

# Such a Wee Mite!

Late summer and autumn time conjure up visions of gathering crops and blackberry picking, but it is also the time when the troublesome harvest mites can cause major irritation for our cats and dogs!

The adult mite lives in plants and other vegetation, but the larvae (*Trombicula autumnalis*) are at the stage in their life cycle where they require a warm blooded host to feed from, and this could be your pet!

**Harvest mites are.....**

**Orange/reddish in colour.**

**Very tiny and only just visible to the naked eye.**

**Active during the day in late summer and autumn.**

A highly magnified mite. They are actually smaller than 1mm.



Autumn 2018



The mites go for areas where the hair and skin are thin. Their small hook fangs then pierce the surface injecting a fluid that liquefies cells to enable easy feeding. The larvae will continue feeding for two or three days, increasing in size and causing a considerable amount of itching and discomfort. As your pet scratches and rubs to ease the irritation, skin can become raw and sore, and crusty spots may develop.

### Treatment and Prevention

Products are available to deal with harvest mites and our vet will provide instructions for treating and helping to prevent or reduce reinfestation. During the season regularly check around the ears, face, under the chin, the mouth and areas of the body that have no or very little hair. **If you see your pet excessively scratching and nibbling or notice clusters of tiny orange/red flecks on the skin, call us for further advice.** There are many conditions that can cause skin irritation, so it is always best for your pet to be checked over.

## Look Into Their Eyes

They say the eyes can tell all and our pets certainly do have a way of expressing their emotions with their eyes, showing us happiness at walk time or that 'please give me a biscuit look'!

The shape and position of the eyes varies to allow different fields of vision. Cats are active at night and have slit shaped pupils that dilate very wide in dim or dark surroundings, giving improved vision. Carnivores (meat eaters) eyes are situated more to the front of the face, for a clearer view to judge distances when hunting prey in the wild. Herbivores (vegetation eaters) eyes are on the side of the head and tend to bulge, as they need to see a wide area to escape any predators!

Your pet's eyes are very sensitive complex organs and have three main layers - **Sclera, Uvea and Retina.**

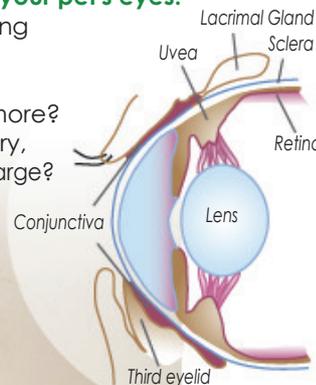
**A third eyelid** protects and acts as a windscreen wiper sweeping away debris.

**The lacrimal (tear) gland**, produces natural tears to keep the cornea moist, cleanse the eye and help to remove dirt.

Unfortunately some dogs develop a condition called **dry-eye** that occurs when the tear glands are damaged by the immune system, resulting in very little or no tear production. Although a permanent condition, there are treatments available to help preserve vision and ease the dryness.

### So look a little closer into your pet's eyes.

- Is your cat or dog blinking excessively, frequently rubbing their eyes or keeping them closed more?
- Do the eyes look red, dry, inflamed or have a discharge?



If you have concerns, please call for an appointment, where our vet can perform a quick and simple test to measure the tear production. If dry-eye is diagnosed, we can discuss treatment to help your pet feel more comfortable and organize regular checks to monitor the condition.



### Harold Hill

01708 344455 01708 386046

Monday to Friday 9am - 6.30pm

Saturday 9am - 12.30pm

### Elm Park

01708 458424 01708 438039

Monday to Friday 9am - 6.30pm

Saturday 4pm - 6.30pm

Sunday 10am - 6.30pm ★

Consultations by Appointment

24 hour 7 day  
Emergency Service

[www.hillparkvets.co.uk](http://www.hillparkvets.co.uk)

01708 344455



# It's whizz bang pop time again!

The firework season is not far away, and the loud bangs and screeches will be heard pretty much throughout the autumn and winter months. As we happily 'oooo' and 'aahh' at the star bursts in the sky and jump at the explosive sounds, sadly for some pets and their owners, it is a particularly distressing time. If your dog or cat is affected by fireworks, now is the time to begin preparations to help make your pet feel more relaxed, comfortable and secure.

## Top tips for the firework season

At least 2 weeks before, create a safe haven for your pet in a room with few windows. Cover all sides of the haven except one. Ensure they can easily get in and out. Place inside a blanket, favourite toys, food, water and treats. Even an item of your clothing is good, so they sense your scent. Encourage your pet to often visit this safe haven, so as to become familiar with the surroundings before the noises start.



This is a hard one - once the noise starts, do not comfort your pet as it only reinforces the worry. NEVER punish or scold a fearful pet. Be happy and provide distractions. Play a gentle game and music to mask the noises outside and offer treats as the aim is to encourage confidence. Use pheromone plug-in diffusers, sprays or collars. Adaptil for dogs and Feliway for cats are available, and emit a comforting and reassuring scent, which is similar to the calming pheromones produced by a nursing bitch to her puppies.



There are also CDs based on the theory of gradually desensitising your pet to loud noises.

Keep pets indoors as it protects cats from the misuse of fireworks, and exercising your dog during fireworks could cause a distressed dog to run off, especially if off the lead.

Ensure your pet is microchipped as identifiable lost pets are much easier to reunite with owners.

**We have plenty of help for nervous pets and advice for their owners, so please do not hesitate to contact us in advance of the firework season.**

# Autumn Hazard

Who can resist a shiny conker when it has just burst from it's prickly case. These jewels of autumn though, can cause our dogs some rather nasty and at times serious affects if eaten, even a blockage!



**Conkers contain the chemical aesculin, which is toxic to our canine friends.** It is found in every part of the horse chestnut tree, even the leaves. So if you have a 'conker' tree in your garden or regularly come across them on your walks, then do please stop your dog from playing with or eating conkers.

If you suspect or know your dog has eaten a conker, contact us for advice or if you notice your dog.....

**vomiting - has diarrhoea showing discomfort or pain restless - becoming dehydrated.**

Dogs are naturally inquisitive creatures, especially when it comes to anything that is possible food, so do keep an eye on your dog when he or she is outside. Treatment is available for conker poisoning, and the sooner this is given, the greater the chance of a happy outcome.

# Bunny's Worries

*If you have or want to own a bunny  
It is quite serious and not all funny  
A responsible owner must take heed  
Of the correct care we really do need*

*For us to live a happy, healthy long life  
Owners should give attention and no strife  
For some the novelty of us may decline  
And for any pet this is a danger sign!*

*We have needs and require good care not bad  
Otherwise our lives will be just forever sad  
As we sit lonely, ignored in a small cold hutch  
No means of escape or feeling a gentle touch*

*In the wild we have friends as we live in groups  
Grazing on grass and running round in loops  
As pets we still need friends, fresh air, the right food  
All these plus more will keep us in a good mood*

*As you read and now feel that we rabbits  
Will enjoyably suit your own daily habits  
Please think... can you give us attention daily?  
Provide a large, safe run so we can play gaily?*

*Vaccinate us regularly against nasty diseases?  
Take us to the vet when we get the sneezes?  
If 'yes' then do give us a happy nice home  
As with love and care we won't feel sad or alone*



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