

# WINGRAVE

## VETERINARY SURGERIES

### NEWS

### Winter Birds



The depths of winter are tough for our garden birds. Food is scarce, the cold weather punishing and even water can

be hard to find during a freeze. Putting food outside will really help get them through these long months before the Spring arrives.

Different species will prefer to eat from different feeding stations. The little Sparrows and Tits like the hanging feeders, ground feeding is preferred by Blackbirds, Robins and Thrushes (but avoid this if you have cats!) but most will enjoy the traditional, flat bird table. Place them in areas where the birds have a good view of the whole garden to watch for predators and within a couple of feet of a hedge or tree so they have somewhere to escape to if they feel threatened.

A variety of seeds and nuts will be appreciated. Peanuts will be popular in the winter as they are full of fats but only use plain ones especially for birds, they won't appreciate salted or roasted! Talking of fats, fat balls are an excellent winter food and will always be popular. If you are using bought ones, always remove the nylon mesh first as it can trap and injure the birds. Finally, do consider mealworms, loved by Robins and Wrens, and if you have any old fruit, Blackbirds will love to peck at them if you simply leave it on the garden (again, not if you have cats!)

A water bath will also be popular, both for drinking and bathing, which birds will do even in very cold weather to keep their feathers clean and healthy. Ensure it doesn't freeze by breaking the ice every morning, or you can buy bird safe anti-freeze to add to the water.

### Festive Fun at Wingrave

All our vets are starting to look forward to the festive season and all their favourite things this exciting time of year has to offer. Most importantly and topping the list is spending time with their families but also includes decorating the tree, Christmas TV specials, carol singing, Christmas shopping, mulled wine and of course a mince pie (or two!)

We also asked our vets for their Christmas loves and hates, with Liz topping our chart as the biggest lover of all things Christmas! Who do you agree with?

	Snow	Sprouts	Christmas Jumpers	Christmas Pudding
Nic	Love	Love	Hate	Hate
Michael	Love	Hate	Hate	Love
Liz	Love	Love	Love	Love
Sarah	Love	Hate	Love	Love
Wanda	Hate	Love	Hate	Hate
Francesco	Love	Hate	Love	Love
Heather	Love	Hate	Love	Hate
Ejaz	Hate	Love	Love	Love
Ilka	Love	Love	Hate	Hate
Birgith	Love	Love	Hate	Hate
Ann	Love	Love	Hate	Love

### MicroChipping: Each year more than 100,000 dogs stray

This has prompted the Government to introduce compulsory Microchipping to help reunite owners with lost or stolen pets and to protect the welfare of dogs by promoting responsible dog ownership. From the 6th April 2016 all dogs must be microchipped and registered to an approved database. The new regulation also requires owners to keep their contact details up-to-date at all times. Owners who fail to meet these new requirements could face a £500 fine.



At Wingrave, our vets can advise you as to the best age to undertake this procedure for your pet and can issue you with all the relevant paperwork in order to confirm the microchip number and register your contact details with the microchip company.

Is your Dog Microchipped? If not, visit our website today and download a half price voucher.

### Sutton Surgery Christmas Opening Times



- Christmas Eve – 8am – 5pm
- Christmas Day – Closed
- Boxing Day – Closed
- 27th Dec – 9am – 12noon
- 28th Dec – 9am – 12noon
- 29th Dec – 8am – 9pm
- 30th Dec - 8am – 9pm
- New Years' Eve – 8am – 5pm
- New Years' Day – Closed
- 2nd Jan – 8am – 5pm
- 3rd Jan – 9am – 12noon
- 4th Jan – Back to normal

For full details of our branch opening times, please see our website or speak to a member of staff for their festive hours.



Sutton Surgery: Tel: 020 8642 9100 • Chipstead Surgery: Tel: 01737 558133  
Epsom Surgery: Tel: 01372 720066 • Horton Surgery: Tel: 01372 741598

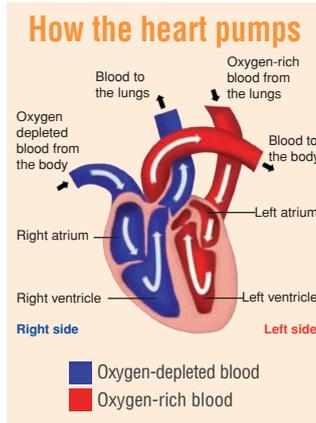
Email: [enquiries@wingravevets.com](mailto:enquiries@wingravevets.com) • [www.wingravevets.com](http://www.wingravevets.com)



## Ticker trouble – heart disease in pets



The heart is a busy organ! In the lifetime of the average animal, it beats about 1 billion times, and pumps an average of 4.5 litres of blood around the body of a dog every minute. Located in the middle of the chest, the heart is split in half by a muscular wall. The right side of the heart receives low-oxygen blood from the body and pumps it to the lungs, where it gets rid of waste gas (carbon dioxide) and receives fresh oxygen from the air. Blood then travels to the left side of the heart, where it is pumped under high pressure to the tissues of the body, to carry oxygen and nutrients for use by other organs (see diagram right).



Winter, more than any other season, brings its own challenges and potential hazards to our pets.

Older animals, especially if they are arthritic, will really feel the cold and can be noticeably stiff. If they are already on medication, have a chat to us about increasing or altering their doses to make them more comfortable. If they are not on any treatment, this is often a good time to start.

If you do manage to get out and about on the freezing days, watch out for snow and grit. The grit can cause nasty sores in your dog's paws and the snow can ball up into painful lumps of ice. So avoid both if at all possible and give their feet a good wash after walks.

Also don't forget about smaller pets who live outdoors. Make sure rabbits and guinea pigs have well insulated hutches, plenty of bedding to snuggle down in and check their water twice daily to ensure it hasn't frozen. However, do let them out on the finer days to stretch their legs. Their coats will grow more than thick enough to keep them warm and they will appreciate some fresh air!

Of course the best thing about winter is Christmas! However, many families' festivities are curtailed by pet related mishaps! Avoid any dramas by keeping decorations well out of your pet's reach; baubles and tinsel can be irresistible but extremely problematic if swallowed or smashed. The tasty treats we enjoy are not so good for our pets, so keep them out of reach! Chocolate is very toxic, especially the plain varieties and raisins can cause serious kidney damage so keep the mince pies and Christmas puddings to yourselves!



## Rabbits: a mite-y problem!



Whilst fleas tend to cause a myriad of problems in dogs and cats, **mites** are often a common problem in rabbits. It can be difficult to spot them but the symptoms they cause tend to be quite obvious.

**Fur Mites:** The most common mite found on rabbits is called *Cheyletiella* but it is much easier to say 'Walking Dandruff', its common name! This is because the mite is quite large and if you comb them out onto a dark surface, although they look like skin flecks, you can see them moving. They cause a thick scurf to form on the skin, patchy hair loss and they can be very itchy; affected rabbits can scratch themselves raw. It is often not possible to identify where the mites came from but it is often a bad batch of hay or bedding. Also, there is a variation in how sensitive rabbits are to the mite and often one in a group will be very badly affected but the others fine.

The treatment is a spot-on preparation, applied every fortnight for 6 weeks to fully clear the infestation. If there is skin damage, antibiotics may also be required. You should also clean out the hutch thoroughly after each treatment.

**Ear Mites** can cause very severe problems in rabbits. Infestations can be in one or both ears and the main clinical signs are a thick, flakey crust in the ear and a great deal of discomfort. These can be treated using spot-on drops, injections or ear drops.

So – if your rabbit is showing signs of scratching or itching, please see us for a check-up!



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