

The
ESTHER HONEY
Foundation

*Improving the world for animals...
One island at a time*



ESTHER HONEY ANIMAL CLINIC
Monthly Veterinarian Report
June 2007
Tim Craig BVSc

The last month of veterinary work has seen the clinic very busy. The bulk of the work has been desexings and dealing with fish poisoning cases. However, we have also been providing primary care for routine problems such as itchy ears and also more significant problems including several animals hit my cars or motorbikes. I have been assisted by Jenny Green (vet student NZ), Simone Shaumberger (vet Austria) and now by the arrival of Mary Aviette (vet student USA).

Routine desexings has been progressing well. Without consulting the records specifically it would seem that we are desexings 4 or 5 animals most week days. I have found the clinic to be well provisioned and equipped to provide an excellent level of care during these procedures. **The drugs used in anaesthesia and pain relief as well as the suture material often exceed in quality those used in my place of employment in Australia. I feel that the quality of service provided to the desexings patients would be something to be proud of in most veterinary hospitals in the world.** All animals have returned for their suture removal thanks to the efforts of Shanna (vet nurse Australia) and there have been no problems in their recovery.

The spay and neuter program has also been of great benefit to the assisting veterinary staff. I have enjoyed helping the less experienced members of the volunteer team to become more competent in their surgical skills and to watch their abilities and confidence increase over their stay at the clinic. **I feel that in addition to benefiting the animals of the Cook Islands, the clinic has also been in my time here an effective and well-supervised place of education for the less experienced staff.**

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Notable cases for fish poisoning would be the recovery of a mixed breed dog in the period just before my arrival. Emma West (vet nurse UK) was largely responsible for the treatment of this dog and its subsequent recovery. The dog was then castrated and went home with his owners. He was in yesterday for suture removal and looked to be doing great. We also have another mixed breed dog at present who was delivered promptly to the clinic for treatment and is improving each day, with improvement even visible from the morning to the afternoon.

There has been treatment for various eye, ear and skin problems, with sarcoptic and demodectic mange and flea problems being high on the list. It would be great if we could get some additional cat flea products such as cat Frontline or Advantage. Also of great use would be an ear drop medication effective against yeasts (in Australia there is one called Dermotic, Surolan or Panolog). Any ear drops with anti-fungal medication would be of great benefit.

Whilst Jenny Green was here, we also attempted the repair of a comminuted fracture of the radius and ulna in a Labrador named Sammy. Unfortunately given his size, some issues with availability of X-ray processing, his temperament and the available orthopaedic equipment the external fixateur was unsuccessful. We had to fall back to amputation and Sammy is now recovering from his string of operations. Even though the repair was not successful it was good to have at least tried to save his leg and the owners were very appreciative of our efforts.

This provides a good summary of our work here over the last month. Back to the operating table for now. A man is flying in two cats from Mangaia Island today to be speyed then return on the afternoon flight so the message is getting around the islands. Due to the experience and skills of the other veterinary staff this month no outer island clinics have been possible.

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