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Animal Crackers

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Animal Crackers

Zoonoses

There are over 150 diseases which can be transmitted from animals to man (zoonoses). Some are nationwide public health problems. The public press has exaggerated the importance of others or, in some cases, reported unproven association as fact. Following are some brief notes on a few different zoonoses.

Rabies is a zoonotic disease of national importance. It may affect any warm-blooded animal, and infection usually results from inoculation of virus-contaminated saliva into bite wounds. Cats as well as dogs should be vaccinated—recently more rabid cats than dogs have been reported.

Animal bites are one of the most common pet-associated zoonoses. In addition to the possibility of rabies and tetanus, they can result in painful wound infection. Wild animals should not be kept as pets. Enforcement of animal control laws should be strict.

Visceral larva migrans is a disease of children caused by larvae of roundworms (*Toxocara* sp.). It is usually contracted by children eating dirt contaminated with embryonated ascarid eggs passed by dogs and cats. Treatment for ascarids in kittens and puppies should be routine, and prompt disposal of waste can minimize exposure.

Toxoplasmosis is another disease which can be caused by exposure to infective oocysts in the feces of cats, as well as by eating infected meat. It is unfortunate that some reports have been misinterpreted. The most severe consequence in humans is transplacental transfer of the parasite to the fetus. Daily emptying of litter boxes and proper waste disposal is a good control measure. However, all carnivorous species may become infested with the parasite, *Toxoplasma gondii*, by eating raw meat containing viable organisms. Cats seem to receive far too much unfavorable publicity as carriers of this disease.

Ringworm is an infection of hair, skin, and nails caused by various fungi. Sometimes, a cat or dog may be a "carrier" with no visible lesions. However, humans may be infected by direct contact.

Sylvatic plague (*Yersinia pestis* infection) exists in certain areas of western and southwestern United States. Sporadic cases of bubonic plague in man are associated with exposure to rodents or their fleas. It can be present in prairie dog colonies. Cases have been reported in cats but not in dogs. This is a disease that is mentioned only as an example of the rare and unusual.

When you read about a "new" or unusual disease, it would be well to check as to exactly how many cases have been reported. Reports of a few isolated cases may be repeated so many times, one case may result in reports of an "epidemic."



Insecticides

There have been reports about adverse reactions to products sold over-the-counter for flea and tick control. Many times this could have been avoided if directions were carefully followed. **READ THE LABELS!** Never mix chemicals or increase recommended amounts. Use the products at recommended intervals.

It has been suggested that a new product should be tested on a small area. It is known that some animals react differently than others. Products safe on dogs might be toxic to cats. Different breeds may react differently.

Flea and tick control is an on-going process. It requires treatment of the environment as well as the animal. House and yard must be sprayed or fogged. Empty and spray vacuum cleaner bags. Don't forget the inside of the car if the animal rides with you.

Professional advice may be necessary for satisfactory results. But if you do it yourself, **follow directions on the package.**

If you suspect poisoning, call a poison control center. Check your telephone directory for a local number. The Illinois Animal Poison Information Center is another source of information. Their telephone is 217-333-3611. Be sure to have the label of the suspected product when you call.

The Finnish Spitz

The Finnish Spitz is the latest breed to be admitted to registry in the American Kennel Club Stud Book. Beginning January 1, 1988, it can be shown in the regular classes in the Non-Sporting Group. It is the 130th breed recognized by AKC. (Eight breeds are divided into varieties based on size and color, so there may be 141 breeds and breed varieties competing at AKC shows.)

The Finnish Spitz is now the national dog of Finland. The dog is a natural bark pointer. The dog flushes the bird and sets up a sharp, ringing bark (sometimes called a yodel) to inform the hunter of the opportunity for a shot. It is a medium-sized dog with a dense, golden-red coat which, combined with its prick ears, pointed muzzle and bushy tail, give it a foxlike appearance.

The breed standard describes the temperament as active and friendly, lively and eager, faithful, brave but cautious. The dog is rugged enough (weighing about thirty pounds) to be an ideal house pet. A "Finkie" (the British nickname) responds to human conversation by "talking" with various throaty sounds and purring.

The first Finnish Spitz was imported from England to the United States in 1959, and about 750 dogs have been registered with the Finnish Spitz Club of America. Look for them at the shows.

More information can be obtained from Mrs. Betty Isakoff, Finnish Spitz Club of America, 400 Houcks Rd., Monkton, MD 21111.



New Anesthesia Teaching Aids

The anesthesiology course during the spring semester will be more interesting, thanks to a computer and programs illustrating principles of anesthesiology and situations one may encounter in the operating room. The Animal Rescue League of Philadelphia provided the School with funds to purchase a computer and a host of anesthesiology teaching programs.

"Anesthesiology is a difficult subject to grasp in lectures," said Dr. Alan Klide, associate professor of anesthesiology. "The concepts are hard to understand and these programs will illustrate them on the computer screen." The programs teach the uptake and distribution of inhaled anesthetics. The students have to choose the amounts of vaporizer, oxygen, and anesthetic for a hypothetical patient. The program plots the effects of drugs over time and provides a curve. If the student chooses an improper amount of drugs or oxygen the

graph will reflect it and corrections can be made. "The programs illustrate on the screen the effects of various substances and make it easier to understand the concepts involved," said Dr. Klide. "They will also make the course more interesting."

The computer will also be used to demonstrate different anesthesia techniques. For example, at Penn's Vet School closed-circuit anesthesia with low oxygen flow is used. This requires a minimum of anesthetics. Another method is to use a larger amount of anesthetics, and this can be simulated on the computer so that students can be familiar with both techniques.

"The programs also allow us to demonstrate how drug action varies from patient to patient. We can select a hypothetical patient and assign all kinds of values, simulating a critical situation," said Dr. Klide. "Anesthesia has to be individualized for each patient, and these programs allow the students to practice this and observe the results on the screen."

The new teaching aids will be used in rounds and will be utilized in an elective for small animal anesthesia. "They allow us to prepare the students more thoroughly for the actual situations they may encounter when participating in anesthesia and surgery. They will be familiar with the various drugs' actions and will be able to evaluate a situation much more quickly. These programs are great teaching aids and will enable us to teach things that previously could only be learned through experience."



Cold Weather Reminders

Every year there are reports of antifreeze poisoning. It is very toxic for dogs, yet they seem to love it. Be careful where you drain radiators, and seek prompt veterinary attention if any antifreeze is ingested.

Salt and other products used to melt ice can cause sore feet, especially in city dogs. It is a good idea to wash feet with warm water when dogs have been out on salted sidewalks. When towel-drying, check between the pads.

Dogs kept in warm apartments, especially the toy breeds, should wear a sweater or coat when taken outside in cold weather. Different breeds have different requirements and some tolerate cold much better than others. If a dog is kept outside, it must have a dry bed with protection from the wind. Young puppies must be kept warm. Bathing should be done only when necessary—regular grooming is more important.

There have been some accidents when cats have found a warm spot to sleep under the hoods of cars. It might be wise to check your cat's whereabouts before you start the car.

Christmas ornaments can be a hazard. Some plants such as poinsettia and mistletoe are poisonous and should be kept out of reach of pets.

It is better not to give a puppy as a Christmas gift. Too much is going on for most people to give the puppy the proper attention. It would be better to gift-wrap a collar and leash with a note that the puppy will arrive later. The same is true for kittens.

Be sure your pet wears an identification tag and/or license at all times. A lost pet can cause heartbreak at any time of the year. A house pet lost outside in freezing weather is at particularly great risk.

Books

A Celebration of Rare Breeds by Cathy J. Flamholtz (OTR Publications, P.O. Box 1243, Ft. Payne, AL 35967, \$24.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling).

This book gives history and characteristics of 53 breeds, most of which are not recognized by the American Kennel Club. It is an excellent reference with numerous photographs. Following are brief notes from the text:

- The Akbash Dog is a large, white, sheepguarding breed from Turkey. These dogs are natural guardians, may be aggressive, and are not suitable for all families. The Anatolian Shepherd is a similar breed, but their color may be tan with black nose and ears, as well as white.

- The Leonberger is another large breed which is even-tempered and said to be fond of children. They have webbed toes, and the lion-colored coat has a pronounced mane or ruff on the neck. The breed was developed in Germany from a Newfoundland-St. Bernard cross, with some Great Pyrenees added. They are trustworthy guard dogs.

- The Fila Brasileiro is the most popular breed in Brazil today. It is a large, strong guard dog weighing 100 pounds and is nearly 30 inches high. The Fila is not a breed for everyone. It is very wary and distrustful of strangers but good with its family.

- The Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever is a small retrieving breed about 20 inches high and weighing under 50 pounds. It is described as "wonderful companions, great children's playmates, super obedience dogs, flashy show dogs and fun to own." When hunting, the toller attracts game by running back and forth, usually retrieving a "tolling stick" thrown by the hunter.

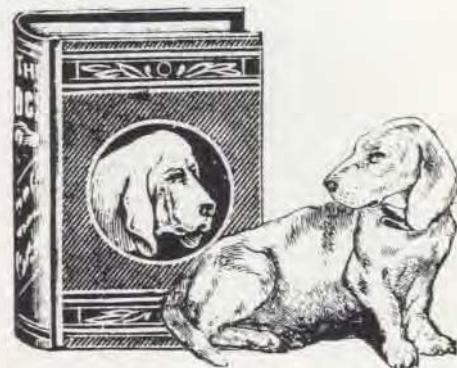
- The Catahoula Leopard Dog is a native American breed. It is the Official State Dog of Louisiana. It is a medium to large breed, about 25 inches in height. The breed's most distinctive feature is its white or "glass" eye. It comes in a wide range of colors, preferably with leopard spotting. The Catahoula is a multi-purpose breed *par excellence*. It has an inherent desire to herd livestock, has been used for hunting large and small game, is a superb home guardian and a great family or child's companion.

- The Czech or Cesky Terrier was "invented" by crossing the Scottish Terrier and Sealyham. Its color is blue or brown. About ten inches tall and weighing under 20 pounds, the Czech Terrier is a household companion, an avid hunter and a good show dog.

- The Shiba is an ancient Japanese breed. It is an active and alert small dog that can adapt well to city or country living. It is related to, but smaller than the Akita. It comes in many colors, but red is the most popular. The breed has a distinctive "foxy" appearance with prick ears and tail curling over the back.

There are chapters on the Beauceron, Karelian Bear Dog, Löwchen, Sloughi, Telomian, and more. It all makes very interesting reading and provides useful information about rare and unusual breeds.

If you are considering purchase of a dog, visit a breeder and see puppies and adults. Don't select a breed just because it is a conversation piece or something different. Be sure to consider the training which might be necessary. There are 130 breeds eligible for registration with the American Kennel Club, while over 300 breeds are recognized by the Federation Canine International, the governing body of dogs in much of Europe, Asia, and South America. This book gives excellent background material and can help the prospective owner study a breed and make an intelligent decision about whether it is a suitable one.



The Rare Breed Handbook by Dee Gannon (Golden Box Press, 22-02 Raphael St., Fairlawn, NJ 07410, \$22.95).

This is a loose-leaf book which should be most useful for judges. It contains standards for 50 rare breeds divided, as by the American Kennel Club, into seven groups—2 in Sporting, 9 in Hounds, 19 in Working, 3 in Terriers, 5 in Toys, 3 in Non-Sporting, and 9 in Herding.

A "Rare Breed" is defined as "A purebred dog which is not eligible for full registration with the American Kennel Club but which has a breed standard and is registered with a National or International Kennel Club." The book gives information on rare breed shows, judging tips, and the U.S. Registry for each breed.

This is a good reference for those who have become involved in showing and judging rare breeds. It is a good beginning, and additions and changes probably will appear in future editions. A glossary would be helpful to define some terms used in the standards, but this really should be done by the standard-writers.

Eighteenth Annual Symposium

The Eighteenth Annual Symposium, *Your Veterinarian and Your Dogs*, will be presented January 30, 1988, at the Veterinary Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

During the day-long event, four faculty members will discuss canine medical topics. Dr. Betsy Dayrell-Hart, lecturer in neurology, will speak about *Seizures and more*. Dr. Robert J. Washabau, lecturer in medicine, will discuss *Canine esophageal diseases*.

In the afternoon, Dr. Kevin Shanley, lecturer in dermatology, will speak about *Allergic skin diseases in dogs*. The final speaker, Dr. Stuart C. Helfand, assistant professor of medicine, will discuss *Signals of cancer*. The program is being supported by the Iams Company.

After each lecture, there will be a brief question-and-answer session. The program begins at 9:30 a.m. at VHUP in Philadelphia. The cost is \$35, which includes

lunch and parking. Advance reservations are required and can be made by contacting Dr. M. Josephine Deubler, 3850 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104. Telephone (215) 898-8862.



Henry P. Schneider Dies

Dr. Henry P. Schneider (V'34) died at the age of 75. Dr. Schneider was director of biological research and chairman of the department of biomedical supporting services at Hahnemann Medical College, Philadelphia. He also served as professor of anatomy, physiology, and biophysics at Hahnemann until his retirement in 1982. Hahnemann University gave him professor emeritus status in 1984.

In addition to teaching and research at Hahnemann, Dr. Schneider maintained a general veterinary practice in the Gwynedd Valley-Spring House area from 1934 to 1959. Dr. Schneider served as president of the School's Alumni Association and as president of the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association. In 1984, the School presented him with its Centennial Award of Merit. Dr. Schneider is survived by his wife, Catherine Schneider; daughters Barbara Simons, Harriet Zubar Day, and Suzanne, and six grandchildren.