

AS TIME TICKS BY.....

Time seems to be flying by, September is here, the nights are drawing in

and the clock ticks on towards the year end. We may start to think of

winter ahead and all it brings but before that we have autumn with

it's beautiful colours and hopefully still warm climes.

This season though can bring its share of parasitic problems to your pet. One of these is the **Harvest mite** which may be commonly found on your pet at this time of year. It appears as tiny orange clusters of mites usually between the toes, on the tummy or around the ears. Although not strictly parasites, as they do not feed off your pet, they will cause intense irritation to some animals, just by crawling over their skin, when they brush onto them from the long grass. Your pet may then make itself very sore by over scratching or licking and in these cases you will need to take it to your veterinary surgeon for treatment.

Another major problem at this time of year is the **Tick**. These will brush onto your pet from the grass where they may have fallen from wildlife or farm animals. They attach to your pet's skin and suck its blood and, once full, will fall off again back to the ground. These parasites can cause disease in your pet in various ways. Firstly they can cause irritation or infection at the site of the bite and, in some cases, large abscesses may appear. Secondly they can spread infections into the blood stream, which can then spread throughout your pet's body. Lyme disease, which causes lameness and high temperatures, can be caught in this way and this can also affect humans. Other tick-borne diseases, which originally were only seen in warmer parts of Europe, are now occurring in this country due to 'foreign' ticks being imported from the continent on travelling pets and surviving here due to global

warming. Any of these diseases needs prompt attention from your veterinary surgeon if your pet is to make a full recovery.

Ticks can be treated in two ways. Firstly, by prevention, which involves using an insecticide on your pet, to deter ticks from jumping on, and killing them if they do. Secondly, by removal, using a tick remover, if you actually find ticks on your pet. Your veterinary surgeon can advise you on suitable products for use in your particular pet. Never be tempted to burn or apply chemicals to a tick as this may make it contract, and by doing so, possibly injecting any infection it is carrying in to your pet.

So remember, as time ticks on through the autumn, regularly check for ticks on your pet. As we all know, prevention is better than cure!



Adult deer tick, [*Ixodes scapularis*](#)

