



The Vet Centre

WAIPU | RUAWAI | MANGAWHAI | MAUNGATUROTO | RUAKĀKĀ



June/July
2026

June and July bring colder days and a good reminder to look closely at our senior pets and how we can keep them comfortable and thriving through winter. In this issue, we share practical ways to support ageing pets, a remarkable teamwork story involving a lion's eye surgery, winter toxin risks to watch for, plus team updates and recent training.

Enjoy the read & thank you for your support.

The Vet Centre Team



Celebrating Our Senior Pets



As our beloved pets grow older, their needs begin to change – but with the right care and attention, our senior companions can continue to live happy, comfortable, and fulfilling lives for many years.

Pets age much faster than we do, meaning health changes can happen gradually and sometimes go unnoticed. This month, we're shining a spotlight on the importance of senior pet care and how regular monitoring can help keep our older furry friends feeling their best.

When Is a Pet Considered "Senior"?

Generally:

- Dogs are considered senior from around 7 years of age (earlier for large breeds)
- Cats are considered senior from around 8–10 years of age.

Every pet ages differently, but routine health checks become increasingly important as they get older.

Common Changes Seen in Senior Pets

Some signs of ageing can be subtle and are often mistaken as "just getting old," including:

- Slowing down on walks or less interest in exercise
- Stiffness or difficulty jumping/climbing
- Weight gain or weight loss
- Increased thirst or urination
- Changes in appetite
- Cloudy eyes or reduced hearing
- Bad breath or dental disease
- Sleeping more
- Behaviour changes or confusion.

Many of these changes can actually be linked to treatable medical conditions such as arthritis, dental disease, kidney disease, diabetes, thyroid disease, or cognitive decline.

Why Senior Health Checks Matter

Regular senior wellness exams allow us to identify health concerns early – often before obvious symptoms appear. Early detection means earlier treatment, improved comfort, and often a better quality of life for your pet.

Senior health checks may include:

- Full physical examination
- Weight and body condition monitoring
- Blood and urine testing
- Blood pressure checks
- Dental assessments





- ← Arthritis and mobility evaluations.

Supporting Your Senior Pet at Home

There are many simple ways you can help your ageing pet stay comfortable:

- Provide soft, warm bedding
- Use ramps or non-slip mats if mobility is reduced
- Keep exercise gentle but consistent
- Feed an appropriate senior diet
- Maintain regular dental care
- Monitor for any changes in behaviour, appetite, thirst, or mobility.

Growing Older Together

Our senior pets have spent years giving us unconditional love, companionship, and loyalty. As they age, they rely on us to help keep them comfortable and healthy through their golden years.

If your pet is entering their senior years, we'd love to help support them with a tailored health plan and regular wellness checks. Please contact the clinic if you have any concerns or would like to book a senior health assessment.



Team News

Welcome:

Zedina Sedgewick

has joined the Mangawhai Nursing Team. Zedina is a Swiss/Kiwi born in Switzerland but has lived the majority of her life in Hawke's Bay until she moved to Auckland to study veterinary nursing. She enjoys sharing knowledge about animals with people and being the voice for the patient. Zedina has many interests, including gardening, arts & crafts, gaming, and spending time with her cats.



Jess Spice

has joined the Mangawhai Nursing Team. Jess was born and bred in rural Whangārei and has 10 years of nursing experience. After returning from working at a specialist hospital on the Gold Coast, she is looking forward to bringing some of this knowledge to the team. One of her favourite parts of nursing is diagnostic imaging and lab sampling. In her spare time, Jess enjoys gaming, reading, being creative and staying active.



Genevieve

Jamieson has joined the Waipu & Ruakaka teams, where she will do a mixture of nursing, reception and on farm tech work.. Genevieve is originally from Hikurangi and now lives on a lifestyle block in Maungakaramea. She is really excited to join such an amazing team that she got to know over her nursing placement last year. She is a hobby gardener at heart with a strong passion for farming and animals, which has naturally shaped the path she is pursuing.



Sharron Revell

has joined the Maungaturoto Customer Service Officer Team. Sharon lives with her husband Scott on their small, off-grid, lifestyle block with their two dogs, Jake and Ruby, a few chooks and a wee herd of cows. They moved to Maungaturoto about 5 years ago from the Waikato, looking for somewhere a bit warmer in the winter, and a better-quality life. They love the lifestyle here and the awesome community.



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20% OFF Royal Canin Mobility Dry Diets



*Discount applies to Royal Canin Mobility C2P+ dry and Royal Canin Mobility Cat food skus only. Offer ends 31st July 2026. While stocks last.



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3 MONTHS
FLEA & TICK
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IN ONE SPOT-ON

Purchase a pack of Bravecto Plus for cats and you could win 4 free packs (same size).

*This is a promotion run by the clinic displaying this promotion. Refer to staff for full terms and conditions, including promotion period. ACVM No: A011446 Bravecto Plus.



← **Dr Amy Butterworth** has joined the Mangawhai Veterinary Team. Amy graduated from Massey University in 2023 and has worked in Warkworth for the past 2 years. She has moved to Mangawhai with her partner, Kallum, and cat, Yogi, and is very excited to be part of the Mangawhai community! Amy grew up in Auckland but spent a lot of time in Northland. Outside of work, she enjoys baking, gardening and spending time outdoors. She is looking forward to exploring the area more.

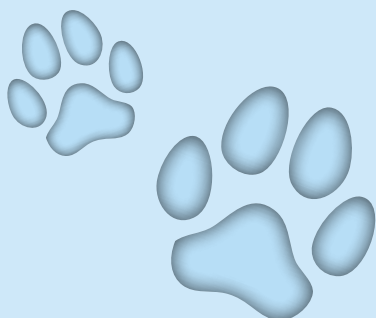


Farewell

Dr Rosie Gillis, who came to us on a one-year fixed-term stint, and lucky for us, never left. She's been an absolute powerhouse on the Waipu and Ruakaka teams and has worked across the business, supporting anyone she can. She will be finishing up at the end of July.



Emily Stevens, the wonderful, helpful, and smiley veterinary nurse, is leaving the Mangawhai team and heading back down to the Waikato to be closer to family. This will leave a big hole, as we have watched her flourish over the last 14 months into a capable nurse and reliable team member who consistently delivers high-quality patient care.



CPD

In April, our Veterinarians and Veterinary Nurses took part in an exciting and hands-on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) day focused on emergency and critical care. The team spent the day deep-diving into patient triage, emergency anaesthesia, and both basic and advanced life support for our small-animal patients, including the latest updates in CPR training.

Led by the wonderful Marcia Fletcher from The Pink Stethoscope, the day was not only incredibly educational but also a lot of fun for the entire team. Through practical workshops and real-life emergency scenarios, our staff gained valuable new skills, refreshed existing knowledge, and built even greater confidence in handling emergencies.



Ongoing education is extremely important to our clinics, helping ensure we continue to provide the highest standard of care possible for your pets when they need us most. We are so proud of our team for their enthusiasm and dedication to learning and improving every day!



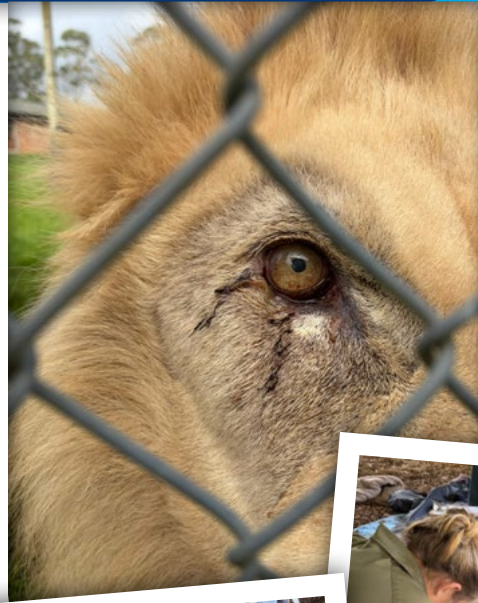
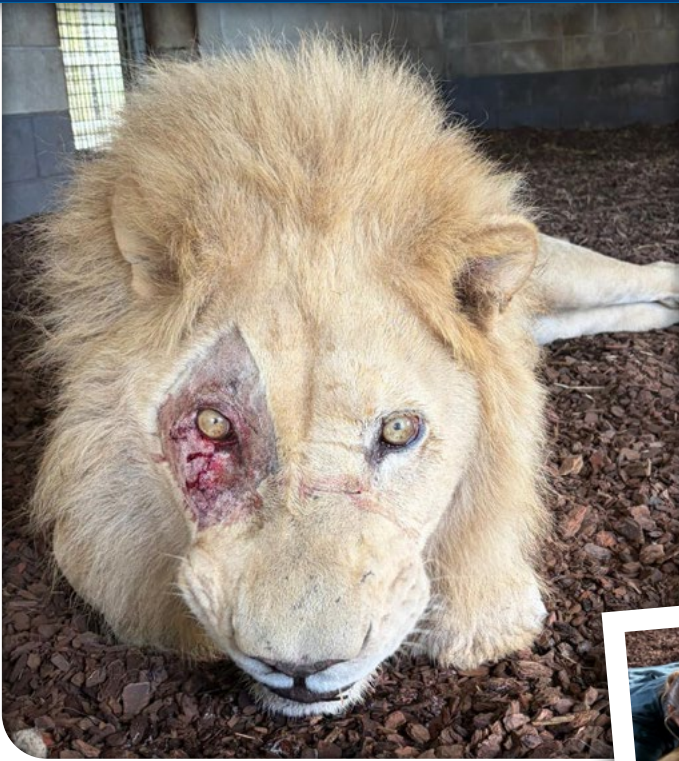
BUY BRAVECTO FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN* A YEARS SUPPLY!



3 MONTHS FLEA & TICK PROTECTION IN ONE CHEW

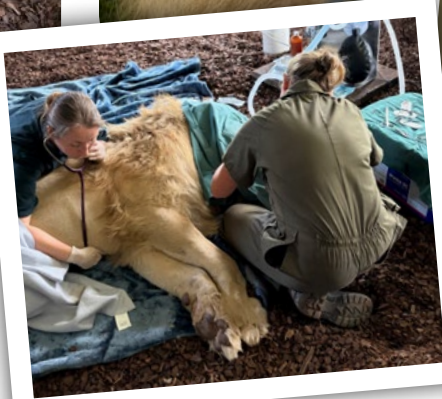
Purchase a pack of Bravecto chew for dogs and you could win 4 free packs (same size).

*This is a promotion run by the clinic displaying this promotion. Refer to staff for full terms and conditions, including promotion period. ACVM No: A011019 Bravecto chew.



Dr Emily Buswell
BVSc, Veterinarian,
Waipu & Ruakaka

Surgery to Remove Growth from Lion's Eye



Recently, our team had the privilege of caring for one of the lions at the local lion park, where we routinely assist with the animals' veterinary care. The patient required diagnostic radiographs and surgical removal of an ocular (eye) mass – a case that showcased not only the variety of work we do but also the incredible teamwork behind the scenes.

From the outset, the procedure relied on a coordinated team effort. Veterinarian Sarah Briggs expertly managed the immobilisation and logistics required to safely prepare the lion for surgery, while our veterinary nurse, Jessie Beeler, carefully monitored and managed the anaesthetic throughout the procedure. Once everything was in place, Veterinarian Emily Buswell performed the delicate surgery to remove the mass, followed by an H-plasty advancement flap to close the site.

Cases like this are a wonderful reminder of the diverse skills within our team and the collaborative approach that underpins so much of what we do. From diagnostic imaging and anaesthesia to surgery and patient care, every person played an important role in achieving a successful outcome.

It's opportunities like these that make our work both challenging and incredibly rewarding – and we're excited to share a few photos from the day in this edition as well.



Congratulations

to Aimie Sands, Lead Vet Nurse at our Waipu clinic, who recently got married.



Winter Pet Toxin Awareness

Keeping Your Pets Safe This Season



As the weather cools, a few hidden seasonal dangers become more common for our furry family members. Winter can bring an increase in accidental poisonings and toxic exposures, particularly from products used around the home and garden.

One of the biggest winter risks we see is rat bait poisoning. As rodents move indoors in search of warmth and food, many households place rat or mouse bait around their property. Unfortunately, these products are highly toxic to pets and can be extremely dangerous if accidentally eaten.

Common Winter Toxins to Watch Out For

Rat & Mouse Baits

Rodenticides are often flavoured to attract rodents, which unfortunately can also attract curious dogs (and occasionally cats). Depending on the type of bait, symptoms may include:

- Bleeding or bruising
- Weakness or collapse
- Tremors or seizures
- Vomiting
- Difficulty breathing.

Symptoms are not always immediate, so if you suspect your pet may have eaten bait, contact your veterinary clinic immediately – even if they seem completely normal.

Antifreeze

Antifreeze has a sweet taste that pets may lick from driveways or garage floors. Even a very small amount can cause severe kidney failure and can be fatal if untreated.



Signs can include:

- Vomiting
- Wobbliness
- Excessive drinking or urination
- Lethargy.

Slug & Snail Bait

These products are commonly used during wet winter weather and can cause severe neurological signs, including tremors and seizures.

Human Cold & Flu Medications

As cold season arrives, remember that many human medications are toxic to pets – especially paracetamol, ibuprofen, and decongestants. Never give medications to your pet unless specifically instructed by your veterinarian.

Tips to Keep Pets Safe This Winter

- Store all chemicals and medications securely out of reach
- Use pet-safe alternatives where possible

- Supervise pets outdoors
- Clean up spills immediately
- Keep pets away from garages, sheds, and bait stations.

What To Do If You Suspect Poisoning

If you think your pet may have ingested something toxic:

1. Stay calm
2. Remove access to the toxin
3. Contact your veterinary clinic immediately
4. If possible, bring the packaging or a photo of the product with you.

Early treatment can make a huge difference and may even save your pet's life.

If you ever have concerns about something your pet may have eaten, please don't hesitate to contact your clinic for advice.



BE IN TO WIN a Frank Green pack

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- 1x Poo bag holder
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Waipu Clinic

53 The Centre
Waipu
P 09 432 0693

Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.00am-5.00pm
Tuesdays until 7.00pm
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
Thursdays until 7.00pm
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