



## Bellwether Magazine

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# Animal Crackers

M. Josephine Deubler  
*University of Pennsylvania*



# Animal Crackers

## Hot Weather

Heat stroke can develop in just a few minutes when a dog is left in a car with the windows rolled up on hot, humid days. Even if you leave the motor and air conditioning running, something can go wrong. Adequate ventilation, shade and drinking water are essential in hot weather. Treatment of heat stroke requires lowering the dog's body temperature with ice or cool water. Seek veterinary attention immediately.

Fleas and ticks can be a year-round problems but more so in the summer. They can be avoided by monthly use of products developed in the past few years.

Heartworm preventatives should be considered, especially in areas where mosquitoes are prevalent and the dog is outside at night.

Dogs can swim, but should be watched while in the water. Panic or exhaustion can result in drowning. Swimming pools should be fenced and dogs should never be left unattended in pool enclosures.

Up-to-date rabies vaccination is important, particularly because of the danger of exposure to infected wildlife. The usual protocol is vaccination at three months of age and one year later. Thereafter boosters are given every three years or annually, depending on the type of vaccine used. Keep the vaccination certificate available.

"Hot Spots" are skin lesions which may appear when the dog scratches. Reddened, moist areas may appear overnight. Your veterinarian can recommend a preparation to have available at the first sign of trouble. If the problem persists, seek help to determine the cause.

## Common Disorders of Dogs and Cats

A recently published study reported the most common disorders reported for dogs and cats examined at private veterinary practices. The study suggests that nearly 32% of US households owned at least one dog and 27% owned at least one cat. The estimated population of dogs in the United States was 53 million. This was exceeded by 59 million cats. While 85.3% of dog-owning households visited a veterinarian at least once during the year studied, 67.7% of cat-owning households sought veterinary attention.

About 7% of dogs and 10% of cats examined were considered healthy. For cats and dogs, the most commonly reported disorders were dental calculus and gingivitis. Many disorders were common to dogs and cats (flea infestation, diarrhea, vomiting, conjunctivitis). Dogs were likely to be examined for lameness, anal sac disease, pyoderma and other skin problems, arthritis, and otitis externa. Cats were likely to be examined for cystitis, feline urologic syndrome, and loss of appetite.

Of course there are emergency situations which require immediate attention. The conditions listed above represent prevalent disorders where veterinary advice can be helpful. There is a long list of other problems where veterinary attention and advice are needed.

## Popular Dogs

The registration statistics of the American Kennel Club indicate that Labrador retrievers, with 157, 936 individual dogs registered in 1998, can be considered a "most popular" breed. This is the eighth consecutive year that the Lab has been in first place. Golden

retrievers moved into second place, followed by German shepherds and Rottweilers. Poodles were highly favored in the '60s and still are in the top ten. Dachshunds, beagles, Chihuahuas, Yorkshire terriers, and Pomeranians also are high in the standings.

There have been big gains in registration of some breeds such as the Cavalier King Charles spaniel and Jack Russell terrier. The border collie does extremely well in obedience and agility and is becoming quite popular although it is not a breed for everybody.

For those looking for a family dog, it's important to study all the characteristics of a breed before making a decision. Television and movies have produced "fad" breeds which just don't fit into every household.

When a dog is registered with the American Kennel Club, it becomes eligible to compete in dog shows, obedience trials, agility trials and other events. AKC sponsors more than 13,000 dog competitions each year and records the results of competitive events held under its rules, in effect supporting and promoting the sport of purebred dogs.

## V.M.D. or D.V.M.?

There are 27 Colleges of Veterinary Medicine in the United States which are accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association. The University of Pennsylvania grants a V.M.D. (Veterinariae Medicinae Doctoris) degree. Graduates of the other schools are D.V.M.s.

University of Pennsylvania graduates can be recognized by their degree. The V.M.D. has been awarded to 5,527 graduates, beginning with the first class in 1887. The degree has been awarded to 1,605 women.

It might be pointed out that if "Dr." is used before a name, the academic

## Student Government Teaching Awards

degrees are not included after the surname. To be grammatically correct, the name should be John Doe, V.M.D. or Dr. John Doe, never Dr. John Doe, V.M.D.

Another error of semantics is using the word veterinary as a noun (it is an adjective). A veterinarian practices veterinary medicine.

### Manatees

The Florida manatee, with an estimated population of 2,300, is an endangered marine mammal facing extinction because of human activities. The largest human-related mortality factor is collision with boats. Unrestricted development is another serious threat. Federal, state, private and industry groups are working to save the manatee. They are protected by the Endangered Species Act. Boat speed regulations are enforced. Unfortunately, manatees are not considered as "important" as other endangered species such as the great apes, giant pandas, and dolphins. This leads to the question: how important is the manatee's ability to help keep waterways clear by consuming vegetation?

The Florida manatee is a member of the order Sirenia. In folklore, Sirenia were mythical mermaids. Manatees are intolerant of cold weather. They can move between salinity extremes and can live in fresh or salt water. Adults may reach a length of nine to 10 feet and weigh between 900 and 1,200 lbs. They have a low reproductive rate. A calf is produced only one in three to five years. The gestation period is about 13 months and calves are dependent on their dams for about two years. Calves nurse underwater for three to five minutes every one to two hours.

Manatees appear remarkably resistant to natural disease and research indicates this may partially result from remarkable efficient and responsive immune system.

A recent study indicates that manatees can co-exist indefinitely with humans if boating and other regulations are completely enforced and effective. It seems that the manatee has gotten in the way of our lifestyle. ■

Students, faculty and staff gathered at the Academy of Sciences on April 10 for the Annual Student Government Teaching Awards Ceremony. The award recipients are selected by the individual classes. The Norden Award, won by **Dr. Cynthia Ward**, assistant professor of medicine, is presented on the basis of the vote of the entire student body. The Lindback Distinguished Teaching Award is presented by the University to outstanding teachers on the faculty. There is a limited number of these awards, so not every school is lucky enough to have a faculty member selected. This year, **Dr. James Lok**, associate professor of parasitology at the School, was a recipient of this prestigious award.

The Class of 1999 presented its Faculty Award to **Dr. Rebecca Hess** and its Resident Award to **Dr. Patricia Kull**. **Dr. Kim Casey** and **Dr. Chick Weisse** received the Intern Award. The class honored the following technicians: **Jo Graugh**, New Bolton Center; **Tracy Mansueto** and **Joe Rogosky**, Philadelphia.

The Class of 2000 presented its award to **Dr. Cynthia Ward**. **Dr. Tom Van Winkle** was honored by the Class of 2001, and the Class of 2002 presented its

award to **Dr. Olena Jacenko**.

Harcum students presented the Veterinary Technician Award to **Carla Garcia**, Philadelphia, and **Colleen Klein**, New Bolton Center. The nursing staff presented Senior Student Patient Care Awards to **Diane Cordray, V'99**, New Bolton Center, and **Erica Pathum, V'99**, and **Dana Frederick, V'99**, Philadelphia.

**Colleen Klein** received the Gretchen Wolf Swartz Award for Outstanding Nursing at New Bolton Center. **Dr. Bonnie Burke** received the Jules and Lucy Silver Animal Bedside Manner Award.

The Resident's Award for Outstanding Teaching by a Faculty Member was presented to **Dr. Kenneth Drobatz**.

The Interns' Mentor Award was given to **Dr. Matthew Beal**. **Dr. Brett Dollente** received the Boucher Award. The VMSC Commendation Award was presented to **Kathleen Aucamp**, **Richard Aucamp** and **Barbara Grandstaff**.

**Dr. Richard Miselis** was the recipient of the Dean's Award for Leadership in Basic Science Education. The Dean's Award for Leadership in Clinical Science Education was presented to **Dr. Eric Parente**. ■

### Feline Vaccination (continued from page 19)

reactions to vaccines, the AAFP modified its recommendations regarding which vaccines to administer and the frequency at which they should be given. Core antigens were defined as those for which the consequences of infection are severe, public health issues are involved, and infection is prevalent. The AAFP listed the following as core antigens: rabies, feline panleukopenia (FPL), feline viral rhinotracheitis (FVR) and feline calicivirus.

The AAFP classified as non-core antigens: feline leukemia virus (FeLV), feline infectious peritonitis (FIP), chlamydia and *Microsporium canis*, and recommended that FeLV and FIP be given only to at-risk cats.

Based on clinical studies that revealed durations of vaccine immunity to exceed one year, the AAFP recommended that vaccinations not be given annually, as has been the convention. They advocated vac-

inating kittens for the three core antigens, and revaccinating at one year of age and then every three years thereafter (annually in high-risk populations, such as breeding colonies and cats being boarded). The rabies vaccine should be administered at three months of age, one year of age, and then every three years thereafter, unless local law mandates greater frequency. For FeLV, at-risk cats should be vaccinated according to manufacturers' recommendations (generally annually).

The AAFP also made suggestions regarding vaccine type (killed vs. attenuated), composition (single antigen vs. multivalent) and administration route.

Dr. Eigner encouraged owners to learn about vaccination issues and participate in making decisions regarding the vaccination of their cats. "We want people to look at the benefits as well as the risks." J.C.