

VETERINARY ADVICE

from Dr Louise Baskind

Parvo

Parvovirus, usually known as parvo, is an infectious disease that affects dogs. It causes a severe vomiting and diarrhoea syndrome, and can also affect the heart. It is highly infectious, and is passed in the faeces of infected dogs. The virus can then remain stable in the environment for years.

A dog does not have to have direct contact with an infected dog, but can contract the virus from somewhere that an infected dog has been. For this reason the virus becomes 'endemic' in an area — meaning that it is common.

Parvo can infect any non-vaccinated dog but it is of most concern in young puppies and dogs less than a year old. It is a devastating disease which has a death rate that approaches 100% if the dog is not treated by a vet. Even with veterinary treatment, there is no specific cure and treatment involves supporting the puppy while the immune system clears the infection. When infected with the virus, the dog will vomit and have diarrhoea, be unable to absorb fluids or nutrients from the gut and will be in severe pain. Treatment is expensive and involves pain relief, intravenous fluids, antibiotics, anti-vomiting medication and supportive nutrition. Even despite our best efforts, about 50% of puppies treated for parvovirus will die.

The great news is that there is a cheap, safe, and very effective preventative for parvo — a course of routine vaccinations administered at 8, 12, and 16 weeks old and then every year.



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CLOTH CAPERS

The past three years she has focused on making quilts; she enjoys a challenge and will often continue making a quilt to see how it evolves or until she is happy with the size. These may range in size from lap quilts to queen bed size and even miniature size for her dolls house.

Sue has only attended lessons in the 'stack and slash' technique, the rest of her designs and techniques are from her own motto 'have a go – there are no rules'. Sue may peruse quilt patterns, think about the fabric and colours to use, work out a pattern to compliment a particular fabric and then let ideas flow from her mind, the result being a unique quilt.

In 2017, Sue was a winner at the Braidwood Show having made a quilt from fabric given to her from someone who had purchased the fabric but could not work out what to do with it.

Sue has been a member of the Braidwood Quilters Inc for a number of years and worked tirelessly for the Airing of the Quilts; she currently enjoys attending 'Jenny's Out-of-House' Monday group to exchange ideas with like-minded people. ■



Stack and Slash

This method develops kaleidoscope blocks with a play on pattern. Rather than cutting one single piece of fabric at a time, multiple layers of identical fabric with one or two pattern repeats are stacked in a single pile and then cut simultaneously; three to six layers can be cut in an accurate fashion. Once all the pieces are cut, they are rearranged and sewn back together to make a stunning quilt block. Fabric with various patterns can create unique patterns within a block. From the pansies on the border the various circles have been created.



THUMP!

I got the call from Majors Creek Wombat Refuge at about 8.00am on a cold Sunday morning in July. A wombat had been reported killed a few kilometres south of where I live and there was a baby in the pouch. Could I go and get the joey?

Ten minutes later I had a frozen but alive wombat joey up my jumper to keep it warm until I handed her over to be hand-reared with the other rescued orphans at the Refuge.

On average I remove about four carcasses a week from the road between my place and Braidwood: wombats, kangaroos, wallabies. I'm not the only one — there are a lot of thoughtful people, not all of whom are members of NARG, who stop and remove roadkill from the middle of the road and check pouches for joeys. As much as anything else, it's a safety measure for other motorists. It's common sense to remove bodies from blind curves where they present a hazard to anyone approaching that curve, particularly at night or in fog.

What amazes me is the negative attitude displayed by some people towards animals — wildlife in particular — and those who care for them. This attitude can manifest in two ways: ignorance or anger.

Ignorance can be addressed by the right information to assist people in developing wildlife strategies for their properties and thereby develop a positive attitude towards non-domestic animals. There are, of course, those who have rusted-on misconceptions and won't budge from their position regardless of how much information is available, but I'm always hopeful that those people can change.

The anger, however, confounds me. These people lash out at anyone who is pro-wildlife and refuse to accept a more caring view. They resort to sneering put-downs or high-handed claims about their own rightness. They make ridiculous accusations.

Why would people be angry? I believe the answer is fear: fear of their own lack of compassion; fear of their incapacity to put the interests of others (including other species) ahead of their own interests; fear that their lack of compassion may be exposed — to themselves as well as others. There is no rational basis for this, but fear is not a rational emotion. It's a primal response to something we don't understand. It is, at source, the 'fight or flight' response. People who express anger at animal advocates are responding to the 'fight' instinct against something they don't understand: human compassion.



Wildlife and death

Robin Tennant Wood wants drivers to more responsible for the animals they skittle

Thankfully, however, animal carers continue to do what they do. Without them the world is a poorer place.

To answer some of the negative comments about wildlife that commonly pop up on social media:

"Wombats are in plague proportion." No, they're not. In fact, wombat populations are in decline. You're seeing a lot of them around because, firstly, their range is being reduced by human development, which means they're being marginalised into smaller and smaller territories. Also, with the dry weather, they're going to graze where they can get grass. That means in people's yards, close to homes and along the sides of roads.

"You don't know what it's like to have a wombat under your house." Yes, I do. I have had a long-running stoush with a particularly persistent wombat who seems to want to be close to me. After about four years, we have finally come to an agreement that suits us both. I've filled the burrow with stones and put wire around where he was getting under the house and in return, the wombat is welcome to graze on what's left of my grass and kick things around the outside of the house noisily in the middle of the night.

"Kangaroos and wombats are coming in from the national park. They don't control them." Right. That's what national parks are for: conserving native fauna and flora. If you're fortunate enough to live adjacent to one of our national parks,

please understand that wildlife is not going to recognise the park boundary. Be grateful. People actually pay for the privilege of seeing Australian wildlife and you're able to live with it. You're winning.

"Farmers and greenies will always disagree on wildlife." Wrong. Some of the 'greenest' people I know are farmers. These people understand the value of native wildlife for biodiversity and are able to work with it rather than against it. Sure, it takes a bit of thought and planning, but that's what good farmers do, no?

"Culling wombats will keep them away from my house." That won't work. Not in the long-term and possibly not even in the short-term. When a wombat burrow is vacated, more often than not another wombat will move into it. He or she will then need to renovate and extend to suit his- or herself. You're better off with a solution for living with the original wombat.

"Kangaroos are a pest species." No, kangaroos are a native animal. 'Pest' species are, by definition, those which have been introduced post-European settlement and which have acclimatised to the detriment of the natural environment. Like white people, for instance.

Finally, if you hit an animal on the road, please stop and remove the body from the road, and call NARG (4846 1900) and report it, giving location and time. Even if you don't care about wildlife, do you really want your grandkids to have to pay to see it? ■