

The Falconer

October 2017



Message from the chairman:

To all the members,

There have been a number of events over the last month arranged for club members or supported by the club.

The weekend at Brighton Ferry was enjoyed by those who attended, where a number of activities (some even falconry related) took place. It was good to see the active involvement of new members to the club.

The training day hosted by Bull-x was successful and supported by a number of YHC members. With other falconers present from outside the club, the YHC were seen in a good light.

A number of club members interested in longwings and their flights at Roprey attended the Wingbeat event at Duncombe Park in support of the event. There were stunning displays of flying from both birds and machines.

For some members there has been a good start to the hunting season, some are still waiting for birds to finish the moult. Sadly I have been made aware of a few falconers associated with the club that have experienced a tragic and upsetting start to the season. I hope that they realise that others are aware of the impact of their loss and that the support other club members have offered is heartfelt and genuine.

For those who are still waiting for feathers to harden, and the wind and rain to stop as well as those who have already started hunting, I wish you all the best for the coming season. Happy and safe flying.

Steve Eastwood



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Ticks (no laughing matter!)

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My first encounter with a tick was when my childhood pet, a tortoise, had a horrible spider like creature embedded in his neck. My dad burnt the critter off with a cigarette and that was the end of it. Fortunately Fred suffered no ill consequences but my dad's method of removal is one to be avoided.

All ticks belong to one of two major families. Ixodidae or hard ticks and Argasidae or soft ticks. The one you or your dog is most likely to be bitten by is the sheep tick (Ixodes ricinus). Ticks are spider like, egg shaped blood sucking creepy crawlies. They have eight legs and vary in size from 1mm to 1cm long. When full they resemble a grey pea. They are commonly found in grassland, woodland and heath areas and are common around sheep and deer.

Mostly active between spring and autumn but are still active throughout the rest of the year. Ticks cannot fly or jump so will walk or drop onto you or your dog. Early removal of a tick is important to lessen the chances of disease. Run your hands over your dogs coat after exercise, they are big enough to feel, especially around ears, head, neck and feet. Humans are likely to have them on legs.

If you do find one use a Tick removal tool. These are very cheap to buy at pet stores, vets or on-line. They come with very clear instructions and it is a relatively straightforward process. The most important thing is to ensure all the head parts are removed. Don't try burning or covering with vaseline or any other chemical as this can cause the tick to regurgitate and increase the risk of infection.

The two main risks are Lyme Disease and Babesiosis.

If your dog has Lyme Disease they may become depressed, lose appetite, have painful or swollen joints, have a fever and swollen lymph nodes. Treatment can begin with antibiotics.

In humans a red rash will appear around the bite resembling a dart board. Some symptoms are similar to a dogs. Left untreated it can develop into conditions such as viral meningitis, facial palsy, arthritis and nerve damage. For more info go to Public Health England.

Babesiosis is rare in England and so far is only found in Southern England and the Continent.

There are several hot spots for tick infestation in UK two of which are North York Moors and The Lake District.

Unfortunately because of the longer warmer, wetter, winters ticks are increasing in numbers.

Prevention is better than a cure so look for Spot on treatments, collars and tablets which are readily available and help prevent attacks. And if the critter does get a hold make sure you have a removal tool in your first aid kit !!

Karen Eastwood

