



# The Vet Centre

WAIPU | RUAWAI | MANGAWHAI | MAUNGATUROTO | RUAKĀKĀ



February/March  
2026



## Welcome

Please join us in welcoming Cam to our team!

Cam is a new graduate veterinarian who will be based at our Waipu Clinic. Born in the United States and moving to New Zealand as a young child, Cam now proudly considers himself a true Kiwi.

Growing up surrounded by household pets in a large rural town in the upper North Island, Cam went on to study Veterinary Science at Massey University in Palmerston North. He is now thrilled to have started his veterinary career in the sunny north.

Cam enjoys working both on farm and in clinic, building strong relationships with clients and embracing all aspects of mixed animal practice.

Outside of work, Cam is looking forward to exploring everything Northland has to offer, with plans to learn to surf and get involved with his local football club.



## Happy New Year!

We hope you had a great summer break, and you are enjoying the warm weather.

### What feels hot to you burns your dog, too.

We often forget that our dogs experience the world through their paws. A simple rule of thumb can help keep them safe: if you can't comfortably touch a surface with your hand, imagine how it feels on your dog's paws. Walk your dog early in the morning or later in the evening when surfaces are cooler. Stick to grassy areas whenever possible.

Enjoy the read and stay safe on the road and in the water this summer.

*The Vet Centre Northland team.*



## MICROCHIP REMINDER:

Just a reminder to check that your details are up to date on the NZ Companion Animal Register <https://www.animalregister.co.nz/>, and next time you are in, get your pet's microchip scanned to ensure it is still working.

If your pet isn't microchipped, book in with our team to get one ASAP. It's quick and can make all the difference in reuniting lost pets who have been missing for weeks, months, or even years with their families.

**\$25 OFF!\***

**any TWO PACKS of BRAVECTO!**

Stop fleas in their tracks – treat the whole household!

Recommended by vets, and pets.

\*A \$25.00 discount (including GST) on the retail price will be provided by the participating veterinary clinic at time of purchasing ANY two packs of BRAVECTO Plus, BRAVECTO Spot-on for Cats, BRAVECTO Spot-on for Dogs and BRAVECTO Chew. This offer may not be combined with any other offer and is available for a limited time.



# Patch the Heroic Guinea Pig

The bravest little guinea pig you'll ever meet

## A Remarkable Journey of Courage and Care

In December 2025, Patch the guinea pig was enjoying an ordinary day when everything changed in an instant. After being attacked by a dog, he suffered severe injuries to his left front leg. His owners acted quickly, placing a plaster on the wound, and Patch – brave as ever – continued eating, drinking, and moving around. But his devoted owners soon realised something wasn't right and took him to the vet for help.

## The First Examination

Despite normal vital signs, Patch's leg was swollen, painful, and visibly injured. He was diagnosed with a dislocation in the small joint above his paw. Because the joint could be partially realigned, two options were presented: splinting or amputation. His leg was splinted as straight as possible, and Patch went home with pain relief and a scheduled recheck.

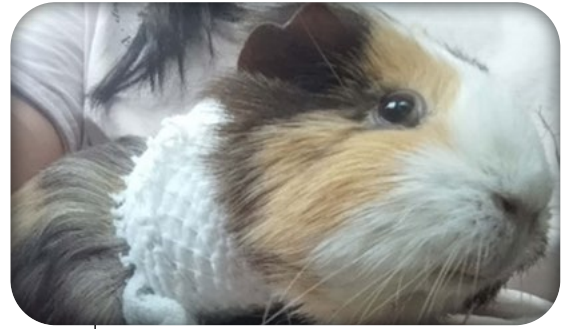
## A Difficult Few Days

At his revisit, Patch had begun to lose weight, though the swelling around his elbow had improved. He remained very painful, but he continued to show incredible bravery – supported by owners who were determined to do everything for him.

A few days later, Patch returned for another follow-up. Unfortunately, his leg was not healing. Swelling had progressed up to the elbow, and his foot was warm to the touch. At this point, the only remaining option was amputation.

## Surgery and Recovery

Patch underwent surgery to remove the damaged leg. He received a combination of anaesthesia and pain relief and was maintained on gas throughout the procedure. The surgery went smoothly, with the amputation performed at mid-humerus. His recovery was uncomplicated, and he went home with antibiotics and pain relief.



Two weeks later, Patch returned to see his favourite veterinary team. His surgical site had healed beautifully, and his sutures were removed without issue.

## Thriving Once Again

Today, Patch is doing exceptionally well. He's back to enjoying warm summer days, exploring, eating, and living life to the fullest – even on three legs. His resilience has been inspiring to everyone who has met him.

## A Heartfelt Thank You

Patch's courage – and the unwavering dedication of his owners – touched all of us deeply. We are grateful to his family for allowing us to share his journey. Stories like Patch's remind us why we do what we do.

# 20% OFF Royal Canin Puppy & Kitten Dry Food



\*Offer ends 31st March 2025. Discount applies to Royal Canin Puppy and Kitten dry food skus only. While stocks last.

# BlackHawk® SAVE \$20 on Black Hawk® Puppy and Dog 7-12kg bags



Available in Feb - Mar 2025 while stocks last.  
© Black Hawk and other associated trademarks are registered trademarks of Masterpet Australia Pty Ltd.



# Something Fishy:

## Jess's Unexpected Discovery

Living in a coastal town has plenty of perks; sandy walks, lunchtime swims, and endless fun. But for one curious Border Collie puppy named Jess, seaside living recently led to a not-so-fun visit to the vet.

Jess had only just recently been adopted when her new family quickly noticed she wasn't herself. After a couple of days of vomiting, refusing food, and becoming lethargic, she came into The Vet Centre looking rather miserable. On examination, she was subdued and slow to respond, her third eyelids were lifting up and more visible than normal, and she had two firm masses in her abdomen. Naturally, our suspicion of a foreign body quickly grew.

Stabilisation with IV fluids and pain relief was rapidly initiated, and a full series of abdominal radiographs was taken. X-rays revealed the surprise: two small, round, metal objects sitting in Jess's stomach. The culprits? Lead fishing sinkers – an uncommon, but unsurprising finding in dogs living near the coast.

### Lead sinkers are especially problematic because:

- they're small and easy for puppies to swallow
- they're tempting to chew, and
- unlike sticks or stones, lead can cause toxicity while sitting in the stomach.

Because the sinkers were lodged near the pylorus (stomach exit), surgery was recommended. Jess was admitted for fluids, pain relief, and anti-nausea medication before heading to surgery the following day.

Both sinkers were successfully removed, though Jess's stomach lining was understandably quite irritated after hosting her heavy metal snacks. She had a slower recovery initially, but with good supportive care, she steadily improved.

Thanks to Jess's quick-acting owners, we're delighted to report that Jess is now doing really well. Her stomach has healed, her appetite is back, and she's returned to her full puppy self - curious, energetic, and very much into everything!



Two radio-opaque (white) foreign bodies in Jess's abdomen in the region of the pyloric outflow (stomach outflow).

### A seaside safety reminder

In coastal towns like ours in the Kaipara district, we regularly see dogs come in after swallowing:

- fishing hooks
- sinkers
- bait
- washed up fish (e.g. jellyfish, puffer fish)
- shells
- and other beach "treasures."

### If you fish or spend time near popular fishing spots:

- store tackle securely
- check pockets and bags after beach trips
- and keep a close eye on dogs, especially during their "try everything once" stage.

If your dog is vomiting, off their food, lethargic, or just not quite right – particularly after a beach visit – it's always worth having them checked.

Jess's story could have ended very differently, but thanks to quick action, attentive owners, and a bit of surgical teamwork, she's now back to enjoying life in her new home.

**The culprits! Two lead-based metal sinkers that are now on display at Jess's home!**





# Karaka Berries

## and the Danger to Our Beloved Pets

### What Are Karaka Berries?

The Karaka tree is a large native New Zealand tree with thick, leathery, dark green leaves. It grows widely across the country, especially in the North Island. While its berries are a favourite food of the kererū, they are highly toxic to dogs.

#### Karaka berries:

- Oval-shaped
- 2–4 cm long
- Green before ripening
- Turn bright orange from January to April
- Fall to the ground where dogs can easily find them

The kernel inside each berry contains karakin, a potent neurotoxin. Even berries that have been on the ground for months can remain dangerous.

### How to Protect Your Dog From Karaka Berry Toxicity

#### Minimising the Risk

- Avoid walking your dog in areas with Karaka trees
- Keep your dog on a short lead near known trees
- Distract them with treats or toys when passing risky areas
- Do not walk directly under Karaka trees
- Ensure anyone who walks your dog knows to avoid these areas.

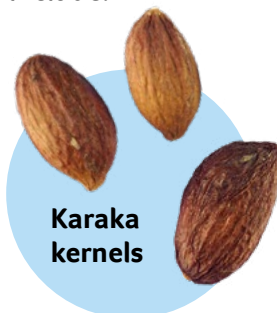


### Symptoms of Karaka Berry Poisoning

Symptoms may not appear for 24–48 hours after ingestion. Even if your dog seems normal, seek veterinary help immediately if you suspect they've eaten a berry.

#### Possible signs include:

- Vomiting
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Seizures
- Collapse
- Paralysis
- Death.



Karaka kernels

### Treatment Options

If ingestion occurred within the last two hours, a vet may induce vomiting to reduce toxin absorption.

If more time has passed, your dog will likely need hospitalisation and supportive care. There is no specific antidote for karakin, and sadly, some animals do not recover even with treatment.

### Prevention Is Key

Avoiding exposure is the best way to keep your dog safe.

If you suspect your dog has eaten Karaka berries, contact your nearest vet immediately.

**SAVE**

**\$10 off**  
on Trouble & Trix  
15L bags of litter!\*

\*Offer available during January - February 2025. While stocks last and excluding Royal. See A0201 100. © Trouble & Trix is a Registered Trade Mark. © Resonance Corporation Ltd.

#### Waipu Clinic

53 The Centre  
Waipu  
P 09 432 0693

#### Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.00am-5.00pm  
Saturdays:  
9.00am-12.30pm

#### Ruawai Clinic

23 Jellicoe Road  
Ruawai  
P 09 439 2506

#### Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.00am - 5.00pm  
Saturdays: CLOSED

#### Mangawhai Clinic

36 Moir St  
Mangawhai  
P 09 431 4535

#### Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.00am - 5.00pm  
Saturdays:  
9.00am - 12:30pm

#### Maungaturoto Clinic

184 Hurndall St  
Maungaturoto  
P 09 431 8318

#### Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.00am - 5.00pm  
Saturdays: CLOSED

#### Ruakākā Clinic

385 Marsden Point Road  
Ruakākā  
P 09 433 4916

#### Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.00am - 5.00pm  
Saturdays: CLOSED