BOOK REVIEWS

Dogs and Cats in the Urban Environment: A Handbook of Municipal Pet Management, 2nd edition, RW Murray and HE Penridge, Chiron Media, Mooloolah, 1997, more than 326 pages, ISBN 0 9586784 1 3

Dick Murray and Helen Penridge are well known to practitioners involved in Urban Animal Management/Municipal Pet Management (MPM) in Australia. Their first book ‘Dogs in the urban environment’ (1992) broke new ground in being the first book of its type to apply a more rigorous, scientific approach to the problems of urban pet management but did so in a way that was contemporary, colloquial and very readable. The second edition has attempted much more and has achieved an excellent balance of content and readability. The book is produced in hard cover and set out in a two-column journalistic style with appropriate graphics and boxes to highlight specific points. In addition, margin highlights draw the attention of the reader to specific quotes within.

The text is divided into four sections and an appendix. Part 1 describes general principles and sets the scene for the more applied sections of the book. This section is key to the authors’ approach to MPM and the need for Councils to meet the community’s need, not impose impractical and unpopular regulations upon pet owners. Paradigms are an important tool used effectively by the authors to draw the reader away from narrow perceptions of ‘dog control’. One of the first is the ‘wagon wheel’ paradigm, in which the MPM Unit of Council is the hub and all the stakeholders (pet breeders, retailers, vets, welfare agencies etc.) speak to the spokes. The concluding item of the book draws on the ‘climbing wheel’ paradigm where this integrated MPM unit inches forward to ‘best practice’. Part 2 titled ‘Dogs’, covers all the core issues including registration, restraint, dog bites, barking, health issues and unwanted pets. In each of these sections the relative importance of the problem, the underlying human and animal components of the problem as well as practical and tried solutions to these problems are discussed.

Part 3 titled ‘Cats’, is a new section not present in the first edition, and reflects the growing concern in the community regarding cats. The differences in behaviour of dogs and cats and the human-cat bond are discussed. These differences are used to develop strategies to cat management. Nowhere are these differences more evident than with the stray cat problem as compared to the stray dog problem.

Part 4 is titled ‘Putting it all together’. It does just that.

The authors have achieved a notable success in again pushing the boundaries of MPM wider. In doing so, they have created a significant problem for themselves in being ‘expert’ in areas as diverse as occupational health and safety, animal behaviour and compliance theory. They have acknowledged in the front of the book the help of an extensive network of experts in UAM. This book will be of greatest use to Municipal Pet Officers (Animal Control Officers) and Councillors, but it is also a must for all veterinarians involved small animal practice as they are a vital ‘spoke’ in the authors’ wagon wheel of Municipal Pet Management - and they derive a substantial portion of their income from it!

M Banyard

Consultations in Feline Internal Medicine 3, JR August, WB Saunders Co. Distributed by Harcourt Brace Co, Marrickville NSW, 1997, 673 pages, ISBN 0 7216 5814 8

This edition ranges from the daily vomiting, scabby skin and cystitis problems in cats, to the rarer and emerging problems of Bartonella henselae, Lyme disease, pancreatitis and transmissible mycarditis. It is a book I take regularly off the shelf and it always has accessible and pertinent information. Dr August is forming a useful anthology of his books by listing articles in previous editions which are still relevant to the topic, thus increasing the value of the collection.

The book covers some of the newer infectious diseases and the old problems of coronavirus, as well as an update on diagnostic techniques. The section on gastroenterology is essential reading if only for the tables of medical therapy and flow charts on treatment of constipation/obstipation/megacolon in cats. Oral disease, chronic vomiting, liver disease and pancreatitis are also covered, providing useful information on management, prognosis and diagnosis.

The section on endocrine and metabolic diseases contains information in a digestible form, particularly the chapters on diabetes mellitus.

The updates on dermatology alone make this book worthwhile. The chapters are clear, easily read and the information easily absorbed. The result will be the elimination of many of those difficult problems with bald and scabby cats. The book is the next best thing to a dermatologist on the premises.

The section on cardiology and respiratory disease discusses diagnostics and features some of the ‘newer’ cardiac and bronchial diagnoses and lesions.

The section on the urinary system provides updates on the perennial problems of chronic renal failure on cats and both medical and behavioural problems of cystitis and lower urinary tract inflammation. There are some very useful flowcharts and tables, particularly with diagnosis of elimination problems (common cat ‘misbehaviours’ in a nutshell). The nephrology section deals clearly with common manifestations of brain and spinal disease, and also the newer topic of electrodiagnostic evaluation of hearing and vision.

The section on haemopoietic and lymphatic systems once again are presented in a digestible form. The section discusses bone marrow transplantation and the medical and surgical management of the oncological patient.

A section entitled ‘Population medicine’, deals with the often difficult problems in catteries. There is a chapter on producing healthier kittens by actually diagnosing the causes of death in siblings, better oral health, managing infertility and public health aspects of zoonoses.

The title suggests that the book is a general treatise on everyday subjects. It is in fact a very detailed and useful text that provides answers so that the subject can be discussed confidently with clients.

K Kendall

Animal Health Strategies, B Jones, FT Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare Publishing, London, UK, 1997, 130 pages, ISBN 1 85334 490 7

Animal health strategies claims it is a report to ‘provide a perspective on, and to identify strategic issues in, the development of the animal health industries’. It is a series of facts and tables interspersed with editorial perceptions and opinion about issues that confront and affect the global animal health industries. It is also an overview of the major corporate players that make up the global industry and identifies trends and offers strategic ideas for these players into the 21st century. It speculates on who are the emerging players and what are the fundamentals that will make for their emergence, as well as the product types that will be relevant and available for the veterinary and animal industries into the next millennium.

The report is contemporaneous and well ordered, setting out its text under nine well indexed chapters: introduction; scope of the industry; major markets and products; leading companies; industry pressure points; new technologies; perceived opportunities; strategic issues; and outlook and conclusions.

The report may be of limited interest to members of the veterinary profession unless they are involved in one of the following categories: management of an animal health company, legislator or bureaucrat working with animal health, executive of an animal industry body or associated organisation, or technical management in the animal industries.

Some of the opinions and issues raised may well act as means to provoke discussion on the wider issues confronting the animal industries. The opinions are assertively stated and appear well thought through and argued. They are supported with examples where appropriate.

Though an interesting read, the book may be considered a ‘must read’ for only those involved in the above-mentioned categories. The report substantially achieves its stated objective.

Doug R Ross