ANIMAL ANTICS

"WHAT DO I DO IF I FIND AN INJURED OR LOST ANIMAL"?

You can imagine the scenario - you are driving home on a cold winter's evening and see a poor dejected bundle at the side of the road. Upon inspection, it reveals itself to be an injured deer. What do you do? Then there's the hedgehog that has a nasty injury from your garden strimmer, the clutch of baby sparrows who have been orphaned by your neighbour's cat, and the family of foxes who are suffering from mange. Not to mention that domestic rabbit that you found down the street, the family of kittens looking for a good home and the old dog what needs a new owner.

Firstly, if there's a potential hazard to humans or if you suspect something illegal, phone the police. For example, and injured deer on the road could cause an accident, so the police should be alerted. Secondly, there are numerous animal charities and rescue centres that you can contact for advice and guidance. Some may suggest you bring an injured animal to them, providing it is easily transportable. Others will offer advice over the telephone that will allow you to treat the animal yourself before releasing it into the wild. Others specialise in finding homes for unwanted pets.

Sometimes the experts may advise you to leave a wild animal where you found it - for instance, baby birds are often "rescued" during their first few days out of the nest, even though they are following nature's course and not in need of any assistance. On other occasions, a charity representative may be willing to come to the animal - but of course this may not always be immediate.

Meanwhile, you will want to do the very best for the animal concerned. If it's obviously a lost pet; the RSPCA, police or local vet may be able to help. Many animals carry a microchip under the skin, giving details of the owner - in which case a vet can usually scan the animal in order to read the details. The local council Dog Warden is also a good contact.

A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION … FIGHT THE FLAB!

With the dawning of 2008 and New Years resolutions being in the forefront of our minds, may I please remind you of how important it is to get your pet into shape!

Unfortunately, weight gain is frequently overlooked, since it usually occurs gradually. An overweight dog is more at risk in surgery, susceptible to injury and will experience stress on the heart, lungs, liver, kidneys and joints. As the weight increases, so does the risk of developing cardiac, digestive and circulatory problems, diabetes, arthritis, fatigue, and exercise and heat intolerance.

Please log onto http://www.petpatrol365.co.uk/downloads/Jan07.pdf for a copy of last year's full article.

Giving paunchy pooches a helping hand in the battle of the bulge, and enabling owners to monitor their dogs' exercise routine **Pet Patrol 365** has **5 FREE Petometers to give away!!!** For a chance to win, simply log onto http://www.petpatrol365.co.uk/html/contact.htm and leave your details. 5 lucky entrants will be randomly selected to **win a FREE Petometer**. The closing date for all entries is Thursday 31st January 2008.

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