

TELL TAIL

THE AFRICAN DREAM



LICENSE
TO BARK

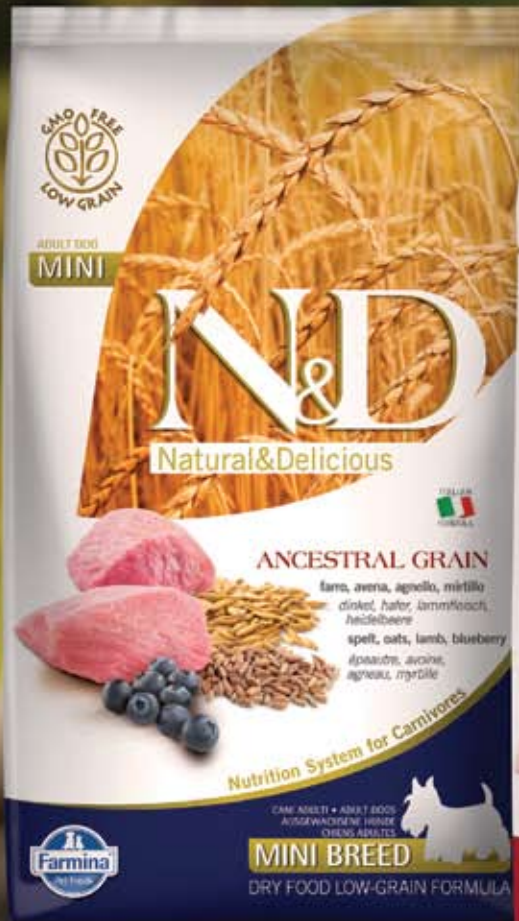
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The image features a golden retriever sitting in a field, looking towards the left. In the foreground, four Venky's pet products are displayed on a green and white background. From left to right: three bottles of VenCard (Heart Support Formula For Pets, 50 Tablets), Vendisc (Back Support Formula For Pets, 50 Tablets), and Venal (Kidney Support Formula For Dogs & Cats, 50 Tablets). To the right of these are a box and a bottle of RKleen (Liver and kidney cleanser, 200 ml).

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Venky's RKleen
Liver and kidney cleanser
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Venky's RKleen
Liver and kidney cleanser
200 ml

Pack size :
50 Tablets

Pack size :
50 Tablets

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Pack size :
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Actor Tejaa Deokar
takes Pari and
Kishmish along
everywhere she
can

The Little Angels

She has two little darlings who rule her home with just their grinning faces. Kishmish and Pari couldn't have asked for a better mom who takes them with her everywhere, as often as possible. Kishmish the chihuahua came first and Pari the min pom followed soon after. True to her name, Pari the fairy waves her magic wand (and sometimes her growls) to get things done her way.

So much so that nobody can sit next to her human, actor Tejaa Deokar without permission. "It's almost like she knows that somebody is going to sit and before we can actually sit, she has jumped up and occupied the place," smiles Teja.

The two are really small dogs. Getting them was a decision Teja took very easily. "I had a beautiful cat some years ago. I was probably looking to fill in that place when I got Kishmish. He got lonely so I got Pari," she thinks out loud. Though smaller in size, in their

heads and hearts, the two are very big. Now, the entire house revolves around the two. "When they haven't eaten, we are all worried and we do everything in our power to get them to eat. It's one of those things that just have to be done," she grins as Pari and Kishmish sit in her lap.

Totally spoilt and quite possessive about Tejaa, the two are adorable in their affections and in their antics.

She shares tips on looking after small dogs:

- ◆ If they fall, they can easily break their bones - they are delicate so take extra care.
- ◆ Being so close to the ground, they see tiny pieces of food and things that we can't. Before you know it, they are likely to eat what they find. It is not always good for them.
- ◆ The chihuahua's eyes are big so don't let this breed hang out of the car when you take them for a ride. For the min pom, the coat needs regular brushing and trimming.
- ◆ Their bathing - grooming routine must be in place. They can't be kept in too much heat or in too much cold.
- ◆ Food plays a very important role in their well being. Make sure the diet is balanced.

— UKC



Dear Readers,

Just when we were wondering what to do with the growing numbers of community dogs, Bajaj Auto's plant at Chakan has taken a step in the right direction. They have adopted 6 pups who are being trained and are working as patrol and security dogs for their premises! We hope others follow in their pawisitive steps.

You may find a little bit more about living on the wild side in this issue. Two stories are close to my heart - One is about Francoise Malby Anthony who runs Thula Thula, a beautiful game reserve in Africa. She lives with her pack of four dogs on this huge property and shares experiences and tips on what to do and what not to with pet dogs in the wild. Among the prized inhabitants of her property are a herd of elephants (who inspired her late husband, conservationist Lawrence Anthony to write *The Elephant Whisperer*), rhinoceros, crocodiles and other animals typical of the African bushland. Also, Francoise is a much appreciated chef who has designed the entire menu at Thula Thula!

The other story is about Vaishali Gadgil's farm where she has 10 dogs. Gadgil lets them run free, hunt and generally be themselves. She worries about her dogs coming in contact with hyenas, snakes, porcupines and wild boars who roam her farm, but is happy watching her pack lead a dog's life!

Snakes are among the reptiles we encounter in urban situations. Here is a list with photographs of some of the most common ones.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue.

Send us your feedback to
thetelltail@gmail.com

Bests,
Uma
Editor, Publisher
+91 8888993366
thetelltail@gmail.com

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Licensed to bark

You don't need a pedigree to be a guard dog. Bajaj Auto has adopted six mixed breed dogs who are doing wonders! Other companies too have adopted a similar approach



Smart guards

Bella, Bonnie, Socks, Duke, Shadow and Jambo are gorgeous 9 month old puppies. Happy, healthy and very playful, you wouldn't guess the job they a job have on hand. They are part of the security team at Bajaj Auto's plant at Chakan!

You expected a rottweiler or a GSD or at least labrador to do the honours? Here's where Bajaj has done something truly revolutionary by adopting these pups and giving them a happy home and work too!

Deepa Bajaj, a trustee with Canine Control and Care (CCC), a trust that works for sterilizations of street dogs saw the pups at CCC's facility in Bhugao. "My husband Rajiv and I are both crazy about dogs. I saw the puppies at Canine Control and Care thought that since most community dogs are intelligent and alert, we should try them as security dogs."

The Bajaj plant already has two Rottweilers as guard dogs. Anil Gudhekar, officer, support service, says, "Initially I was apprehensive

but once I interacted with the puppies, saw them play, I knew it was worth it. They have learned very well and the difference is obvious. In the next few days they will be put on the job."

In their final phase of training, the result is inspiring indeed. Almost ready to be put into action, they have a structured day that includes meals, rest in their designated area, playtime and training hours to patrol the premises. If only other organisations stepped forward to take a leaf out of this effort.

Smitten by the desi girl

Over at the offices of Avik Polychem, in Aundh, Rocky the smart mixed breed girl plays hostess.

Much loved, she has a giant bed and an assortment of ready dog food, home cooked chicken rice meals and treats to select from. Rocky is everybody's favourite. "I would come early on most mornings to introduce her to other dogs on their morning walks because we wanted her to get comfortable with everybody around. Now, her morning begins with greeting everybody," says partner, Nitin Joshi. The idea was for Rocky to get friendly with humans as well since there are visitors to the office. Says Joshi, "From 11 am to 5 pm



she is on a leash. For the rest of the time, she is a free bird. At night she transforms into a security dog. She

brings a lot of joy into the office," adds Joshi who also looks after dogs in the vicinity of their factory.

James Bond



Four puppies and their mother started visiting the CEE Engineering Pvt. Ltd in Hinjewadi about a year ago. The owner, Amit Pol, took an instant liking to them and began feeding them. Sadly, over the next few months, only two puppies survived. "Of those two, one ate pest medicine and was barely able to stand up when we found him. I rushed him to a vet who put him on a drip and gave him other medicines. He was up and about in two days. The incident scared me and I decided to adopt the duo and named them James and Bond," says Pol. A year old, their job is to eat, sleep, play, repeat. "They are a watchful and vigilant team," he adds. What's made Pol happy is that the team working in the factory have learned to treat dogs with respect. "It could be from the fear of me firing them," he laughs patting James and Bond.

— UMA KARVE CHAKRANARAYAN



Lucky DOG!

His very filmy name is the result of his massive ego. In spite of that, his persona is very endearing so kind samaritan Aarpita Gokhale gave Jaykant Shikre office space...

He may peer at you from his beanbag perch inside his "office" in Pune. You are allowed a double take because this mongrel boy looks like nobody who would walk into an office.

Jaykant Shikre's life was set to change one rainy day in July 2015 when he found a welcome mat outside Halo Holidays, Kamla Nehru Park, Pune. "We had already developed a bond with him and another dog. So we kept door mats outside our office for them to sleep on," says proprietor Aarpita Gokhale.



One morning, it was raining heavily. The doormats were drenched and he and his friend were wet and shivering so Aarpita let both inside the office. "We have a bean bag just at the entrance of our office, and he has claimed it since then. Since that day, I feel like I need permission from him to enter my own office," she grins of the boy who relishes boiled egg and wheat roti.

While you may think Jaykant Shikre is an unusual name for a dog, there's a story there too! "Once, I refused to let him into the office since it was closing time and that hurt his

ego. He gave me the cold shoulder for the next two three days. In the movie *Singham*, there is a dialogue, *Kuch bhi karneka par Jaykant ka ego hurt nahi karneka*" and so he got his name, she explains.

Initially, customers found him intimidating but now they know he is part of the office. The good thing is that when he realises that people are not interested in giving him attention, he takes a break. The entire team of Halo Holidays - Sagar, Netra, Rutuja and Tejas look after him. Of course Jaykant is happier indoors - he strides in when he wants, whining and scratching at the door to be let in if its shut. He doesn't need to look for shelter or food. And the humans can't stop smiling when he comes ears flapping, grin firmly in place. That's a win win!

— UKC



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Booboo was kidnapped

A cash reward saw the kidnapper return the big German Shepherd dog to his family

“Booboo is gone!” my daughter Bhairavi was hysteric. I was on my way back to Pune from Indore. She was crying and trying to speak at the same time. I was unable to make out what she was trying to tell me because of my racing heart. Booboo was a young strapping German Shepherd. I had left him with a couple who took care of pets. “What happened?” I asked fearing the worst. “Booboo ran away,” she managed between sobs. The situation was bad but not hopeless.

As soon as I reached Pune, we set out to look for Booboo from near the pet care home in Bund Garden. Booboo was a Jekyll and Hyde character. At home he was friendly, docile, loving, communicative, obedient, trusting and trustworthy.

The moment he stepped out of

the house, he turned into another character - Mr Hyde. He barked at the top of his voice at every passing vehicle, pulling his handler in the direction he wanted, tried to attack every animal that had the audacity to walk on the road that belonged to him alone. After several falls and other mishaps we had become wiser but in spite of our warning the lady who was used to handling dogs thought she would be able to handle him. That was too much for Booboo to accept. A stranger claiming she would be able to handle him easily enough without any training. He had to coach her then, by continually pulling her on the busy road till she tripped and had to let him go. Having proven who the master was, Booboo set off to satisfy his wanderlust.

We searched the dog pounds,

the animal shelters and finally the paths which may have been traversed by Booboo. After pasting his pictures on trees and poles in that area, we went to the offices of two newspapers and placed an ad promising a cash reward for the return of our dog.

The next morning, I got a call from an ‘anonymous’ person saying he had our dog. He refused to divulge his name or address but we were able to establish Booboo’s identity through the funky green studded collar and the leash. He was more ingenious than the villains of Bollywood movies. He asked me to come to Yerwada jail. Bhairavi and I had decided not to carry extra cash and not to allow him to travel in our car. Fortunately he was on a bike with a friend (co-conspirator?) near the Yerwada jail. We followed his bike as per his instruction through twists and turns. Then he stopped suddenly and told us to wait for him. After some time, he appeared with Booboo leading as usual. The relief and joy at finding Booboo was overwhelming. As expected he asked for more than the announced prize because according to him he had saved the dog and fed him for three days. We gave him whatever we had.

Booboo was happy to be in his favourite car with his family without realizing how much his escapade had cost us in terms of money, efforts and trauma. He believed that since we had dropped him at the pet care home, it was our duty to pick him up from wherever he was. Nothing more and nothing less.

— Alka Vaidya



What is a hairball?



Cats are thorough groomers. It is an activity they do almost meditatively, going through every part of their body that they can reach. During these grooming sessions, a cat swallows a bit of the fur as it licks itself clean.

A hairball is a mass of fur that a cat has swallowed over time. In most cases, cats can pass these through their digestive tracts. Those that can't, can cough them out.

Hairballs are seen most often in furry cats like Persians, and in other cats who groom themselves frequently. All cats are likely to get hairballs at some time. Kittens are not expert groomers so hairballs are not seen in very young kittens.

How it happens

As a cat licks her body to groom

herself, the papillae on her tongue collect the loose fur and she swallows it. Part of the fur passes out of the digestive tract and is excreted. Part of it collects in the digestive tract as a mass. This is expelled when the cat coughs it up or vomits it. It comes out coated in bile and other digestive fluids. And no, contrary to the name, hairballs are not round, but in fact cylindrical.

Though most cats expel hairballs by vomiting, always keep your eyes and ears open for these symptoms:

If they continue to **retch** or **gag** without it coming out, or if they show **symptoms** like **constipation**, **diarrhoea**, **lethargy** or **lack of appetite**, contact your veterinarian.

To reduce hairballs

◆ You pick up a brush and groom your cat regularly. The more fur

you clean up, the less goes in her belly. Also, it works as a wonderful way to keep a check on your cats coat condition, check for parasites etc.

◆ Work up a diversion if you see your cat engrossed in excessive rooming. Introduce a toy or start and activity that will take her mind off her fur.

◆ Look through the market shelves to pick up specially formulated hairball reducing food. It promotes coat health and reduces shedding. The formulas also work to encourage hairballs to pass through the digestive tract.

◆ Hairball control products are available. These are mild laxatives that help the hairball pass through the digestive tract. Do consult your veterinarian if you want to try them.

Steralization

Canine Control and Care (CCC) is the only charitable trust working towards sterilizations of community dogs in Pune. Operating from their base in Bhugao, they also operate dogs and cats in three other locations in Pune. **Tell Tail** chats with **Dhanashree Bhisey**, one of the trustees of CCC, about the need for sterilizations to be undertaken on a war footing.

Tell us about CCC

CCC is a charitable trust that was set up in September 2014, with the intent of neutering and vaccinating against rabies every community dog in Pune in a humane manner. Apart from myself, Deepa Bajaj and Lolita Kewalramani are the trustees. We have two veterinary doctors (Dr Suhas Bhokare and Dr Anushka Lobo) and two assistants Vikas Falay and Reva Bodas in our team.

Our base is at Home on the Hill, a place in Bhugao where we have our kennels used strictly for the post operative care of dogs sterilised by us. For those volunteers who can't take care of the dogs post op treatment, our kennels are available on prior booking. We don't charge for neutering surgeries and the anti rabies vaccine.

We have sterilised about 1600 dogs and cats till now.

Is sterilisation the only answer?

To be honest the way Pune is growing, unless several organisations (I'm not even mentioning the government) start neutering dogs on a war footing in a structured area-wise manner, the population is not going to be controlled quickly. Ideally one must neuter 80 percent of the community dogs in an area within one heat cycle so we reach the point of births being less than the rate of operations.

is the key



How can we help?

The easiest way to reduce the number of community dogs would be to eliminate all trash. Most dogs survive on trash or waste from the burgeoning food-stalls around the city. The few who are being fed by animal lovers are mostly already

neutered and vaccinated.

What is next for CCC?

We hope to get our 80G certification in a few months- and with that in place- more funding to build more kennels, so we can operate more dogs!



PROS OF NEUTERING/SPAYING

- ◆ Spaying female dogs before her first heat is ideal, but they have to be at least 6-7 months old and in reasonably good health.
- ◆ Female dogs come into season every 6 months- causing large packs of male dogs to follow them (including some pets) and in general, tempers are high during this time. The female is fed up with the constant attention and the males fight with each other to establish dominance.
- ◆ Cats usually go into heat for four to five days every three weeks during breeding season. In an effort to advertise for mates, they'll yowl and urinate more frequently. This causes the famous 'cat fights' that all of us hear during the nights!
- ◆ If they've been sterilised, neither bitches nor queens come into season, thereby completely eliminating the above behaviour— which is

mostly when people complain about them. Not to mention, no puppies being run over or starving to death.

HEALTH BENEFITS

- ◆ Spaying helps prevent uterine infections and breast cancer, which is fatal in about 50 percent of dogs and 90 percent of cats.
- ◆ Neutering male dogs and cats prevents testicular cancer, and they are spared the aggression during mating season.
- ◆ Un- neutered males are also much more likely to mark territory by spraying pee everywhere.

PLEASE NOTE

- ◆ Having said this, neutering is not a quick fix for behaviour issues. Aggression relating to testosterone will reduce, but other learned bad behaviour will not be totally reversed.

The key is in raw material

Farmina continues to give dogs and cats the best diet because they focus on the raw materials

The selection of raw materials is of paramount importance to obtain a product whose characteristics provide the optimum nutritional intake and biological value for the welfare of pets. In Farmina, we use only the best products of our partners to get food nutritionally able to meet the needs of dogs and cats. In our food, the raw materials are fit for human consumption. In the wet food, for example, you can see whole pieces of muscle and vegetables. The ingredients are GMO deprived and come from healthy animals. These elements are then pulverised and used in the composition of our dry food. The higher quality of the elements ensures the highest quality of the finished product - with the correct amounts of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals.

Proteins

Farmina Pet Foods utilizes primary source of protein from chicken, fish, lamb and eggs. The dehydrated chicken meat present in Farmina products derives from whole Italian chickens. The fish are all caught at sea and not of breeding. The eggs are transported fresh to the shelling plants.

The raw materials are low chloride content, with protein with an amino acid profile to assure a cured contribution of essential amino acids.

The products containing lamb are particularly indicated for subjects with manifested problems of cutaneous allergies. The meat is of New Zealand origin.

Fats

Fats represent a primary source of energy for dogs and cats. The choice of lipids to be used is of fundamental importance to the contribution of all the essential fat acids.

The fat from chicken, the oil from fish, the vegetable oils, among which those contained in the flax seed, allow furnishing the animals the required essential fat acids. Furthermore, the percentage of fatty acids omega-3 type and fatty acids omega-6 type, is held in the proper ratio, thanks to the balanced mix of raw materials bearer of lipids.



All this allows for control of inflammation and maintenance of good condition of the skin and fur. Polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA), in fact, play an important role in the maintenance of skin function.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are another important source of energy for dogs and cats. The digestibility and availability of carbohydrates of our foods derive from the raw materials used and from technological processes and controls which they are subject.

Fibers

In a balanced food, the correct intake of fiber plays an important role in the regulation of intestinal transit of food ingested. Farmina utilizes beet pulp as an important source of fiber, which promotes the formation of good stool consistency.



Similarly, the use of substances in Farmina products bearers of fructo-oligosaccharides (FOS), can produce beneficial effects in the intestine.

Farmina pays particular attention to the mix of fiber products for certain

species, races and classes of animals. For example, for those who show special predisposition to constipation or the tendency to gain weight, the product is enriched with pea fiber and cellulose powder. These fibers help reduce enteric problems, promote intestinal peristalsis, and at the same time, help to give a correct sense of satiety in the animal.

Vitamins, minerals and more

Daily intake of the appropriate amounts of vitamins is important to help the dog and cat towards a smooth operation of all vital functions. Our vitamin supplementation is balanced according to the physiological and developmental stage of the animal.

Great attention is given to the inclusion of minerals through the addition of macro minerals and oligo elements opportunely balanced for each species and category of dogs and cats. To support the welfare of the joints, Farmina products are fortified with glucosamine and chondroitin.



Taurine helps regulate the osmosis cells and supports cardiac function: its inclusion along with that of L-carnitine in food is exceptionally well designed to increase the mobilization of metabolic body fat storage and preserving lean muscle mass.

Methionine, lysine, cystine are amino acids help to increase the biological value of protein in Farmina food products, to respond better to specific amino acid requirements of different species and animal categories.

Beta-carotene and lutein are two carotenoids with characteristics of pro-vitamins that accompany and enrich the vitamin supplementation in our products. Lastly, natural plant extracts from grapes and green tea, enhance the antioxidant action.

— Advt



Rikkie being fed by Sandhya Rao



▶ I ♥ MY DOGS

A big warm family

The Rao family with Rikkie, Rado and Rancho and about 100 fish are a delight to meet

She is spoon fed her meals while she watches the birds in the garden. Given her predisposition to being this cute, loving little cuddly ball of fur, perhaps this extra pampering is warranted. But if you ask Pune's Rao family about it, they will tell you its not pampering, its just what their baby, Rikkie, requires. This 6 1/2 year old Spitz is the undisputed baby and queen of the house. Following close on her heels are Rado, the aloof boy (also 6 1/2 years old) and Rancho the 5 year old big German Shepherd. All have a free run of the house, the only rules, as parent Sandhya Rao says, is that there are no rules.

■ **HARISH RAO:** It is expensive if you want a marine aquarium, but if not, then, you need to provide clean water, good filters, heaters and good food. Read up so you know what kind of fish you will be able to look after. Also, don't mix aggressive fish with the docile ones. Planted tanks need more maintenance. Start small and go ahead armed with information

The tail wagging welcome to their house is truly warm. But it is the patio makes you stand and stare in surprise as fish of all shapes swim in aquariums that line the sides! Home to about 100 fish, including oscars, gold fish, koi, parrot, red bellied piranha and angels, they are husband Harish Rao's love. Of their aquatic lot, Harish tells us that their sharks are the mildest!

The four legged family members are clearly the most favourite. On their part, the furry three respond in kind. They need mom and they need dad. "The three are an inseparable part of our lives. We never get angry with them," says the duo. So much so that they go for holidays somebody from the family stays back for the dogs. When it gets hot, the trio need the AC and they tell their humans to turn it on. "They look at the AC and at our face and keep doing that till we turn it on," smiles Sandhya. Almost as if on cue, they look at the AC and get us smiling our broadest.

— UMA KARVE CHAKRANARAYAN

■ **SANDHYA RAO:** Don't get a dog because your child asks. Get a dog only if you are able to give him/her enough time.



Periodontal diseases in dogs and cats - signs, care, diagnosis

For that winning smile

Small breed dogs, dogs with flat faces like boxers and pugs, and cats - adult and senior are likely to suffer from periodontal disease.

Don't ignore bad breath as it may be an indicator of something going wrong with organs in your pets body. It begins with bacteria combining with saliva and food debris in the channel between the teeth and gums. As this accumulates, it leads to periodontal disease. **Indications include bad breath, discoloured teeth, deposits on teeth, red or irritated gums. If you can see reddening of the gum line and hard brown tarter on the teeth, it can make rest of the body unwell too. So keep your eyes and nose wide open.**



Dr Sagar Bhongle

Diagnosis

If you enjoy cuddling up to your dog or cat, you will be quick to notice if he has bad breath. That is the first indication of periodontal disease. Other indicators are change in your dogs eating habits because of pain, excess salivation and drooling. Don't ignore early signs as periodontal diseases can, over time, develop into serious issues.

Tarter

Plaque formation develops with the remains food particles as a sugar-protein mix which allows bacteria to quickly stick to the surface of the tooth. The bacteria produce their own sugars which combine with food debris and attract even more types of bacteria. This is called plaque. It starts to spread into little pockets between the teeth and gums. These are anaerobes that cause distraction and damage to surrounding tissues.

Hardened plaque is called tarter. It cannot be removed with a tooth brush. In severe cases, it can lead to tooth loss.

Prevention and treatment

- ◆ Once tarter has formed, professional dental cleaning under general anaesthesia is necessary to remove it.
- ◆ Dental scaling removes tarter from above and below the gum line. This is done with hand instruments and ultrasonic cleaning equipment. Polishing smoothens the surface of the teeth, making them resistant to additional plaque formation.
- ◆ Feed your dog dry pellet food. It has been shown that plaque formation reduces with this diet.
- ◆ Dental paste or fluoride based gels or sprays applied daily help to reduce the bacterial count in the mouth.
- ◆ Using 2 percent chlorhexidine solution on alternate days helps to reduce staining teeth. Just dip



cotton balls in this solution and wipe off gums and teeth. You can also use a spray.

◆ Chew toys and dental treats that are specifically made to provide dental benefits help in removing mild tartar only. Rub a pinch of baking soda on the gums and teeth every week. Get your vet to check your

dogs' mouth every six months.

Severe effects of plaque

- ◆ Damage or loss of gums tissue or bone around the teeth.
- ◆ Bone infection
- ◆ Weakening of jaw
- ◆ Periodontal diseases associated with microscopic changes in the

heart, liver, kidneys.

- ◆ Halitosis could be secondary to renal failure in dogs and cats
- ◆ Extraction of teeth helps cats resume appetite in periodontal diseases.

— DR SAGAR BHONGLE
AMS PET CLINIC,
SALUNKE VIHAAR



Before



After



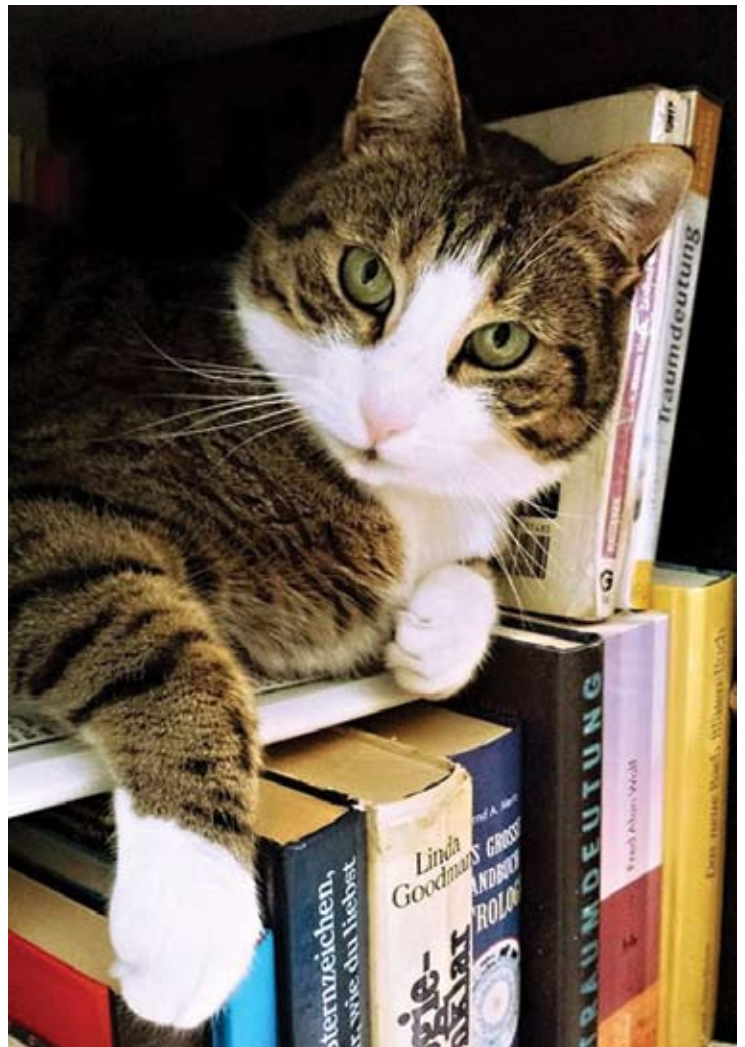


My best DIWALI WISH

I knew it before I saw her. In fact, as soon as I went in to keep the rangoli case back in its place, I realised I had left my two hours of colourful effort unguarded, at Mia's mercy. Immediately, I went out apprehensively, to see what was left of it. Slightly angry, I had begun picturing Mia's slight hesitation when she sees a new object, the way she approaches it using all her senses to gauge it before she gives it her best shot.

Sure enough, there was my 10-month-old draped in a rainbow sari standing at the door as if a guest had come to wish me Happy Diwali. I smothered her with kisses and wished her back. It was unlike any other wish I received all season.

— SHRADHA RATHOD



Write for us

Send us anecdotes that make you laugh or cry, stories that make you wonder at the way your pet understands you and the joy you get from having a pet at home. All stories should be original, accompanied by high resolution colour images of the pets being written about. A full name, contact number and email id is a must! Content must not be over 200 words.

The best ones will be published in Tell Tail. Send them to thetelltailpages@gmail.com Call +91 8888993366 if you have any queries.



14 dogs and a farm

A farm with 10 dogs is a lot of fun. But it has its share of heartache too as organic farmer Vaishali Gadgil points out

As far as the eye can see, there's greenery. You can hear the birds chirping and feel the fresh air in every breath you take.

Little wonder then that matriarch Rani and her family of 9 dogs - Caravan, Saluki and Dalmatian are thrilled to head out on their patrol. Divided into groups, the dogs are let out at different times, except when their human, organic farmer Vaishali Gadgil visits. Then they gallop across the farm and run to the hills bordering it. Vaishali smiles, "They love to race everywhere and I like to see them running."

Animal instinct

Vaishali's farm has porcupines, biter, rabbits, monkeys, barking deer, wild boar, peacocks and more. She says, "My dogs know every corner of the farm and are ready to chase anything that moves." She has had many a sleepless night because of that - she lost a dog to a porcupine, another to a wild boar. But that doesn't

deter the dogs from continuing their chase. When the monkeys come, they bark at them for hours on end. And on most evenings, they go hunting small animals. "Rani always gives birth to her pups in a crevice under a huge rock. Instead of getting them to eat what the rest of them are fed, unfailingly, she feeds every litter only what she hunts," adds Vaishali.

Bonds of friendship

Among the famous friends on the farm were the dogs Mahesh and Mangesh. Mahesh got into a fight with the others and lost his life. Mangesh then simply moved out to the village. "We were sad but we could see why he chose to move," she explains.

Perhaps the cutest friends are Arjun the horse and Bhairu the bull. "They scratch each other through the bars with their mouths. Its a wonderful relationship," adds Vaishali.

And then there is Jay who disliked being tied up. So one day he decided enough was enough and left. Initially

he would visit but it's been a long time since he dropped in.

The worry

Poisonous snakes are at the farm. "I fret about the dogs getting bitten by snakes. I dread the thought of hyenas picking one of my dogs up. And I hope that they never come in contact with porcupines and wild boar. Since it's a huge property there is a very real chance of it happening, however smart my dogs are," sighs Vaishali.

Food time

With many cows at the farm, fresh milk is in abundance for the dogs. To match their activity levels, they are fed a rich diet of bhakri, meat and more.

The next step

Vaishali intends to move her four city dogs - Toffee, Chanda, Masti - all mixed breed dogs and Bingo a rescued beagle - to the farm. "We hope it is one big happy family soon," she signs off.

— UKC



Vaishali with Bingo and Masti



The African Dream

Francoise Malby Anthony loves her life at Thula Thula, a game reserve in Zululand, South Africa. She lives it up with her dogs, rhinos who want her to stop for a chat and the magnificent herd of elephants who lord over the game reserve

Cover Photo: Kim Mcleod

The African wild is her home. Naturally then everyday brings **Francoise Malby Anthony** in contact with a variety of wildlife. The special herd of elephants, rhinoceros, buffalo, leopard, giraffe, zebra, nyala, hyenas, kudu, wildebeest, crocodiles, snakes, monkeys, bush babies are all part of Francoise's work and her relaxation. She lives with her four dogs Gin, Gypsy, Jeff and Sammy at Thula Thula, the game reserve she and her husband, late Anthony Lawrence, toiled hard to establish as a safe haven for elephants and rhinos.

Inspired by *The Elephant Whisperer* and *The Last Rhino*, two fantastic books by late Lawrence Anthony about his experiences with elephants, rhinos and his pet dogs, **Uma Karve Chakranarayan** talks to **Francoise** about being a good pet parent in the wild.

A day at Thula Thula

A typical day at Thula Thula starts with my dogs waking me up. In a little while I check in at the office and then head out in the car with Gin and Gypsy. On most days, Thabo and Ntombi, the white rhinos, trot along hoping that we stop for a chat. Rightfully so, because, after their rescue, they stayed at the lodge for many months and we met daily till they learned to forage for themselves. Gypsy looks at them with big eyes and Gin growls all through. Jeff is not invited because he barks and



Gin and Gypsy at the airstrip with Francoise

chases all wildlife instinctively. A tour of the tented camps, conversations with guests staying at the reserve and check ups on the safaris later, the day is over! And when there is a chance, I cook.

In Lawrence Anthony's books, he describes Penny, Max, Bijou.

Yes, Bijou was the really snooty poodle who looked down upon all. I

had to cook many different delicious options for her meals from which she would choose what she wanted. She was my baby. I cried for days when she passed away. Max, was totally fearless, very protective and an absolute darling. He got spat in his eyes by Mozambican cobras but never learnt a lesson. Staffordshire terriers are like that. Penny was always the protector who never gauged her own size. She probably

attacked the crocodile as described in *The Elephant Whisperer* because of the way she was. All of them are in the happy hunting grounds. We have four other dogs.

Living with dogs in the wild is fun as it is dangerous

Tonic, a big fighter in a Jack Russel terriers shape, has to be kept away from home, in our tented camp section at Thula Thula since he fought with everybody. Once, he thought he could manage a 4 meter python. By the time we heard his scream by the riverbed close to camp and reached, it was too late. Then there was the time Bijou growled on the way to bed. I went to investigate and found her staring with despise at a Mozambican spitting cobra. She was just two steps away. We froze. Luckily we escaped unharmed. Jeff, a half labrador and half Boerbull is lethal as he is a softy. He got bitten by a neurotoxic snake. We reached the vet when his head was very badly swollen. He survived. Everybody loves him, except those he has bitten!

The majestic elephants

Brought to Thula Thula as a batch of rogue elephants,

POINTERS FOR THOSE INTENDING TO HIT THE WILD TRAILS WITH THEIR DOGS

- I am convinced animals don't know their size. If you are bent on taking them into the wild, don't let them attack wildlife.
- Likewise, keep an eye for wildlife that can attack your dogs. Our dogs went on a walk and were attacked by a pack of zebras!
- Baboons are dangerous as are snakes, leopards, lions etc.
- Poachers use dogs for tracking so most animals tend to run away from them, but some don't show fear and attack. So, for the dogs well-being, I recommend taking them on a leash if leaving them behind is not an option.

Lawrence spent a long long time communicating with them. They broke out of their boma and escaped over a very high voltage fence, and took a long time to trust Lawrence and us.

Lead by Nana, the herd settled in eventually and had a fantastic bond with Lawrence. The herd now has 30 elephants and many babies. Nana has vision problems so they have a co leader in Frankie. They visit we when they



Françoise with the rhino



George the Bushbaby who visits for a meal

want to.

Funny incidents with them are many. Once, the elephants arrived at the main house with Nana and Frankie in the lead. Since they don't like dogs, I panicked and hurriedly put all the dogs in my wardrobe, and watched them come out of the other side as I had left the door open! A while back, the herd came to visit me at the main house. Sam, the Jack Russel terrier confronted them. Frankie



The elephant herd



Late Lawrence Anthony and Francoise dreamt up Thula Thula together

charged at Sam who ran so fast that we got to see a dog flying across the lawn with no legs.

And there is a mystery too. I was day dreaming once about how wonderful it would be to have another baby elephant in my kitchen. 18 hours later, my safari lodge chief Tom came to tell me a baby elephant was wandering in the garden! Elephants have a very

strong family bond and don't leave their babies behind. It is a mystery how she was separated. She was only 10 days old, starved and lost. The rangers found her herd and reunited them.

My dogs

Dogs have this uncanny sixth sense which helps them identify the good from the not so good

■ Thula Thula was so named for the feeling of peace and tranquility (Zulu meaning) and the spiritual feeling that everybody gets on visiting. Residential options at Thula Thula (that covers a huge 4500 ha) include tents as well as the lodge. Do log onto www.thulathula.com for more.

people. I have a lot to learn from Jeff who shows it to me all the time. All my dogs teach me a lot. I love to observe them playing and showing their love to each other. They feel joy, anger, jealousy, sadness like we do. And they are always happy to see me.

The rhinos

Poaching is a big issue here. We lost Heidi to poachers some years ago. Thabo our male was shot at and wounded a while back. So, apart from stepping up security, I took the decision to dehorn our rhinos. It is better to have a dehorned rhino than a dead rhino. Elephants too are in danger of being poached so our anti poaching exercise is on full steam.



Jeff trying to catch the geese in the pool



Its an adventure of a lifetime. A hen and a man are going around the world by sea



Clucking across the world in a sailboat

Guirec Soudee and his hen Monique have set out to sail the world. Yes, you got that correct, a man and his hen! The duo who met in Portugal, after Guirec had already begun his adventure, have stuck by each other through miles of ocean, big bad waves and calm seas, sailing through zero visibility and anchoring at places where you can almost see the bottom of the ocean. Watching the sun set and rise like good friends that they are, they have shared the catch from the ocean and Monique who is intrigued by the flying fish even caught one! Completely at ease on the sailboat, she continues to lay eggs and walks across irrespective of the waves.

It does get lonely on the boat, and scary like the time they were caught in ice. But then 24 year old Guirec sees the sea and sun merge in gold, purple and blue. Beautiful scenery that looks like watercolours. Sometimes dolphins, whales and other sea creatures dance around the boat. And he is sure, that's why he left.

Guirec, from Brittany, and Monique have been across the Atlantic in their sailboat Yvinec, spent some time in the Caribbean and Greenland, picked their way through the Northwest Passage. They stayed with the Inuit people and are currently going along the coast of Alaska and will be going further.



In the last issue we saw what is good food and what is bad. Here, we look at the topic in more detail



Food for thought

Safe for human consumption” does not necessarily mean “Safe for dog consumption”.



Dr. Shambhavi A Sabnis

In fact, many common foodstuffs, medications and products, readily available in the house can turn out to be highly toxic for your dog. The symptoms of poisoning depend upon the type of poison your dog is exposed to. Signs of poisoning may include the following:

- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Excessive salivation
- ◆ Diarrhoea
- ◆ Seizures
- ◆ Loss of co-ordination
- ◆ Abnormal behaviour
- ◆ Change in colour of mucous membranes (gums)
- ◆ Bleeding through natural orifices
- ◆ Change in heart rate
- ◆ Change in rate and pattern of breathing (laboured breathing)
- ◆ Dullness or lethargy
- ◆ Loss of consciousness
- ◆ Lack of response to external stimuli

If you suspect that your dog has ingested a poisonous product, or is showing any of the above symptoms, consult a veterinarian immediately. Saving time is of utmost importance. In the long run, it's better to seek instant medical help and find out that the situation isn't nearly as critical as it seemed than to find out it's too late to help.

The majority (>90%) of animal poisonings are accidental and acute in nature and occur near or at the dog owner's home. Common items that pose threat include:

Alcohol: Giving you dog alcohol is not a 'joke'. Dogs cannot tolerate alcohol even in small amounts and so, care must be taken to never leave your drink unattended. Common clinical signs include

ataxia, lethargy, vomiting, diarrhoea, poor breathing, liver failure, coma, and death.

Seeds: Seeds of fruits like apple, cherry, plum etc. contain a toxic component called cyanide. Dogs are likely to show rapid breathing, abnormal heart rhythm, skin reactions etc.

Onion and garlic: All forms can be a problem: dehydrated, raw or cooked onions, table scraps containing cooked onions or garlic, left over pizzas, chinese dishes, any feeding stuff containing onions. The toxic ingredient is called thiosulphate, which causes the red blood cells circulating through your dogs body to burst, resulting into a condition called hemolytic anaemia.

Candy/chewing gum: These often contain an artificial sweetner, xylitol. Although its consumption in humans is harmless, xylitol consumption in dogs results into a sudden drop in blood sugar causing depression, ataxia, seizures and collapse. This compound can also cause liver damage and death.

Chocolate: It is derived from the roasted seeds of theobroma cacao that contain the toxic principle, theobromine. Theobromine is also found in tea, cola beverages, and some other foods. Its consumption is potentially life-threatening. Clinical signs of toxicosis usually occur within 6–12 hours of ingestion, e.g. nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and difficulty to breathe. These can progress to dehydration, restlessness, hyperactivity, abnormal heart rhythm, internal bleeding, heart attacks, tremors, seizures, weakness, coma, increased blood pressure and eventually death.

Grapes/raisins: These contain an unknown toxin. Early signs are observed within 6-8 hours of ingestion and include vomiting, diarrhoea, lethargy, weakness and abdominal pain. Kidney failure is usually seen in about 1-3 days and

kidneys may fail to produce normal quantities of urine.

Human medicines: These usually include drugs like acetaminophen, paracetamol, Ibuprofen, etc. Proven to cause non-repairable liver damage. To prevent accidents, make sure you should store all of your medications in cabinets that are inaccessible to your dog.

Nuts: Macadamia nuts or moldy walnuts are commonly present in cookies. They contain an unknown toxin that affects the muscles, digestive system and nervous system. The toxin may trigger pancreatitis and cause locomotory dysfunction.

Plants: Several popular household flowers and plants can be poisonous to your dog, including tulips, daffodils, lilies etc.

Topical tick/flea medication: Usually include compounds like permethrin or fipronil. Dogs that are hypersensitive or ingest a large or concentrated amount, can develop severe symptoms such as tremors, twitching, shaking, difficulty breathing, difficulty standing or walking, seizures, and rarely, death.

Insecticides: Symptoms may vary from mild to severe depending upon the type of insecticide ingested. Usually affects the nervous and respiratory systems.

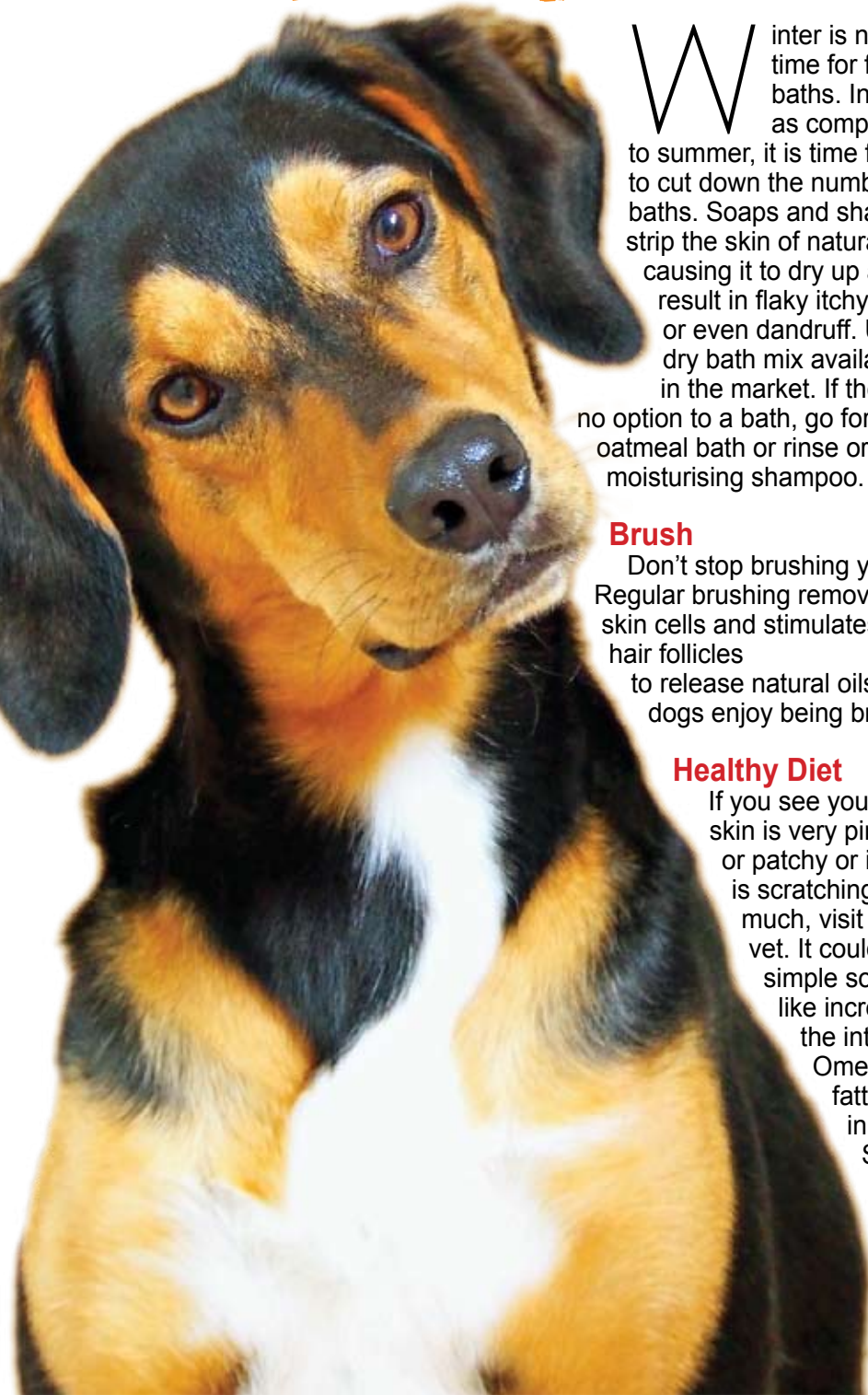
Rodenticide:

◆ Cause spontaneous and uncontrolled bleeding. Mostly fatal. Try to identify the toxin your dog may have come in contact with. This information could save your vet valuable time in formulating a treatment plan.

- ◆ Call your vet right away and describe the exact symptoms.
- ◆ Follow directions your vet advises.
- ◆ Above all, never decide how to treat your dog on your own without the explicit advice of your vet.
- ◆ Rush to a nearby clinic for treatment unless your vet advises otherwise.

— DR SHAMBHAVI SABNIS

Winter essentials for your pooch



Winter is not a time for frequent baths. In fact, as compared to summer, it is time for you to cut down the number of baths. Soaps and shampoos strip the skin of natural oils causing it to dry up and result in flaky itchy skin or even dandruff. Use a dry bath mix available in the market. If there is no option to a bath, go for an oatmeal bath or rinse or use a moisturising shampoo.

Brush

Don't stop brushing your dog. Regular brushing removes dead skin cells and stimulates the hair follicles

to release natural oils. Most dogs enjoy being brushed.

Healthy Diet

If you see your dog's skin is very pink or patchy or if he is scratching too much, visit your vet. It could be a simple solution like increasing the intake of Omega 3 fatty acids in the diet. Salmon oil,

The cold winter is just around the corner. That with low humidity can cause your pooch to get dry flaky skin. The dog will then tend to get itchy. Try these tips to keep the coat soft and the skin healthy.



Sandeep Mulye

sunflower oil and olive oil help in that direction. Just add it to their food and watch the coat get healthy.

Coat conditioning

Massage your dog with coconut oil before a bath. It works nicely on the fur. Spray rose water which contains glycerine to keep the skin moisturised.

Watch the water

While trying to stay warm during winter, dogs burn a lot of energy so they can get dehydrated. Keep the water bowl full of clean water.

Compare with you

If the weather is too cold for you to be out in, it probably is too cold for him too. Create a warm place outdoors or bring him in.

At their feet

Rub some petroleum jelly into your pooch's foot pads to prevent cracks from developing, just like we do for us humans.

— SANDEEP MULYE
PREMIER GROOMING
CONSULTANT, OWNER FINE FURS

Fine Furs

Pet Grooming PARLOUR



Haircuts

◆ Pure Scissor Cuts That Cause No Distress to Dog/Cat

Baths

◆ Anti Flea & Anti Tick Baths
◆ Medicated Baths ◆ Coat Conditioning

PUPPY/ KITTEN SEGMENT

1-3 Months

◆ Dry Bath with Flea/Tick Removal

3 Months & Above

◆ Tick/ Flea Baths/ Medicated Baths/
Conditioning Baths
◆ Nail Clipping, Ear Cleaning Paw & Web
Clean Up

ADULT DOGS & CATS

◆ Hair Trimming & Clipping
◆ Dematting
◆ Under Carriage Cleaning
◆ Paw & Web Clean Up
◆ Under Coat Removal to Control Hairfall/ Shedding
◆ Flew/ Facial Hair Removal

Sandeep
9822043370

Visit us at: **Petsworld, Karve Road,**
Opp. Siddharth Hall, Pune.

A vibrant yellow and silver angelfish is the central focus, swimming towards the left. It has a yellow head and dorsal fin, with silver and black stripes on its body. The background is filled with lush green artificial aquarium plants. In the upper left, there is a red banner with white text. In the upper right, the title is written in a large, white, serif font. At the bottom, there is an orange footer with white text.

▶▶ GO FISH

10 steps to a healthy aquarium



Acclimatize your fish:

Whenever you buy new fish from your Local Fish Store (LFS) do not directly add them to the aquarium, if you have a quarantine



Romulus Dias

tank, keep your fish there for a week to observe them for signs of illness and stress before introducing them to your main tank.

Ensure all the parameters of your quarantine tank are similar to the main tank. If you do not have a quarantine tank, let the bag containing the new fish float on the surface for 15-30 mins to allow the temperature to acclimatise. Then open the bag and add a small cup of water from the tank into the bag. Repeat till the bag is full. Tilt the bag and allow the fish to swim out into the tank on their own.

Fish compatibility: Always check for fish compatibility before you buy fish to save you trouble and tension later. The incompatible fish are sure to get stressed and die. If you are not sure, put off the purchase till you do more research.

Do not overcrowd your tank: More fish mean more waste, less oxygen, which degrades your aquarium water. Ensure your fish have enough place to swim, also take into account that some of your fish will grow.

Water changes: An aquarium is a closed ecosystem unlike the wild, even though you have filter and air stone in place for oxygen, you need to change your water, 25% every 2 weeks is a good routine to follow. Don't forget to condition your water before using it. Use de-chlorinating and biological aquarium supplement from your LFS.

Water temperature: It is very important to check and maintain the temperature of your aquarium. Use a submersible or a glass



thermometer for a reading and adjust your heater accordingly. Changes in temperature can wreck havoc on aquarium fish. Don't place your aquarium in a window that gets a lot of sun or next to heating or air conditioning vents, as drastic temperature changes can make your fish sick or even kill them.

Don't overfeed: It is important that you do not overfeed your fish. You need to feed your fish what they can consume in 10 mins. Extra food clouds the water and degrades the water quality.

Manage light: One of the most frustrating things for a new aquarium owner is managing algae in an aquarium. Algae are similar to plants, and like all plants they require sunlight to thrive.

You need to have lights in your tank to be able to see your fish. When you decide on the placement of your tank, try to keep it away from any place that gets strong sunlight throughout the day.

You should keep the tank light on a maximum of 12 hours every day. Remember that the light in the fish tank is for you, not the fish. The moderate lighting of daylight is plenty for them. If there is nobody home, there is no point in having the light on. You can keep the light off while you are at work or in school, and turn it on when you come home at night. The exception here is if you have live plants in your tank. They will require a full 12 hours of overhead lighting per day. However, live plants will suck up many of the

nutrients algae needs for survival, and in themselves can keep algae levels in check.

Maintenance: There are some cleaning tasks that you need to do every other week together with the water changes. Vacuum the gravel, clean the glass and get rid of any algae that grows on it. If you have plants, you can trim and cut off the excess. If you have a test kit you could check for parameters like Ammonia, Nitrite and Nitrates. On a monthly basis, you need to clean the filter in the aquarium water itself, so that the beneficial bacteria are not killed.

Quarantine tank: Regularly check the fish for illnesses. If there are any fish that are sick, put them into a separate quarantine tank and treat them there. It is essential to separate the fish so that the disease does not spread to the other fish.

Observe and learn: The most important point for every aquarium hobbyist is to observe and learn, fish are like any other pets in the house and require attention and care. It is up to you to provide them with a stress free environment. You will make mistakes along the way and may lose some fish in the process, we all have. Just be observant and learn from your mistakes.

Hope these tips help you create a healthy, well managed aquarium which will give you countless happy hours.

**— ROMULUS DIAS,
HOBBY AQUARIST**

Not so shy anymore

Girard -Jerry- Bradshaw, founder Tarheel Canine, is an ace in obedience training. He shares simple ways to get your shy dog out of his shell

If you think about it, it's kind of a dirty trick to take a species that naturally chases moving objects, eats whatever it comes across, bites

to argue, and then announce all these as behaviour problems." Jean Donaldson



Jerry

Understanding systematic desensitization is critical to successful management

and elimination of many kinds of behaviour problems. In systematic de-sensitization our aim is to expose the dog slowly to the stimulus that elicits the unwanted behaviour,

while ensuring the dog experiences a response to that stimulus that is positive. This establishes a new classically conditioned behaviour that results when the stimulus occurs. We require 2 preconditions:

Identify and be able to control the stimulus that elicits the unwanted behaviour.

Identify the threshold at which the unwanted behaviour occurs in the presence of this stimulus.

The shy dog

The shy dog looks to avoid managing stress. The catch 22 here is that a dog that is afraid of meeting people must be exposed to people in a way that builds confidence. Just bringing the dog out to public places

without a plan may elicit avoidance behaviour, without any way to control the outcome. Controlled exposure will ensure a positive outcome.

Example of a fearful/shy dog:

Stimulus: Proximity of a stranger
Threshold: Proximity that elicits avoidance

The job of the trainer is to figure out where the threshold lies - whether 50 feet or five feet. Dogs possess a defensive instinct whose stimulus is a perceived threat. What the dog perceives as threatening will vary with the dog's genetics and social upbringing.

In most cases, fear will cause a dog to avoid people (shy dog), but sometimes the dog learns he can



scare people away with aggression (fear aggressive). A fearful dog who has not yet learned aggression as an avoidance mechanism, can more easily and more safely be desensitized to new people. If the dog has learned to use aggression to make people leave his proximity, the process is a little more dangerous and should only be attempted under the guidance of a professional trainer.

As a prerequisite, I highly recommend doing an obedience training programme. Obedience gives the dog a set of safe behaviours and these behaviours will allow the trainer to gain a threshold more quickly. They can also be used as mutually exclusive behaviours to the fight or flight impulse.

Training procedure: Socialization game

When the dog is hungry, use his food drive to help overcome his fear. Place a stranger, seated, facing away from the dog (least threatening). Bring the dog on a leash as close as you can before he shows unease. Reward calmness yourself with some food. Then the person will gently toss food

between himself and the dog. Praise him eating food closer to our target. Don't force him, and be patient. Time in training will depend on the strength of the fear response.

The dog learns that good things happen as he becomes bolder. Overcoming this unwarranted fear is stressful. Allow advance and retreat. The dog sets the pace. When the dog takes food from the person's hand consistently, approach from the side, then finally frontally.

The person should not look at the dog rather feed the dog as an afterthought. Allow him to take food off of the thigh, lap and allow the dog to climb up on the seated person if he wishes. Always allowing the dog to approach, never moving toward the dog.

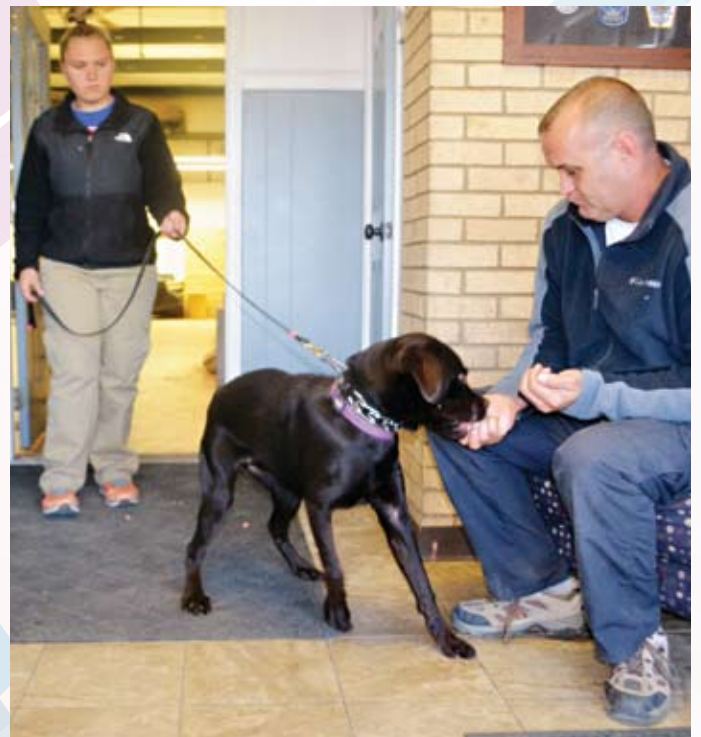
Try the same exercise with the person standing up, starting well outside the threshold. Standing will magnify the perception of threat. Only when the dog readily approaches a standing person, place the dog on a sit and stay and have the person calmly and slowly approach. Walk backward toward the dog and feed from the hand. As the dog gains confidence, have the person approach walking sideways,

then approach frontally.

Transfer this game to the home. Invite new people while the dog is far away on a down-stay. Place the visitor in a chair, always the same chair. Replicate the same game. Allow the dog to approach tossed treats. By placing the new person in the same place and keeping the game the same each time, the dog will anticipate the outcome and quickly generalize the outcome as positive. Avoid triggers of quick movements. Be sure to tell visitors to be calm, deliberate, and non-threatening. After a time drop the leash and allow the dog to approach on his own. Use the down-stay at a distance to put the dog away for a time during the visit to allow stress to dissipate, let the dog relax, then repeat.

He makes a world of friends one at a time. This process takes time, but the dog will understand the game and get bolder and move much more quickly to making new friends, in a new mindset about people.

The author is training director of the USA based Tarheel Canine School for Dog Trainers, founder, The Protection Sports Association.



Snake in my garden

In urban settings, it is not uncommon to find a snake sunbathing or slithering into a hole in the ground. It may worry us when we see it, but seeing a snake should not be reason to panic. For, snakes if left undisturbed, will go away.

Calling a catcher is an option, just ensure that the person is going to release the snake in the right manner, in the right place and will not be hoarding or selling it. **Veterinarian Dr Amol Khedgikar** gives us a basic list of snakes we may encounter.

THE BIG FOUR

Photos Nishanth Nichu

Indian cobra: The most well known and also most feared venomous snake of India, it varies tremendously in colour and pattern throughout its range. The underside colouration can be grey, yellow, tan, brown, reddish or black. The dorsal scales can have a hood mark or colour patterns. You can find this snake in tree hollows, termite mounds, piles of rocks, holes in embankments and even small mammal dens.
Look alike: Rat snake



Russell's viper: Almost strictly terrestrial, it stays hidden under leaves, grass, wood piles etc. Strong bodied, this is the only true old world viper species found in India. It has a loud hiss as a warning to the intruder in its space. Its venom is used in developing drugs for many types of treatments including coagulants, cancer etc.
Look alike: Common sandboa, Indian rock python

Common krait: Extremely calm and shy and almost strictly nocturnal, it seeks warm places including human beds for warmth in cool nights. Most bites by this species occur during such encounters. Bites are not instantly painful like other venomous snakes hence they can go undetected resulting in delay in subsequent treatment and therefore death.
Look alike: Wolf snakes



Saw-scaled viper: Smallest of the big four, but can grow upto 25 inches. Small but strong keeled body. An arrow mark on a typical triangular viper head. Mostly nocturnal, found under rocks in arid, dry areas. Accounts for a majority of the venomous bites in Konkan region. One of India's most well known sidewinders. Makes a warning sound by rubbing scales which sound like wood being sawed. The name is due to saw like edges on each scale. It feeds on small lizards, scorpions.
Look alike: Common cat snake



MILDLY-VENOMOUS

The venom is strong enough only to paralyse prey



Common vine snake: Unmistakable, thin green, can also be seen in a brown morphological presentation almost strictly arboreal, diurnal. The venom strong enough only to paralyse prey. It eats lizards, small birds, mice.
Look alike: Bamboo pit viper, other green pit vipers

Rat snake: One of the most common species found in urban and rural areas. This is known as a friend of farmers as the main prey base is rats and mice. Long and slender but a strong snake. India's second longest species among non venomous snakes, it can grow up to 12 feet. Most commonly mistaken for a cobra and killed. Equally comfortable on land as trees.
Look alike: Cobra



Vivek Sharma/indiansnakes.org



Common trinket snake: Gets its name due to beautiful patterns and colours. Nocturnal and arboreal snake, this snake is commonly found around human habitation. Preys on mice, small birds, lizards. Retracts body into 'S' shaped coils and may strike repeatedly when cornered.
Look alike: Striped keelback

A circus of cats and dogs

Monika Pandhare shares the story of pets that her parents have adopted



Ram Lakhan the naughty two



Mau, king of the castle

Ten years ago my parents and brother adopted an abandoned year-old Labrador, Tango. He is now the apple of their eye and the master of the house. He was a show dog who was abandoned by his owner when he developed a severe skin infection that caused him to lose all his hair.

He was found on the streets by my brother's friend who fostered him till his lovely fur grew back. It was love at first sight for us when we went there to adopt him!

A few months ago, my parents adopted another abandoned little fellow, Breezer the adorable year-old Lhasa Apso! Found wandering on the hills behind MIT college in Pune, he stayed with a couple of kind hearted boys at their hostel for a week and was moved to Vandanaa Patwardhan Goswaamii's home by Sushma Date, till either his family was found or a permanent loving home. Sushma, Vandana and Anjali Patwardhan Kudale tried tracing his previous owners with no luck. I just had to show his photo to my mom and she fell in love with him in an instant, and soon, little Breezer arrived home.

Tango and Breezer have settled in so well that it's as if they were



Bajirao

together since they were puppies, and not as abandoned doggies searching for a home.

Mau the resident cat and king of the castle, isn't really pleased about this situation, he smacks Breezer daily who in turn tries unsuccessfully to catch him then! My parents have also got 2 more cats Bajirao and Mastani—the lovey dovey pair who live on the streets and drop in twice a day for their meals.

Last but definitely not the least is the madcap sibling pair of mixed breed dogs, Ram Lakhan/Santa Banta/Rocky Mark. They're a naughty handful and have been christened these different sets of names by many who love them. My brother has named them Ram Lakhan, and they too visit once a day for food. My parents and brother live on the third floor, these cats and dogs come up three flights of stairs everyday for their meals, never getting confused as to which floor they



Breezer and Tango

are on.

It's a lovely mad circus there and the furry friends are all learning to adjust to one another each day. Love you aai, daddy, Chaitanya Gokhale for being so large hearted and loving; the furry fellows have the best life with you!

In today's world, some people just want to "own" a "pedigree" dog for their (false) status and image in society, and then are unable to comprehend that a pet should be treated like a family member and not an asset or acquisition to show off.

Pedigrees or not, they are just as faithful, loving and adorable. Please adopt, don't shop.



3 dogs and lots of fun

I'm a proud pet parent of 3 dogs - Scooby, Alpha and Hero! They stay at my farm in Pachane gaon, Mulshi and I visit them every weekend.

I adopted Scooby and his sister Sarah about a year ago. As cute little pups, they stole my heart in just a glance. Sarah had 6 little puppies and that was one of happiest days of my life. Four were adopted and I kept two of them - Alpha the first born and Hero the whining puppy.

Sadly, Sarah lost her life in a road-kill soon after and we buried her at the back of the farmhouse. I cried a lot when I went to the grave and kept some flowers there! Alpha and Hero knew why I was doing it and though they were not even 3 months old. They were sitting beside me with their faces on my lap. It is very hard to deal with the loss of a pet and it was one of my worst times.



At the farm, I feel peaceful not because of the wind or the grass and the trees, but because of my 3 beautiful 4-legged babies! Their love is very simple and unconditional. Give them your heart and they will give you theirs!

Scooby is the eldest and still the smallest. He wags his tail at the speed of lightning when he sees my

car in the drive way and jumps on us as if he is a little puppy hoping we will pick him up! When it's time for us to head back, he holds onto our legs with his paws hoping we stay.

The best moments are when I'm riding my bike on the road near the river there and the dogs are running beside me! Rolling in the grass and hiding their face thinking their entire body is hidden, jumping on us and making our clothes dirty are just some things that are the icing on the cake. They express their love with their eyes when they sleep on my lap. They protect the farmhouse from intruders and are playful with family and friends.

I don't care if my dogs have a "pedigree" or whether they are of a pure bloodline. The love they give me is equal to what any dog gives his humans and that's all that I've ever wanted!

— YASH MESTRY

Meew

Cats with hairball trouble can try this hairball lickstick for ₹950. Your cat has to lick it straight from the stick.



A rat is always attractive for a cat. This springboard rat is bound to keep kitty busy. Price: ₹250.



There's nothing as engrossing as a toy with a string attached. Check out the variety that includes feathers, rope attachments and more at Petsworld. Prices begin at ₹150.

Name Tag

Put a name tag with your phone number on your dog or cat's neck. Select from a variety of materials, colours and sizes. Prices begin at ₹200.



Oral care for meew and woof

Trixie brings mint flavoured toothpaste for dogs and cats. Priced at ₹225.



Beaphar's toothpaste with advanced enzyme action is sure to be enticing in its liver flavour. Priced at ₹280.



Dentapaste promises to prevent tartar buildup and freshens breath! Tea tree oil flavoured, it costs ₹160.

Plaque tooth wipes are available to clean teeth, gums, plaque and tartar and to freshen breath. A pack of 40 wipes by Petkin costs ₹560.



Short bath for dogs and cats



Himalaya's Fresh Coat, the no rinse spray is priced at ₹200. You just have to spray it on and brush it off your pet!

Dry Bath Cleanser is made with anti bacterial tea tree oil. It has an instant cleaner dispersed in alcohol and is soap and chemical free. Price ₹210.



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Puppy love



This Pune based group is working to get more community dogs adopted. Bharati Tambe who heads AART tells us about their effort

The AART group has been formed by animal lovers from Pune. Members are encouraged to unite and take equal responsibility of caring for community animals in their area. Mixed breed dogs have excellent survival and communication skills. The group spreads awareness to make the streets safer for them, to stop cruelty and animal abuse. Young pups that have lost their mothers, dogs who are injured, sick or in an absolutely unsafe environments are rescued. Fosters groom and feed the pups to make them fit for adoption.

Monthly adoption camps are organised by this dedicated team of animal welfare volunteers. Every volunteer, from the age of 7 years to 70 years, enthusiastically carries out the duties assigned to him or her, right from picking up the poo and pee of the puppies to the final winding up

after the camp. The most enthusiastic of the lot are of course the kids and youngsters who are tasked with babysitting the pups and kittens in their pens.

The list doesn't end here, there is a regular followup with the adopters and house checks too. A big thank you to all the vets who have always been there for us, Dr Tulpule, Dr Atul Mane, Dr Shivaji Vidhate, Dr Chirantana Mathkari, Dr Amod Kale, Dr Makarand Dixit.

Special mention needs to be made of our young volunteers who have been truly dedicated in our camp, in rescues or our van service to the needy, all round the clock - Shachi Mujumdar, Neepa Rai and Chinmay Patwardhan, and our youngest volunteer, Rajani aunty.

Recently our volunteers have designed and created some merchandise, the proceeds from the sale of these products will be used for sterilisation, rescue and treatment of street dogs and cats. Check our Facebook page - AART Pune.

Rosco the cutie

After hundreds of votes and careful deliberation by judges from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India, Rosco, whose guardian is Spandana Raj, beat nine finalists to be crowned the winner of PETA's fifth annual Cutest Indian Dog Alive contest. PETA created the contest to show that the kindest thing a prospective guardian can do is to adopt an animal from the streets or a shelter. The second-place winner of the contest is Nekti, whose guardian is Ananya Karmakar of Kolkata, and the third-place winner is Petu, whose guardian is Minima Peres of Goa.



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