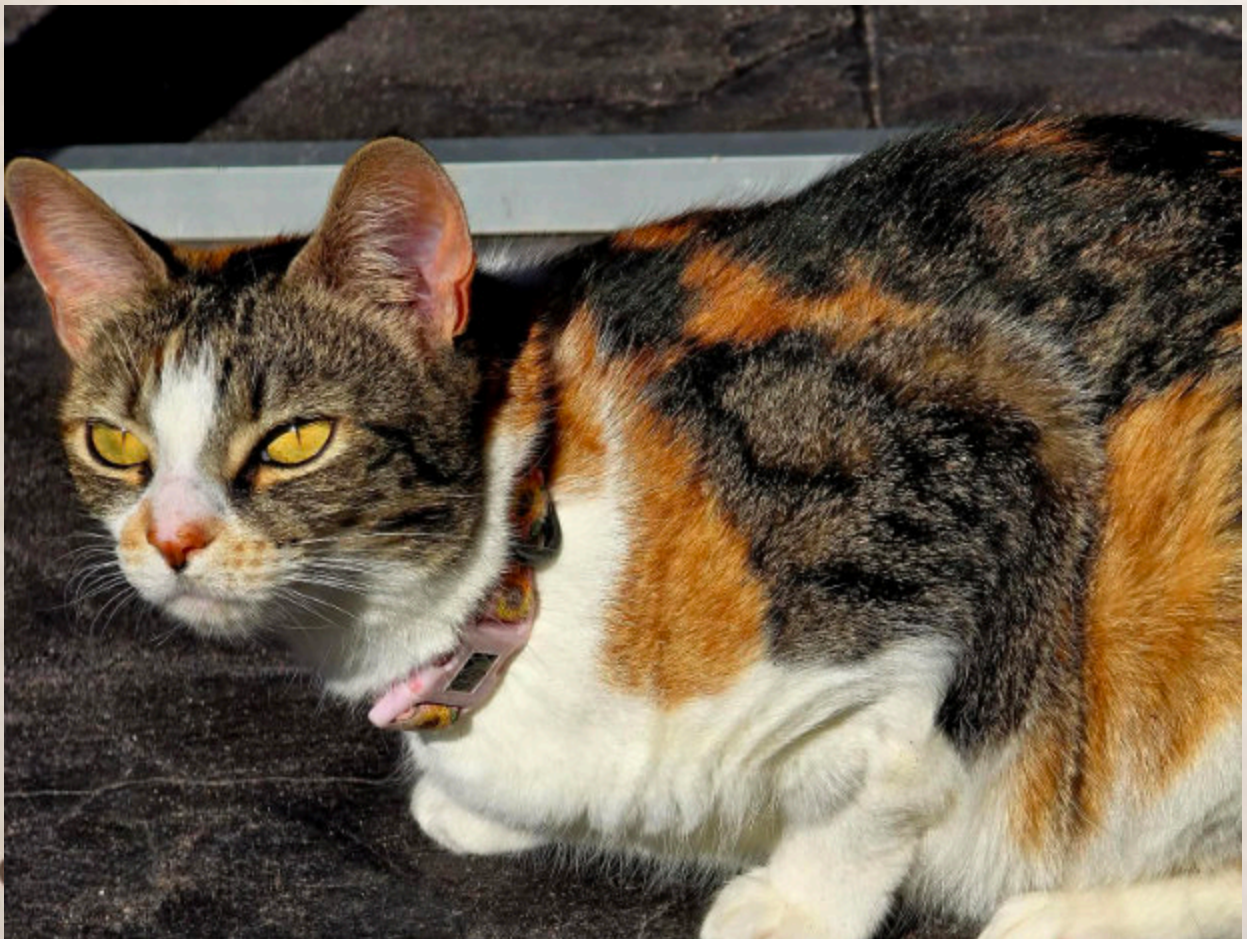
*I may have started my life unwanted
and frightened, but now I know
what it feels like to be loved.*

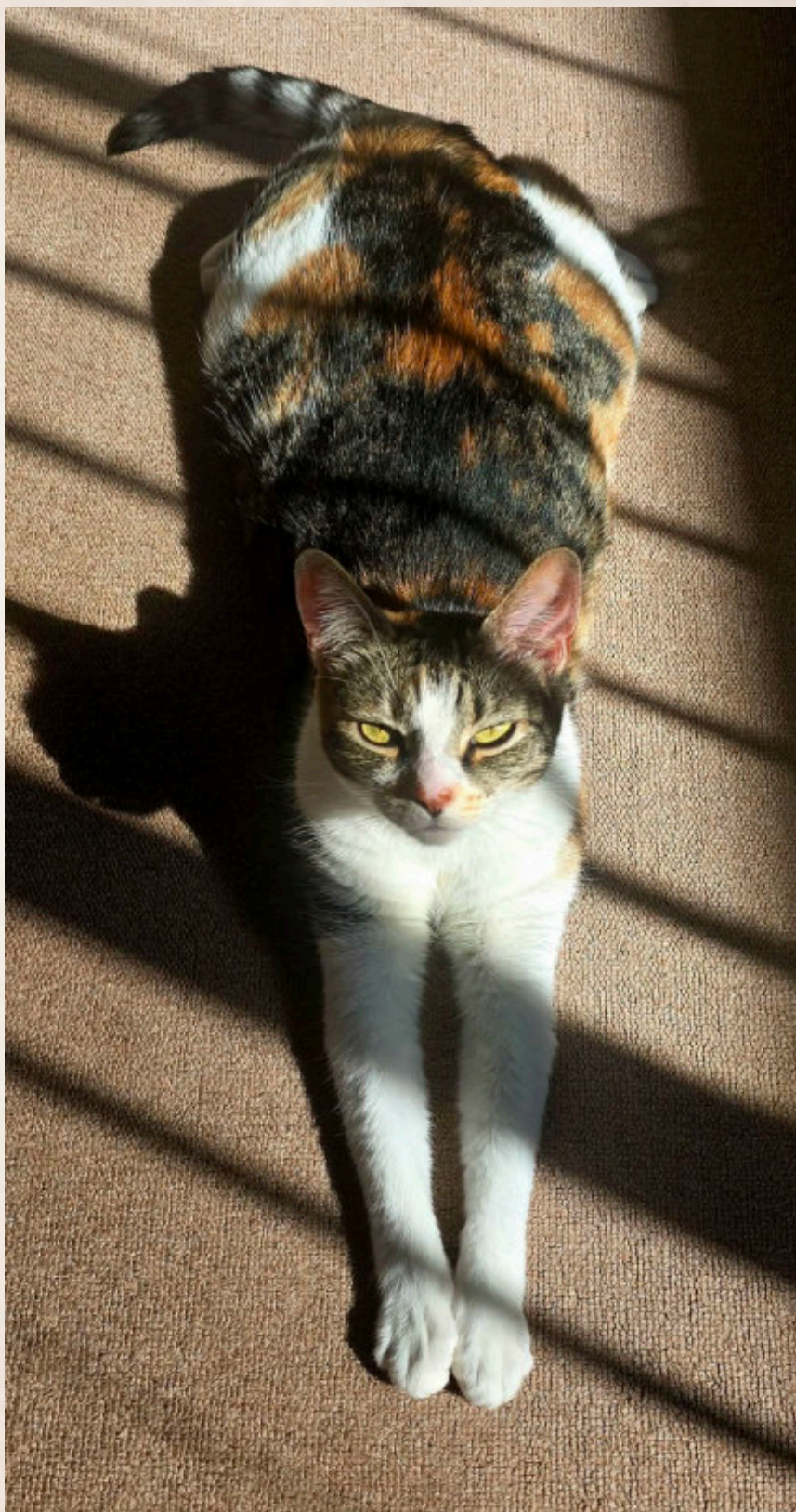


*I have a family, warm beds, adventures outside, and
a best friend who happens to be a sheep.*



*I think I turned out to be a very lucky little cat after
all.*





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To sign the petition scan the QR Code or follow the petition Link: <https://c.org/JgWcwBCftk>



"Protect Bird Keeping in Victoria" petition and why your support is crucial at this time.

Background:

A review of the Victorian Wildlife Act (1975) commenced in 2021, with input from the community and stakeholders being requested.

MPAS, along with other bird clubs, Animal Care Australia and the Victorian Avicultural Council all sent in submissions to the Review Panel.

The Review Panel presented their report to the state government on the 20 December 2021, with the state government responding in October 2025.

Current Situation:

As many of you are aware, bird keeping has a long and cherished tradition within our community, providing not only joy and companionship to thousands of Victorians but also supporting vital conservation efforts and educational Programs.

It is our belief that the government's response wording indicates that they plan to create further regulations that could severely restrict responsible bird

keeping practices across the state. These changes could undermine the work of dedicated hobbyists and organizations that contribute significantly to both animal welfare and community life.

The petition aims to recognise the positive impact of ethical bird keeping and to ensure that any new regulations are developed in consultation with those who are most knowledgeable and passionate about aviculture. By supporting this petition, you are helping to safeguard a valued pastime, protect the interests of responsible keepers, and ensure that future regulations are fair and informed by those with experience in the field.

We encourage you to review the petition and add your support. Your voice is vital in demonstrating to policymakers that this issue matters to a broad and engaged community. Please also consider sharing the petition with your networks, as wider awareness will strengthen our collective efforts.

Together we can make a difference.

Online Petition Link: <https://c.org/JgWcwBCftk>

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Care Australia stands for?
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keep us going.**

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***Become a
sponsor!***

Introducing our new partner, The Pet Industry College

You may have noticed some of our recent communications about our new partnership with the Pet Industry College, designed to make quality training and education more accessible for our supporters.

We speak to Andrew Biggs, CEO to find out a bit more about Pet Industry College and what makes them unique.



Andrew, how was Pet Industry College formed?

Pet Industry College has its origins in Hanrob College, a training provider which was established to support the staff at Hanrob Pet Hotels and lift the standard of care for pets and animals. That was 14 years ago. As our training programs and reputation grew, we expanded organically to help meet the education needs of the public and broader pet industry.

Last year, we rebranded to the Pet Industry College and are now a leading independent provider, which creates pathways for passionate animal lovers to build rewarding careers working with animals.

And what is your point of difference when it comes to education and training?

The pet industry is growing fast, with more than 73% of Australian households now enjoying the companionship that pet ownership brings. This means that more Australians than ever are investing in pet well-being, creating demand for qualified, compassionate animal professionals. Through our nationally recognised training and education for the pet industry, we want to improve industry standards and ensure *exceptional* care and training for animals.

We recognise how important partnerships are in building an industry with the right skills and approach. We're really excited about this new partnership with Animal Care Australia, which builds on others including, Mars Petcare, Assistance Dogs Australia, Pet Industry Association of Australia, Animal Care and Management Australia and the Australian Government. These partnerships ensure we are well-connected with and have a deep knowledge of the industry.

There are many ways for people to learn about working with animals – why should people look to Pet Industry College?

Having built and operated one of Australia's largest pet care companies, Hanrob Pet Hotels, our team boasts decades of hands-on industry experience. Through that experience, we saw first-hand the impact that quality education and well-trained staff have on animal welfare, customer outcomes and business success. That insight inspired the creation of Pet Industry College. Every student that joins us becomes part of something bigger — a movement toward better standards, better care and a better future for animals.

Who is The Pet Industry College designed for – people looking to start a career, or do you also work with experienced animal professionals?

Our training opportunities are broad – including online learning, hands-on training and real-world industry experience for the animal industry. Whether you're embarking on your career, wanting to formalise your existing experience or upskill your team, there are nationally recognised qualifications, short courses and professional development opportunities available.

We don't just train aspiring pet-care professionals. We also provide specialised training for councils, rangers, shelters, animal management teams and others, in the areas of animal handling, safety, local-law and workforce training. And our popular short courses equip trainees with important skills in dog training, first aid, handling, safety, behaviour and pet care.

What do you hope this partnership with Animal Care Australia will achieve?

At the heart of everything we do is a commitment to animal welfare. We believe that better education leads to better outcomes for animals, and we are proud to support the next generation of knowledgeable, compassionate and skilled pet industry professionals.



“ Every skilled hand in this industry makes a difference to the animals in its care. That’s why this partnership means so much to me – Animal Care Australia’s members already bring real passion to what they do, and now we get to back that with genuine, nationally recognised training. Together, we’re raising the bar for skill and professionalism right across the pet and animal care sector. ”

Andrew Biggs, CEO. Pet Industry College

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Training Is for Life: Why Every Dog Benefits from Training and Structure



By: Kylie Gilbert - Dog Representative

When we talk about dog training, it is often associated with puppies. puppy preschool, toilet training, learning to sit, walking on a lead and developing good manners. But training should never be viewed as something that only happens during the first few months of a dog's life.

Every dog can benefit from training, regardless of the age at which they enter our homes.

Whether you purchase an eight-week-old puppy from a breeder, welcome an adolescent dog, rehome an adult dog or adopt through a shelter or rescue organisation, training and appropriate structure are important parts of helping that dog successfully adjust to life with you.

Puppies Need More Than Socialisation

Bringing home a young puppy is exciting, but it is also the beginning of a significant developmental period.

Puppies are learning from the moment they arrive. They are learning what behaviours result in positive outcomes, what their environment means, how people interact with them and what is expected of them.

This is why early training should be about much more than teaching "sit" or "drop".

A young dog benefits from learning how to settle, cope with short periods alone, walk appropriately on a lead, interact calmly with people and other animals, accept handling and grooming, travel safely, respond to their name and come when called.





Just as importantly, they need opportunities to learn that not everything in their environment requires a reaction.

Socialisation should not simply mean meeting as many dogs and people as possible. Quality experiences, appropriate exposure and helping a puppy develop confidence and resilience are far more important than simply increasing the number of experiences they have.

Structure Is Not the Same as Restriction

The word "structure" can sometimes be misunderstood.

Providing structure does not mean removing choice, play or enjoyment from a dog's life. It means creating predictability, consistency and appropriate boundaries.

Dogs need to understand how to successfully live within a human household and community. Clear routines and consistent expectations can make the environment easier for them to navigate.

Structure might include regular feeding and exercise routines, appropriate rest periods, consistent household expectations, planned enrichment and training sessions, boundaries around interactions and teaching a dog how to calmly disengage and settle.

For puppies in particular, this can be extremely valuable.

It can be tempting to constantly entertain a new puppy, take them everywhere and provide continuous interaction. However, learning to rest, spend appropriate periods independently and cope when nothing exciting is happening are also valuable life skills.

We are not simply raising puppies — we are raising the adult dogs they will become.

What About Rescue and Shelter Dogs?

Training and structure can be particularly important when bringing home a dog from a shelter, rescue or rehoming situation.

These dogs are not a single behavioural category. Some may have extensive training and have previously lived successfully in a home. Others may have limited experience of household life, while some may arrive with behaviours that have developed through their previous experiences.



Owners may also have incomplete information about a dog's history.

One of the most helpful things we can provide during this transition is predictability.

Rather than immediately exposing a newly adopted dog to every possible experience, allowing them time to become familiar with their new environment, routine and household can provide an important foundation.

Training can then help establish communication between the dog and their new owner.

It provides opportunities to reinforce desirable behaviours, develop new skills and identify areas where the dog may require additional support.

Importantly, owners should avoid assuming that every behaviour displayed by a rescue dog is necessarily the result of trauma or abuse. Behaviour is influenced by many factors, including genetics, previous learning, environment, health and current circumstances.

Understanding the individual dog in front of us is far more valuable than making assumptions about their past.

Older Dogs Can Learn Too

The saying "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" has probably done older dogs a great disservice.

Dogs continue to learn throughout their lives.

An adult dog entering a new household still needs to learn the expectations and routines of that household. Even a well-trained dog may need guidance because behaviours that were appropriate or reinforced in one home may be different in another.



Training older dogs can also provide valuable mental stimulation and enrichment.

Training should therefore not be considered something we complete.

It is an ongoing conversation between the dog and the person responsible for them.

Training Is About More Than Obedience

Perhaps one of the biggest misconceptions about dog training is that its primary purpose is to create an obedient dog.

Good training has a much broader role.

It helps dogs safely participate in our communities. It develops communication between dogs and their owners. It can provide mental stimulation, build useful life skills and give owners practical ways of managing their dogs in different environments.

A reliable recall, for example, is not simply an obedience exercise — it is an important safety skill.

Being comfortable with handling is not simply about compliance — it can make veterinary examinations, grooming and routine care considerably easier.

Learning to settle calmly is not simply about having a quiet dog — it is a skill that can help a dog participate successfully in everyday family life.

There Is No Universal Training Program

Responsible training also means recognising that dogs are individuals.

Breed and breed purpose, genetics, age, previous experiences, environment, physical health, temperament and learning history can all influence behaviour.

What is appropriate for one dog may not be appropriate for another.

This is particularly important when behavioural concerns emerge. Significant fear, anxiety, aggression or sudden changes in behaviour should not simply be dismissed as a dog being "naughty". Veterinary assessment may be necessary to rule out pain or other medical factors, and appropriately qualified behavioural or training professionals may be required.

Seeking assistance early can prevent owners and dogs from struggling unnecessarily.

A Lifetime Commitment

Responsible dog ownership involves much more than providing food, water and shelter.

Dogs live within a complex human environment, and we have a responsibility to help them understand how to successfully navigate it.

That responsibility begins when the dog enters our care — whether they are eight weeks old, eight months old or eight years old.

Training, appropriate socialisation, enrichment, boundaries, routine and ongoing learning all contribute to developing dogs that can participate safely and successfully within their families and communities.

Most importantly, we should stop thinking of training as something that happens to a dog for a few weeks when they are young.

Training is education — and education should continue throughout a dog's life.



Tree hollows are so important.



Did you know more than 300 species of native Australian animals rely on tree hollows? They use them for shelter, nesting and raising their young?

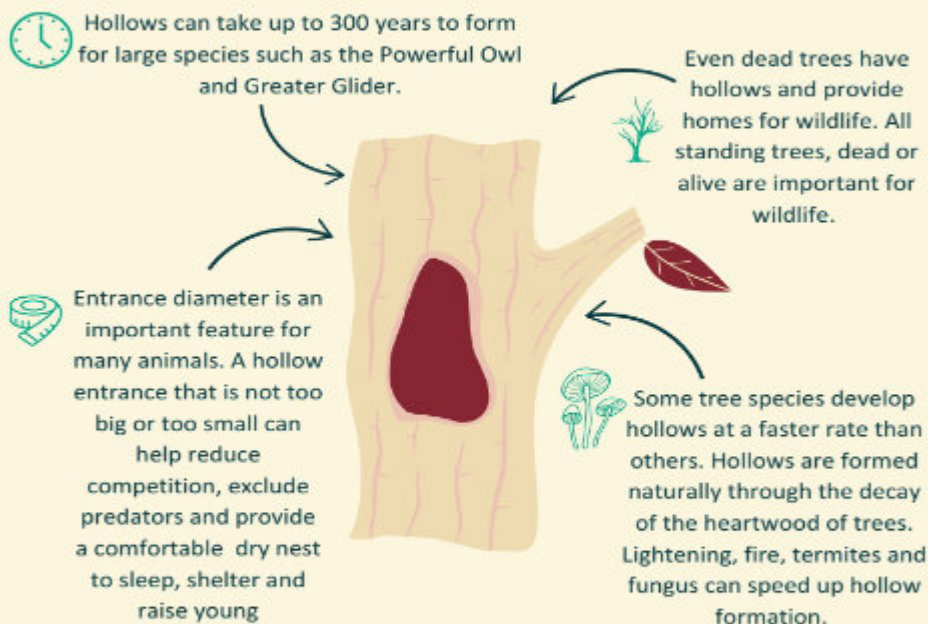
Tree hollows are an important part of healthy ecosystems, but they don't form overnight. Large hollows used by species such as the Powerful Owl and Greater Glider can take up to 300 years to develop.

Next time you're out in nature, take a closer look at hollow-bearing trees and think about the wildlife that may call them home. Observations like these can help build our understanding of local environments and biodiversity.

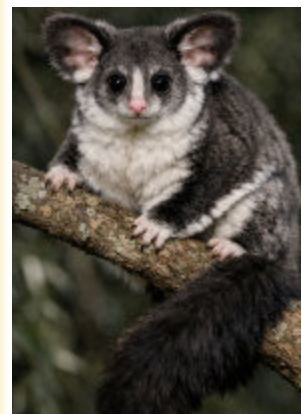
A HOLLOW HOME



More than 300 species of Australian native animals use tree hollows. They form an integral part of woodland ecosystems and are critical to the survival of many native species.



Hollow bearing trees are a critical habitat component for several threatened species and are becoming increasingly scarce. It is important to retain hollow bearing trees, as well as mature trees to ensure we have hollows in the future.



Prepared by Maalke Hofman and Michael Torvo for NESP Project Improving Environmental Outcomes on Conserved Lands. This project is supported with funding from the Australian Government under the National Environmental Science Program's Resilient Landscapes Hub.

<https://nesplandscapes.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Hollows-1.pdf?>



Spring has sprung: Is your pet feeling the itch?

By: Dr. Tanya Phillips- Veterinary

September means longer days, warmer weather and the beginning of spring across Australia. But for some of our pets, it can also mean the beginning of **itchy season**.

Just like us, cats and dogs can react to allergens in their environment. As pollen counts rise and grasses and plants begin to flourish, you may notice your pet scratching, licking or grooming more than usual.

As a Vet, this is something I commonly see as the weather warms. And while the occasional scratch is completely normal, **persistent itching is worth paying attention to**.

What causes seasonal allergies in pets?

Seasonal allergies occur when your pet's immune system overreacts to something in their environment. Common triggers can include:

- Grass, tree and plant pollens
- Certain plants and flowers
- Mould spores
- Dust mites
- Other environmental allergens

Unlike food allergies or some environmental allergies that can cause problems throughout the year, seasonal allergies tend to flare at particular times. For many Australian pets, **spring is when those tell-tale signs start appearing**.

What should you look out for?

Allergies don't always look the way we expect. In pets, itchy skin is often a much bigger feature than the runny nose and sneezing we associate with hay fever in people.

Keep an eye out for:

- Scratching more than usual
- Licking or chewing the paws
- Red, irritated or inflamed skin
- Recurrent ear problems or head shaking



- Hair loss or areas of thinning coat
- Excessive grooming, particularly in cats
- Rubbing the face or body
- Occasionally, watery eyes or sneezing



Cats can be particularly good at hiding skin irritation. Sometimes the first thing you'll notice is **overgrooming, thinning fur or small scabs through the coat**, rather than seeing your cat actively scratching.

Another very subtle sign I often notice in cats is **twitching or rippling of the skin and coat along their back**. It can be easy to overlook, but in some cats it may be an early clue that their skin is feeling irritated or uncomfortable.

And itching isn't simply annoying.

I can think of few things worse than feeling like your skin is crawling, being unable to get comfortable and having your sleep repeatedly disturbed because you're itchy.

Our pets can experience that same discomfort, but they can't tell us what's keeping them awake or making them miserable. That's why persistent scratching, licking, overgrooming or other subtle changes shouldn't simply be dismissed.

Comfort matters. Sometimes these small changes are your pet's way of telling you that something isn't quite right.

Is it definitely an allergy?

Not necessarily.

One of the most important parts of treating an itchy pet is working out **why they're itchy in the first place**.

Fleas and other parasites, skin infections and other underlying conditions can cause very similar signs, so it's important not to assume that an increase in scratching is simply a seasonal allergy.

That's why I recommend speaking with your Vet rather than assuming spring allergies are the culprit.

What can you do at home?

If your pet is prone to seasonal allergies, a few simple changes can help reduce their exposure to environmental allergens.

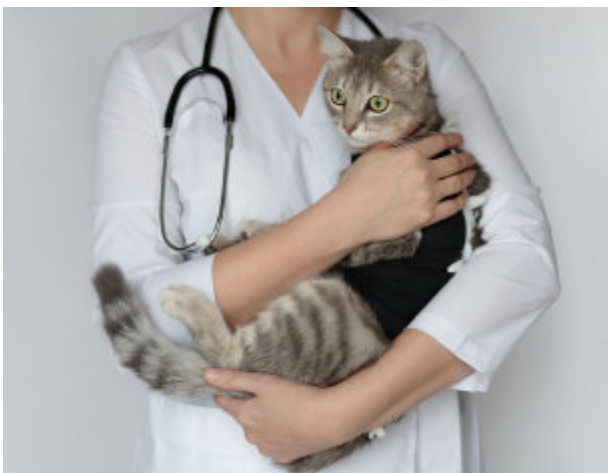
Wiping paws and coats after time outdoors can help **physically remove pollen and other allergens from the coat and skin, reducing ongoing exposure**.



Keeping bedding clean, vacuuming regularly and maintaining consistent parasite prevention are also worthwhile.

For cats, particularly indoor cats, think about the environment close to the ground too. **Dust, fragrances and other airborne irritants can matter**, especially around the places where they sleep, play and toilet.

And if your pet is already itchy, don't wait until they have scratched or groomed themselves raw. Early veterinary attention can help get them comfortable sooner and reduce the risk of secondary skin and ear infections developing.



My Vet tip for spring

Don't dismiss a sudden increase in scratching, licking or overgrooming as "just something they do."

Your pet's skin is telling you something.

With spring just beginning, September is a great time to pay a little more attention to your pet's skin, coat, ears and paws.

Notice what's normal for them. And more importantly, notice when

something changes.

If they're scratching more, grooming differently, twitching their skin or simply don't seem as comfortable as usual, have a chat with your Vet.

Sometimes a small itch is the first sign that your pet needs a little extra help.



Pets In Spring

Australia, pet safety and health in Spring for dogs and cats, involve regular vet visits and parasite prevention for increased outdoor activity, grooming to remove winter coat and check for skin issues, and vigilance against garden hazards like toxic plants, pesticides, bees, and wasps.

Monitor for signs of allergies, such as excessive scratching, and watch for dangers like lawn seeds in ears and eyes, or potential rat poison exposure.

Health & Prevention

Vaccinations & Vet Checks:

Ensure vaccinations are up-to-date, as increased outdoor contact raises the risk of diseases like leptospirosis. Schedule a check-up to discuss heartworm prevention and other health needs for the season.

Parasite Control:

Keep pets on their regular flea, tick, and worming treatments, and treat your home and garden if an infestation is present.

Allergy Monitoring:

Be alert for symptoms of seasonal allergies, such as itchy skin, runny eyes, or excessive licking, which can be caused by pollen, grass, or mould.

Diet & Fitness:

Adjust your pet's diet and exercise routine to match their increased activity levels, and avoid overfeeding to prevent health issues.

Garden & Environmental Hazards

Toxic Plants:

Many spring flowers, such as lilies, daffodils, tulips, and hyacinths, are toxic to pets. Check your garden and remove any harmful bulbs or plants.

Pesticides & Snail Bait:

Avoid using snail bait and other pesticides, as these are poisonous to pets.



Bees and Wasps:

Watch out for these pollinators, as stings can lead to painful swelling or life-threatening anaphylaxis.

Lawn Seeds:

Keep your lawn mowed to prevent grass seeds from lodging in your pet's ears, eyes, or between their toes, which can cause infections.

Rat Poison:

If you've seen rats, check for any rat poison that may have been laid and keep your pets away from the area.

Grooming & General Care

Regular Grooming:

A good brush-out removes excess winter coat, reduces matting, and helps you spot any lumps, bumps, or skin irritation.

Keep an Eye on Tools:

Store sharp gardening tools safely to prevent your pet from them as toys.

For other animals

Spring will bring warmer temperatures so ensure that you maintain an ideal temperature for them by monitoring their environment. For reptiles and fish, use thermometers, aquarium heating and reptile heat lamps. Species of reptile will be coming out of brumation. During this time, slowly increase the heat to match normal Spring temperatures and start to increase their feed.

Birds will be breeding so ensure they have sufficient brush, nesting materials and increased feed, etc as young begin to hatch.

Monitor your small mammals as they too will be looking to breed.

(Brumation is a natural process that allows healthy reptiles to handle stressful environmental conditions such as cold temperatures, drought, and/or extended periods of extreme heat.)



Rat poison isn't selective

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has restricted general public access to second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs), halting over-the-counter retail sales starting March 24, 2026, to protect native wildlife and pets from secondary poisoning.

What Changed in 2026

- Restricted Chemical Products (RCPs): All SGARs are now classified as RCPs, ending open retail sales to everyday consumers.
- Authorized Users Only: Purchase and use are limited to licensed pest controllers and trained, accredited operators.
- One-Year Product Suspension: A formal suspension applies to a wide range of common commercial and domestic SGAR formulations while manufacturers update labels or face cancellation.

What is Still Allowed

- First-Generation Rodenticides: Older, multi-feed bait products remain available under standard guidelines.
- Non-Anticoagulant Alternatives: Products relying on active components like zinc phosphide are not impacted by this restriction.

Readily accessible, anticoagulant rodenticides (rat poison) is commonly used to solve a pest problem. Unfortunately, this poison ends up in the food chain and kills a wide range of native wildlife, with pets also at risk.

Rat poisons are either First Generation or Second Generation. With the following active ingredients, Second Generation rodenticides pose a much higher risk for native wildlife either by direct consumption or by predators e.g. owls eating poisoned animals:

- Brodifacoum
- Bromadiolone
- Difenacoum
- Difethialone

Before buying, knowing the difference can 'make a difference'. Safer alternatives are available. The below websites provide some great information:

<https://owlfriendly.org.au/rodent-control/>

[Birdlife: A Guide to poison alternatives](#)



A Spotlight on ... Michelle Grayson

Secretary & Cat Representative

By Amanda Webb - Media & Sponsorship Representative

What first sparked your interest in cats? Were they part of your life growing up?

One of the first family pets I remember was a cat called Misty, which we got when I was about six years old. I've had a cat in my life ever since. Until 2008, all of my cats were domestics from the local pound or from neighbours whose cats had kittens. In 2008, a four month old purebred Ragdoll came into my life unexpectedly and that is where my journey with purebred cats began. I've also shared my home with a British Shorthair.

How did this interest in cats eventually lead you to Animal Care Australia?

I purchased my first two pedigree cats around 15 years ago. After much research, I settled on the Birman breed, and named them Rambo and Willow. The following year, I attended my first cat show and I was hooked. This led me to apply for a breeder prefix with NSW Cat Fanciers Association. I became a member of their Management Committee and currently hold the position of Treasurer. I am also Club Secretary for three cat clubs and involved in organising eight cat shows each year.

In 2018, I attended Symposium which was in response to concerns about proposed legislation changes, and within months Animal Care Australia took shape. To start with, I was the delegate for NSW Cat Fanciers Association who was a founding member. A couple of years later I was nominated as the Cat Species Representative and Secretary of Animal Care Australia.

What does being the ACA Cat Species Representative mean to you?

Being part of Animal Care Australia gives me the opportunity to advocate and educate about cats - including everything about them from health and welfare to behaviour and cat management.

You've written a lot for the ACE newsletter about feline behaviour – what do you think cat owners most often misunderstand about their cats?

There are many aspects of cat behaviour that owners commonly misunderstand, but I think one of the most common misconceptions about cat behaviour is: "My cat is doing it because they're being naughty." Cats generally aren't behaving out of spite or trying to be difficult. Their behaviour is communication. If we learn to ask: "What is my cat trying to tell me?" rather than: "How do I stop this behaviour?", we often get much closer to the underlying problem.

Cats don't urinate outside the litter tray, scratch furniture or hide because they're trying to punish their owner. These behaviours usually indicate a medical issue, stress, environmental problem or unmet behavioural need.

Michelle Grayson's cats



Photo caption (from left to right): 1. Michelle at age six with her first kitten, Misty 2. one of Michelle's first Birman cats, Willow 3. Michelle's 'Highest Point Scoring Cat' award and certificate for Leon in 2025.

What do you think some of the major challenges are for cat owners in Australia at the moment and how are you addressing these in your Cat Species Representative role?

I think the major challenges for Australian cat owners right now go well beyond simply "owning a cat." There is a growing tension between cat welfare, responsible ownership, wildlife protection, regulation and the cost of keeping pets.

As the Cat Species Representative, I believe it is important to ensure that the voice of the cat is included in conversations about cat management. We need to move away from policies that simply tell owners what they cannot do, and instead provide them with the knowledge, resources and practical support to do the right thing.

Education about responsible ownership, accessible desexing and veterinary care, safe and enriching containment, better understanding of feline behaviour, prevention of unwanted cats entering the pound and shelter system and ensuring

that responsible breeders and cat owners are included in policy development is the key.

I also believe we need to recognise that there isn't one solution for every cat or every community. Owned cats, semi-owned cats, community cats and feral cats have different circumstances and require different management approaches. Ultimately, the goal is to advocate for practical, evidence-based policies that improve the welfare of cats, while also addressing legitimate community and environmental concerns. Education, early intervention and collaboration will achieve far more than punishment alone.

What do you think breeders and cat owners can contribute to cat welfare?

As a member of the Executive Committee of the NSW Cat Fanciers Association, I believe breeders and cat owners have an enormous contribution to make. Responsible breeders have a unique opportunity to influence feline welfare from the very beginning of a cat's life. This means breeding for healthy, well-adjusted cats, making informed breeding decisions, undertaking appropriate health testing, providing excellent veterinary care and educating about responsible pet ownership.

How many cats do you own now? Any other pets at home?

I have 16 cats currently, with a mixture of desexed pets and breeding cats. I don't have any other pets - the ones I have are more than enough!!

What has been one of your most memorable moments from your involvement with and dedication to cats?

One of my proudest moments since I began showing and breeding Birmans was to win the 'Highest Point Scoring Cat' at the NSW Cat Fanciers' Association Cat of the Year awards in 2025 with Leon, who is one of my desexed boys that I bred.





Notice of AGM

Animal Care Australia's Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 9th November 2026 via Zoom commencing at 7.30pm.

Any member wishing to join this meeting will need to RSVP by no later than 5pm Monday 9th November via email: aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au with:

- * The name of the member organisation and the representative of your organisation who will participate on behalf of the organisation
- * Individuals may also attend – but do not have any voting rights – please RSVP your name.

A link for the meeting will be emailed to you shortly before the starting time.

All end of term Committee members (Species representatives) have indicated their intent to re-stand for their positions.

Office-bearers positions are elected by the newly elected Committee.

- Vice-President (Sam Davis)

Committee positions to be re-elected (current representative in brackets)

- Birds (Sam Davis)
- Exhibited Animals (Tracey Dierikx)
- Small Mammals (Rachel Sydenham)

Vacant Committee positions available

- Fish & Aquatic Species Representative

Nominations for positions will open on 18th October 2026. You can download a form here: [Nomination Form](#)

Completed Forms must be delivered to the Secretary by no later than 11.59pm 2nd November 2026. Email: secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au

If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies the candidates nominated are taken to be elected.

AGM Agenda will be provided closer to the time of the AGM via our Members Email system, or by request or upon RSVP.
Michelle Grayson
Secretary

If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Grayson Secretary – Animal Care Australia — secretary@animalcareaustralia.org.au



Pounds, Shelters, Rescues – how does the system work?

By; Tracey Dierikx, Exhibited Animals Representative

In Australia, our system for managing lost, unowned, or surrendered companion animals has roughly 3 “layers”.

1. Pounds
2. Shelters
3. Rescues

Let’s break them down into their primary roles/functions

Pounds:

- Generally the responsibility of Local Government (councils)
- May be owned/run by council, or contracted out to a private business/facility
- Some contracts may also be taken on by those in the “shelter” business
- Entry point of the system for stray/roaming animals, and some owner surrenders
- Animals may be rehomed directly from the pound, or transferred to a shelter or rescue group to maximise rehoming prospects
- Animals rehomed from pounds are not required by law to be desexed before rehoming, but many do desex them first
- Generally have limited space for large numbers of animals – they are supposed to be temporary holding facilities only
- Due to space, longer term animals that have not been able to move out to shelters or rescues may need to be euthanised to make room for incoming strays
- Some animals may be euthanised due to unsuitability for rehoming – aggressive animal or legal reasons

Pound holding periods differ across the states, so it’s best to familiarise yourself with those timeframes in case you need to reclaim a lost pet from the pound.

Shelters:

- Generally are kennel/cattery facilities designed to hold more animals for longer timeframes than pounds can



- Examples of larger shelters are RSPCA and Animal Welfare League
- Some shelters also operate pound services – e.g. Sydney Dogs and Cats Home
- Some shelters also have a foster carer network that can take animals into a home environment during rehabilitation or time waiting to be adopted
- Most shelters only take in animals from pounds or from owner surrenders – unless the shelter is contracted for pound services like the example above
- Animals rehomed from shelters are generally required by law to be desexed before rehoming
- Most shelters are run as a business and employ a number of paid staff as well as using volunteers

Rescue groups:

- Usually volunteer run and operated
- Generally consist of foster carer networks
- Animals rehomed from rescues are generally required by law to be desexed before rehoming
- Some rescues “specialise” – cats, dogs, pocket pets (rabbits, guinea pigs, rodents), certain breeds or breed types, wildlife, livestock, etc
- Rescue companion animal intake can be generally from pounds or shelters or owner surrenders
- Wildlife rescues operate under different legislation to companion animals

So, how do these layers interact with each other?

Pounds are the first place a stray animal should be taken – usually by law – although some states have legislation that may allow cats to roam at will (eg: NSW), so pounds generally will not take them in when brought by members of the public, only if council rangers bring them due to compliance seizures and the like.

Shelters cannot take in strays. They can take in animals from pounds, or from owner surrender only. They primarily tend to rehabilitate animals in their care to be rehomed to the general public.

Rescue groups also cannot take in strays by law – although “colony/community” cats may be a source for cat rescue groups, as these cats don’t have any identified owners. Most rescues source animals from pounds, shelters, and even transfers between rescue groups can happen.

Now for the “interesting” part...

Pounds and shelters are held to specific legally enforceable standards and must show compliance via strict record keeping and reporting to authorities. Facilities



can be audited at regular intervals to ensure compliance also.

Rescue groups are not regulated or held accountable by any legal authority other than those tasked with investigating claims of poor welfare situations. In NSW, the Office of Local Government (OLG) has an “Approved Rehoming Organisations” scheme whereby some rescues have opted into the scheme in return for some regulatory leeway (ability to take animals from pounds with little to no charge, registration concessions, etc) in return for providing reports on their activities on an annual basis. The vast majority of rescues in NSW are NOT registered in the OLG “Approved Rehoming Organisation” scheme... specifically smaller cat rescues who don’t see enough incentives to register and report.

What we really now need to ask is why do the majority of “players” (rescue groups) in the whole system have no legislated accountability for their operations? Rescue groups are the one part of this sector that effectively rehomes most of the animals that find themselves in that system, yet once those animals are in that section of the system, virtually all welfare accountability stops being monitored – unless they opt in to a scheme like the one run by NSW OLG.

Government seems loathe to regulate the rescue industry, as that will cost money that they currently don’t spend, yet the “job” of managing/rehoming lost animals is ultimately the responsibility of government. The fact that rescue groups exist at all is a sad indictment on how seriously government seems to take that responsibility.



Dubia Roach raids and support for trade to continue.

Animal Care Australia sent communications to the Federal Minister and to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment & Water.

While Animal Care Australia supports biosecurity safeguards and compliance with Australia's import legislation, recent compliance and enforcement action by DCCEEW officers attending the premises of domestic *B. dubia* traders has yet again highlighted the inconsistencies between federal and state departments relating to the keeping or trading of exotic species.

Animal Care Australia supports the Draft Risk Assessment Report for the Amendment of the List of Specimens Taken to be Suitable for Live Import (Live Import List) lodged by the Pet Industry Association of Australia (PIAA) for the *Dubia Roach*.

For those who missed our link to our submission, it can be found here:

[Follow-up to the Mayor](#)



Strengthening the Veterinary Workforce and Safeguarding Animal Health and Welfare Consultation Paper

The proposed reforms represent an important opportunity to modernise animal health regulation in NSW.

Recognition of veterinary nurses, improved utilisation of skilled professionals, modern service delivery models and improved complaints processes are positive steps forward.

Successful implementation must recognise that animal welfare outcomes are achieved by a broad and experienced workforce.

A flexible, practical, and inclusive framework will strengthen the veterinary industry, support workforce sustainability, and improve outcomes for animals and the communities that rely on these services.

You can read our full submission here



Read more: <https://www.animalcareaustralia.org.au/aca-library/>



Response to Knox City Council's Local Law Review

Animal Care Australia condemned Council for ignoring our previous submissions to their proposed animal restrictions. Numbers proposed do not align with the animal welfare needs of the different species, especially for birds and small mammals.

Animal Care Australia also highlighted their own Consultation report DID NOT support the proposed animal restrictions and yet they are still going ahead regardless.

Animal Care Australia also called out the false statement in the Report that the changes would not be affecting many of their residents. A blatant misdirection.

Animal Care Australia responded to the Review, the Mayor and all Councillors.

You can read all our submissions in our Library or this latest response here:



Orange City Council reviews the future of the Cook Park Aviary

Animal Care Australia submitted a resolution to Council that would see the existence of the aviary continue. Under the proposal:

The ongoing care and responsibility of the aviary and birds would return via an MOU to the Orange Bird Society to ensure the aviary becomes one of Australia's finest public aviaries.

Council should never have taken responsibility from the Orange Bird Society in the first place.

It has slowly fallen into disrepair and the animal welfare declined during control of the Council.

The Avicultural Community have jointly agreed with our submission.

UPDATE: ACA's Bird Representative attended the Council meeting to speak about our submission. Council voted to maintain the aviary, and ACA will be assisting in the development of the strategy to achieve this.



Read more: <https://www.animalcareaustralia.org.au/aca-library/>



Response to Yarra City Council's draft Local Laws - UPDATE.

Animal Care Australia condemned Council for ignoring our previous submissions to their proposed animal restrictions.

Numbers proposed do not align with the animal welfare needs of the different species, especially for small mammals. The reduction of birds from 15 down to 5 (without a permit) is totally opposed.

Animal Care Australia's response resulted in a meeting with the Mayor and two other Councillors, where we were requested to provide the Council with a proposal that is similar to that in NSW that see restrictions only applied to individuals who disregard the welfare needs of their pets or ignore Council requests to downsize for legitimate reasons.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Despite assurances our concerns would be discussed with Councillors - the new Local Law was approved and will be in force from 1st September 2026. Minutes do not show any record of discussion.

You can read our full submissions in our Library or this latest response here:



Call for the evidence before blaming registered dog breeders..

A recent announcement by the Victorian Government proposes another review of commercial dog breeding laws in the name of improving animal welfare.

Everyone involved in animal welfare wants the same outcome — healthier dogs, responsible breeding and fewer animals entering shelters and pounds.

But before introducing another round of restrictions, Victorians deserve to know one thing:

'Did the last Puppy Farm reforms actually achieve what they promised?'

Before condemning those doing the right thing, tell us what is being done to stop all the breeders now breeding outside of the regulations.

Show us the reports that you promised would be provided in 2022 and are still missing!

Animal Care Australia wrote to the Minister seeking answers before actions. You can read that submission here:



Read more: <https://www.animalcareaustralia.org.au/aca-library/>



Moree Plains Shire Council is introducing an Animal Keeping Policy.

Animal Care Australia acknowledged the Policy was described as a guide for their Officers and was based on improving animal welfare. This is contradicted by the fact it will only apply to animals obtained after the date of the Policy being introduced.

Furthermore, Animal Care Australia strongly recommends Council invest in and implement extensive education of its residents prior to permitting its compliance officers to commence regulating any part of this policy.

→ The numbers proposed for dogs and cats contradicts those permitted by State laws.

→ The limits (tabled) should ONLY be enforced if/when issues with amenity or welfare arise – NOT as the status quo.

Read our full submission on our website:



NSW Inquiry into Dingoes in National Parks.

Animal Care Australia has submitted to the NSW Inquiry supporting protections of dingoes in national parks, and for new regulations to protect and prevent domestic pets and livestock from 1080 poisoning, particularly after aerial baiting.

Animal Care Australia also supported the right of private property owners to protect their properties and called on the government to provide further assistance in this arena to assist them to move towards modern methods of protecting their animals.

To ensure the submission is protected under Parliamentary Privilege, a link to our submission listed on the NSW Parliament website is provided below:



Read more: <https://www.animalcareaustralia.org.au/aca-library/>



Update: Australian Animal Welfare Strategy

Animal Care Australia recently responded to two separate 'key stakeholder' consultations for the upcoming Strategy.

Our consultation was provided to draft proposal of:

- Overarching Strategy Statement
- Companion Animals Chapter – one of six chapters encompassing all animal species.

Acknowledging these were drafts and subject to alterations, Animal Care Australia found them to be non-aspirational and really contain very little strategic merit.

Our expectations have not yet been met.

There will be a public consultation in due course, and when it is released, Animal Care Australia will share the necessary information with everyone.

At that point we will also be able to share the recent consultation submissions publicly.

Stay tuned ... the process is ongoing



The Animal Care Expert

Watch out for our next issue in

December 2026.

Click to read our [previous issues](#)

Read more: <https://www.animalcareaustralia.org.au/aca-library/>



Cats & Spring: What Every Cat Owner Should Know

By; Michelle Grayson, Cat Representative

Warmer weather brings new opportunities—and new risks—for our feline friends

Spring is a beautiful time of year. The days become longer, temperatures rise, gardens burst into life and, for our cats, the world becomes filled with new sights, sounds and smells.

But spring also brings some seasonal challenges for cat owners. Breeding activity increases, kittens begin appearing, parasites become more active and gardens can contain plants that are dangerous to cats.

With a little preparation, however, we can help our cats enjoy spring safely.

Spring is breeding season

The increasing hours of daylight in spring can stimulate reproductive activity in cats.

Un-desexed female cats may come into season, and their behaviour can change noticeably. They may become more vocal, affectionate, restless or determined to get outside. Male cats may also become more interested in roaming and searching for females.

This is one reason spring and early summer can see an increase in unwanted litters.

Responsible breeding requires careful planning. For owners who do not intend to breed, desexing is an important part of responsible cat ownership and can help prevent unplanned pregnancies.

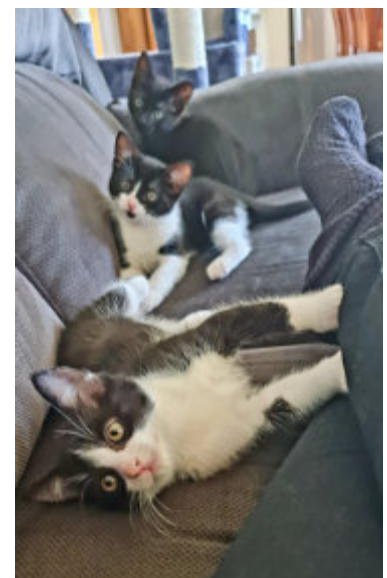
For breeders, spring is also a reminder that breeding should be approached with careful consideration of health, temperament, genetics and the future welfare of both the queen and her kittens.

The arrival of kittens

Spring can also mean an increase in the number of kittens needing homes.

While kittens are undeniably adorable, raising a litter is a significant responsibility. Kittens require appropriate nutrition, veterinary care, parasite prevention, vaccinations, socialisation and plenty of human interaction.

For breeders, the early weeks provide an important opportunity to introduce kittens to a range of positive experiences. Gentle handling, appropriate play, household sounds and exposure to normal daily activities can help kittens develop into confident and well-adjusted cats.





For anyone considering getting a kitten, remember that a kitten is a commitment that can last 15–20 years or more.

The cute kitten stage is only the beginning of a lifelong relationship.

Spring means parasites

Warmer weather can create favourable conditions for fleas and other parasites.

Fleas aren't simply an irritation. A significant flea infestation can cause considerable discomfort and skin problems, and some cats can develop flea allergy dermatitis.

Fleas can also contribute to the transmission of certain parasites.

Regularly checking your cat and discussing an appropriate parasite-prevention program with your veterinarian is particularly important as the weather warms.

Remember that **not every flea product is suitable for every cat**. Some products designed for dogs can be extremely dangerous to cats.

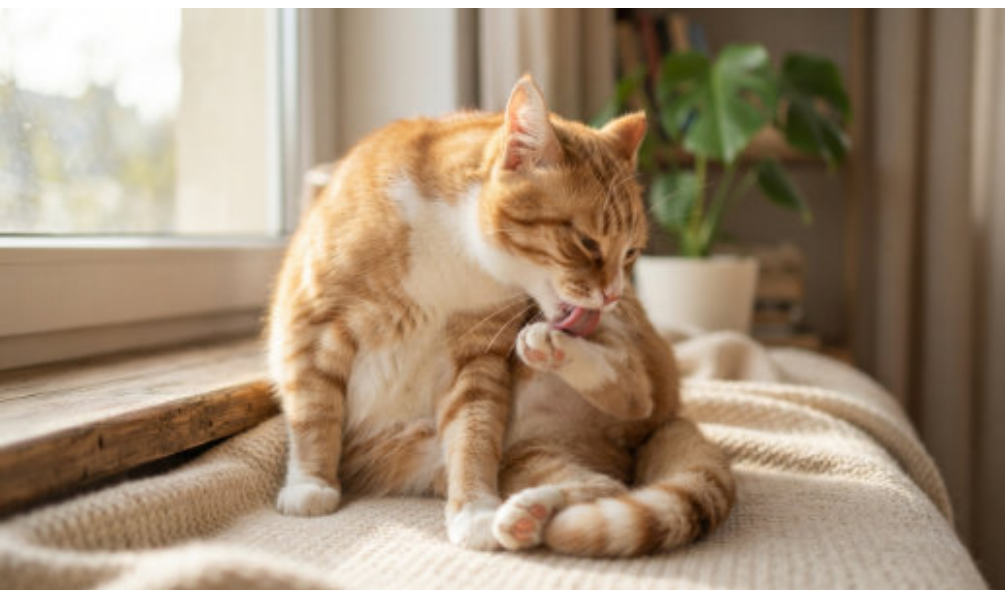
Always use products specifically labelled for cats and follow the directions carefully.

Spring allergies

Spring brings pollen, grasses and flowering plants—and some cats can be sensitive to environmental allergens.

Cats may show signs such as:

- Increased scratching or grooming
- Red or irritated skin
- Hair loss
- Sneezing
- Watery eyes
- Skin lesions
- Recurrent ear irritation



However, these symptoms can have many possible causes, including parasites, infections and food or environmental allergies.

If your cat develops persistent itching, skin problems or respiratory symptoms, don't simply assume it is hay fever. A veterinary examination can help identify the underlying cause.





Beautiful plants can be dangerous

Spring gardening can present another hazard.

Many plants can cause illness in cats, while some are potentially life-threatening.

Lilies are particularly important.

True lilies and daylilies can cause severe poisoning and potentially fatal kidney failure in cats. All parts of the plant can be dangerous, and exposure can occur through eating the plant, pollen or even drinking water from a vase containing lilies.

If you have cats, the safest approach is to **keep lilies completely out of the home and garden.**

Don't assume a plant is safe simply because your cat has ignored it in the past. Curious cats may investigate plants at any time.

Before bringing a new plant into your home or garden, check that it is safe for cats.

Create a cat-friendly garden

A cat-friendly garden doesn't have to be boring.

You can provide safe areas for your cat to explore, hide, climb and observe the outdoors.

Consider providing:

- Cat-safe grasses
- Shady resting areas
- Secure hiding spots
- Elevated observation areas
- Scratching opportunities
- Cat-friendly plants
- Safe areas away from garden chemicals

If your cat has outdoor access, make sure the environment is secure and that they cannot wander onto roads or into unsafe areas.

For cats kept indoors, you can bring some of the sights and smells of spring inside through safe plants, enrichment activities and access to secure windows or cat enclosures.

Watch those curious paws

Spring also means more insects.

Cats are natural hunters and may spend hours watching or chasing insects around the garden.





Most encounters will be harmless, but curious cats can occasionally be stung or bitten.

If your cat develops sudden swelling, difficulty breathing, weakness, vomiting or other concerning symptoms after an insect encounter, seek veterinary advice promptly.

Spring is a great time for a health check

Spring is an excellent opportunity to give your cat a little seasonal check-up.

Take a look at:

Eyes: Are they clear and free from unusual discharge?

Ears: Are they clean and free from excessive wax or irritation?

Coat: Is there any dandruff, matting, hair loss or excessive grooming?

Skin: Are there any lumps, scabs, redness or sores?

Weight: Has your cat gained or lost weight?

Nails: Do they need attention?

Teeth: Are there signs of tartar, bad breath or difficulty eating?

Small changes can sometimes be an early indication that something isn't quite right.



Enjoy spring with your cat

Spring is a wonderful opportunity to refresh your cat's environment and enrichment.

Introduce new toys, create safe places to climb and hide, provide opportunities





for interactive play and spend time enjoying your cat's company.

For breeders, it is a time to prepare carefully for potential litters and ensure that every kitten receives the best possible start.

For pet owners, it is a reminder to review parasite prevention, check the garden and make sure the home remains a safe environment.

And for everyone who loves cats, spring is simply another reason to appreciate the wonderful creatures sharing our homes.

Spring checklist

Before spring gets into full swing, ask yourself:

- ☐ Is my cat's parasite prevention up to date?
- ☐ Is my cat desexed if I don't intend to breed?
- ☐ Have I checked my garden for toxic plants?
- ☐ Are lilies completely absent from my home?
- ☐ Is my cat protected from unsafe outdoor access?
- ☐ Have I checked their coat, skin, eyes and ears?
- ☐ Does my cat have plenty of enrichment and places to hide?
- ☐ If I'm a breeder, am I prepared for the responsibilities of raising a litter?

A little preparation can make spring safer, healthier and happier for our cats. 




Want To Join Our Team?



Fish & Aquatic Species Representative

Experience:

Animal Care Australia is seeking a person who has reasonable advocacy experience and an understanding of the differences between animal rights and animal welfare.

Animal Care Australia is seeking a person who has reasonable experience in the keeping & breeding of fish – tropical, freshwater and marine.

Essential skills:

- Communication skills (oral & written)
- Time management
- Able to work as part of a Team

Desirable – but not essential:

The inclusion of cephalopods in animal welfare legislation will result in Codes of Practice needing to be examined and in some cases to be drafted. Knowledge of keeping these species will be of great benefit.

Having a membership of an Association for the keeping & breeding of fish species or contacts to groups.

Responsibilities include:

- Represent all species specific member organisations to communicate current animal-related community and welfare issues.
- Undertake work including drafting of policy advice, project work of a specialist nature, research and analyse current legislation and policies and prepare associated reports for consideration by our Committee.
- Assist us to work with government, non-government & community stakeholders to ensure policy issues are coordinated and effectively communicated as per community and government expectations.

If you would like to join the Animal Care Australia Team or you know someone who would be ideal for the position please apply via [SEEK Volunteer](#) or email us at: aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au





OMIGOSH! Is Your Horse BLIND??

By; Karri Nadazdy. Horse & Livestock Representative



It is spring and it's the time of year when we start hearing this from the public passing horses in paddocks. The horse is simply wearing a fly mask.

Horse fly masks are made of mesh, similar to a fly screen in your house, with Velcro closures, designed to shield a horse's eyes, ears, and sometimes nose from flies, mosquitoes, midges, dust, and UV light. The Velcro easily comes undone if the horse becomes caught on anything. They are see through, lightweight and allow air flow to keep the horse comfortable, reduce irritation and protect the eyes.

What a fly mask actually does

- **Blocks flies and insects** — especially around the eyes, where horses are most sensitive. Some horses are allergic to the bites of midges, and need to be covered as much as possible.
- **Reduces UV exposure** — many masks offer 70–90% UV protection, helpful for light-skinned horses. Many horses become more sensitive to bright light as they age, and a mask acts like sunglasses, allowing them to enjoy their outside time more.
- **Prevents eye issues** — masks can reduce the risk of conjunctivitis and weepy eyes. It also protects eyes following first aid or vet care following an eye injury.
- **Keeps debris out** — dust, seeds, and grass can irritate eyes; masks act as a barrier
- **Calms sensitive horses** — some horses become irritated when flies swarm their face; masks help them relax.

So, the horse isn't blind? They can be, blind horses certainly do exist, and if they still have their eyes, they may not produce tears as they used to (or may produce more tears and weep, attracting flies). But it's very unlikely that you will encounter a blind horse in a pasture with his friends.

So next time you see a horse with a mask enjoying the outdoors, know that the owner is doing the best by the horse to protect him and keep him comfortable.



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-  Eye off some of Australia's tiniest mantises
-  Marvel at giant millipedes
-  Be dazzled by magnificent butterflies
-  Meet incredible creatures you never knew existed

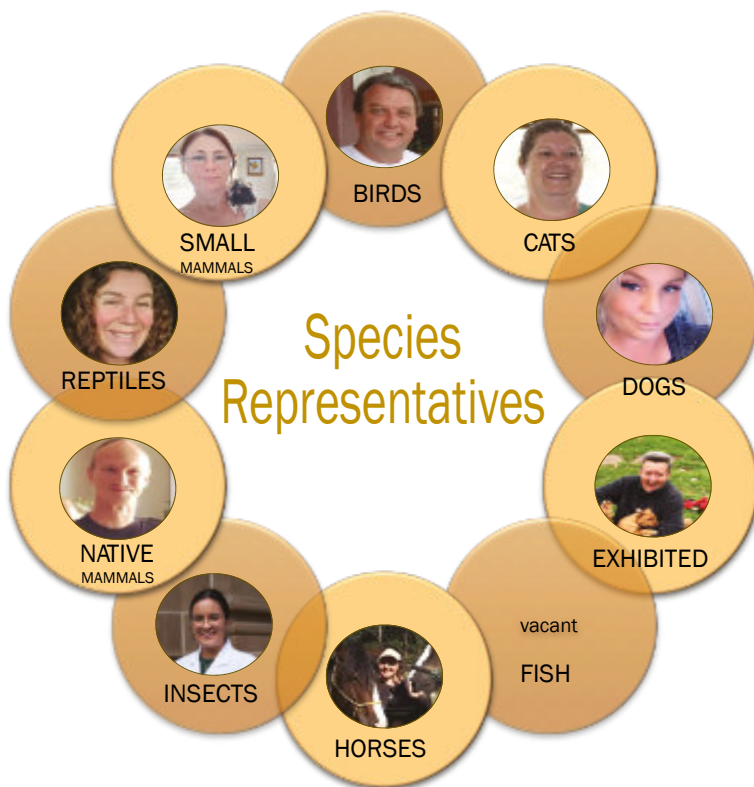
...and so much MORE!

Tickets online through [Wildlife Reimagined](#)



Animal Care Australia

About Us



Species Representatives:

BIRDS: **Sam Davis**

CATS: **Michelle Grayson**

DOGS: **Kylie Gilbert**

EXHIBITED: **Tracey Dierikx**

FISH: vacant

HORSES: **Karri Nadazdy**

INSECTS: **Michaela Storen**

NATIVES: **Michael Donnelly**

REPTILES: **Joanne Payne**

SMALL MAMMALS: **Rachel Sydenham**

Executive:

PRESIDENT & TREASURER:

Michael Donnelly

VICE PRESIDENT: **Sam Davis**

SECRETARY & PUBLIC OFFICER:

Michelle Grayson

The Team:

VETERINARY REPRESENTATIVE:

Dr Tanya Phillips BVSc

SPONSORSHIP & MEDIA COORDINATOR:

Amanda Webb

SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM:

Maya David

Animal Care Australia Inc.

PO Box 314 Macarthur Square Post Office NSW 2560

Website: animalcareaustralia.org.au

Email: aca@animalcareaustralia.org.au

ABN 36 438 686 995

Tax File No 508 268 553



