



The Better Pet
Gazette

h i g h l a n d s v e t e r i n a r y h o s p i t a l . c o m . a u

think before you

hop!



Each Easter, rabbits are often seen as cute, seasonal gifts. Sadly, this well-meaning tradition leads to many rabbits being abandoned once the novelty wears off.

Don't be fooled... Rabbits are not low-maintenance pets or short-term companions — they are a long-term commitment, just like dogs or cats.

Rabbits can live for 8–12 years and require daily care, appropriate housing, a specialised diet, regular veterinary checks, and plenty of space to exercise and socialise.

They are intelligent, sensitive animals who can become stressed or unwell if their needs are not met. Children may quickly lose interest after the initial excitement, leaving adults unprepared for the responsibility that follows.

Impulse purchases at Easter often result in rabbits being surrendered to shelters

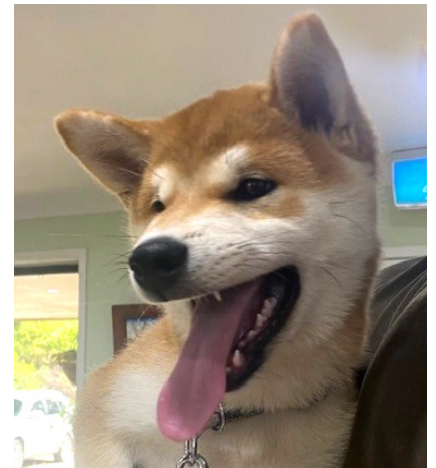
once families realise the true level of care involved.

If you are considering welcoming a rabbit into your family, it should be a carefully planned decision made at the right time — not driven by a holiday tradition. Also, it's important to get your rabbit desexed and your bunny will need a yearly vaccination to protect it from Calicivirus.

easter closure

Please note that HIGHLANDS will be closed from Good Fri, 3 April and re-open on Tue, 7 April 2026. Happy Easter, everyone!

Meet Ren, a 15 week-old Shiba Inu. Small, fox-like and full of personality, the Shiba Inu is one of Japan's oldest dog breeds. This little guy is as cute as they come!



The Better Pet Gazette is a monthly newsletter full of informative articles and tips on pet health as well as updates on what's happening at the practice. We hope you enjoy the read!

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need an appointment?
BOOK ONLINE

REMINDER

Refill Your Pet's Prescription Online!



Did you know you can easily request prescription refills for your pet through our online system? It's a quick and convenient way to make sure your furry friend has the medications they need, right when they need them. Refills are available for current HIGHLands patients who already have existing prescriptions [here](#).

If your pet requires a check-up before we can issue a refill, our team will contact you to arrange a visit. We're here to help make the process smooth and stress-free for both you and your pet.

For any questions or assistance, give us a call at (02) 4872 1144 — we're always happy to help!

need a prescription refill?
CLICK HERE



crate smart

the secret to a happy, calm puppy

Crate training can be one of the best tools during puppyhood when done correctly. Think of it as your puppy's bedroom — not a punishment.

Crates provide a safe, calm space to rest, help teach routine and boundaries, and keep puppies secure when you can't supervise them.

A Safe Space to Rest

Crate training often gets a bad rap, but when done correctly, it provides your puppy with a safe, comfortable space — think of it as their bedroom, not a punishment. Crates help puppies rest, feel secure, and learn routines while keeping them safe when you can't supervise every moment.

Supports Training and Routine

Crates help teach boundaries and independence. Puppies quickly learn when it's time to play and when it's time to rest, making training, toileting, and settling easier for both you and your puppy.

A Positive "Time Out"

If your puppy becomes overstimulated or nippy, a short crate rest lets them reset. This isn't punishment — think of it like a nap for a tired toddler. It helps them calm down, regain focus, and return to play or training in a positive frame of mind.

Keeping Puppies Safe

Crates protect puppies from chewing cords, eating unsafe items, or getting into trouble when you can't watch them. Crates give owners peace of mind, knowing their puppy is safe and secure while they step away.

How Long In The Crate?

Excluding overnight sleep:

- **8–10 weeks:** up to 1 hour
- **10–12 weeks:** up to 1–1.5 hours
- **3–4 months:** up to 2 hours
- **4–6 months:** up to 3 hours

Always include breaks for toileting, play, training, and human interaction.

Crate Use & Tips

Crates should allow a pup to stand, turn, and lie down comfortably. Include soft bedding, safe toys, or a comfort item, but avoid collars or unsafe objects. Use the crate for naps, meals, short absences, and overnight sleeping. Gradually build up crate time with praise so it stays a positive space.

Crate Size Matters

Choosing the right size from the start helps your pup feel comfortable, safe, and confident in their crate as they settle in. Too big can lead to accidents; too small can be stressful. Many crates have dividers so they can "grow" with your puppy.

Patience Is Key

Be patient as your puppy learns to enjoy their crate. With time, consistency, and positive reinforcement, it will become a safe haven they love — and a helpful tool you'll both rely on for calm, happy moments together.



Dental procedures can be frightening for dogs and cats (and many humans!).

Anaesthesia allows veterinary teams to provide dental care safely, gently, and without pain. It enables thorough cleaning below the gumline, dental X-rays, and treatment of painful teeth while keeping pets calm and still.

During the procedure, pets are carefully monitored to ensure their comfort and safety.

Recommended dental care helps prevent infection, supports overall health, and ensures pets live more comfortably, protecting our little heroes long after they wake up and greet us with a wag or a lick!

Don't forget – HIGHLands offers free dental checks to keep your pet's smile healthy and happy! Schedule an appointment with us on 4872 1144.

upcoming

f LIVE TALK

should all cats and dogs be
desexed?
the great snip debate

Join us on your lunch break:
06.05.26
@ 12:30pm

@ facebook.com / highlandsveterinaryhospital

f LIVE Highlands Veterinary Hospital
06 MAY · 2026 · 12:30PM

Veterinarian Dr Diederik Gelderman will explore the pros, cons, and potential health and behavioural impacts of desexing, challenging the idea that every cat and dog automatically needs the procedure.

Supporters of compulsory desexing argue it helps reduce unwanted animals entering shelters and limits the impact of roaming cats on native wildlife. Desexed pets are also less likely to wander or breed uncontrollably. However, some breeders and vets believe decisions should be made case by case, considering factors like breed and health, and worry strict laws may deter owners from seeking veterinary care. In his upcoming talk, Dr Diederik will unpack both sides of this complex issue. **Please note that he will be away on holidays in April, so the next livestream will return in May.**

*Please listen in on Wed, 6 May at 12.30pm on our Facebook page **here**. If you are unable to attend this Facebook talk, you can find the recording in the Live section under the More menu for up to one month after the live - or click **here**.*

MARCH FACEBOOK LIVE TALK RECAP

“What If I Had Waited?”

The 10 Most Common 'What ifs' After Pet Euthanasia”

For families who surrender a beloved pet for euthanasia, the decision rarely ends at the clinic door. Long after, quiet questions linger. What if I had waited one more day? What if another treatment had worked? What if they weren't ready to go?



In his talk, Dick explored the emotional reality of pet euthanasia, including the difficult decisions families face and the lingering “what if” questions that often follow, emphasising that these choices are made from a place of deep love and compassion, even when grief later reshapes how those moments are remembered.

*This video is available until the 9 April, to watch **click here**. To view any of Dr Deiderik's past live sessions, just go **here**.*

5



NATIONAL
pet month
APR
2026

habits that help pets live longer, happier lives

April is National Pet Month! Being a great pet owner is about far more than providing food and shelter. It is a long-term commitment that requires time, patience, compassion, and a willingness to put an animal's needs first for their entire life.

1.

Meeting all needs

A responsible pet owner meets all needs. Pets require proper nutrition, safe housing, exercise, and regular veterinary care, including vaccinations and prompt treatment when unwell.

2.

Know your pet

Know your pet before bringing them home. Understanding a species' or breed's needs helps prevent stress, behaviour issues, and neglect, ensuring a good match for your household.

3.

Time & consistency

Time and consistency are equally important. Pets rely on routine and stability to feel secure. Training, enrichment, and social interaction help animals feel confident and well-adjusted. This requires daily effort, even when life is busy or circumstances change.

4.

A lifelong commitment

Perhaps most importantly, a great pet owner sees their animal as a lifelong responsibility. Pets may live for many years and will depend on their owners throughout their lives, including illness, ageing, and behavioural changes. Responsible owners plan for this commitment and understand that rehoming should be a last resort, not a convenience.

5.

Lead by example

Children can learn wonderful lessons from pet ownership, but adults must always remain accountable for the animal's care. A great pet owner leads by example, showing kindness, respect, and empathy.

When pets are treated with care, understanding, and respect, everyone benefits — especially the animals who trust us with their lives.



Helping Paws

HIGHLANDS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

Helping Paws was established to support pet owners facing financial hardship when urgent veterinary care cannot be delayed. Medical emergencies rarely occur at a convenient time, and animals in critical need require immediate assistance.

Through the generosity of local individuals and businesses who donate items for our raffle prize baskets, we can provide timely support where it is needed most.

For those who cannot have a pet, perhaps you could donate to such an initiative. Animals give without conditions; all they want is to be healthy and to be with their family. In today's highly stressed lifestyle, the gift of giving helps all parties to feel as though they have helped where it was needed.

We sincerely thank everyone who has contributed or purchased tickets toward our raffles — your support has made a meaningful difference.