



Annual Review of Cases 1995

The data for the 1995 report was provided by members of the APBC the target figure of 1500 dog and 100 cat cases was exceeded. These cases are only a proportion of the total cases seen by the membership.

The authors of this report, David Appleby MAPBC and Emma Magnus MSc would like to thank the following for their contributions of data:

Richard Allport, David Appleby & Associates, Gwen Bailey, Caroline Bower, Donna Brander, John Fisher, Margaret Goddard, Sarah Heath, Anne McBride, Katie Patmore, Erica Peachey and Julie Sellors.

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The APBC - The Way Forward

The last year has seen a changing of the guard, with some familiar faces taking a back seat to let others come forward with fresh ideas and renewed energy for the future.

John Fisher (retiring Chairman) and Peter Neville (retiring Hon. Secretary) have retreated to the "back benches" from where they will act as observers and advisors. The Association is grateful for the many years of hard work they have put in to make it what it is today, with nearly forty members and advisors world-wide. In the UK alone there are 54 clinics, four of which are held at University Veterinary Schools.

Gwen Bailey BSc (Hons), Animal Behaviourist to the Blue Cross, has become the APBC's new Chairman whilst Caroline Bower BVM&S, MRCVS, a well known member of the veterinary profession, is the APBC's new Honorary Secretary and Erica Peachey BSc (Hons) the association's Honorary Treasurer.

Pauline Appleby has been appointed as Administrator to deal with the day to day enquiries and business matters. As a result of this appointment, a new office facility has been created to enable enquiries to be dealt with.

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These facilities provide a more efficient service for clients, referring veterinary surgeons and all those seeking to contact the APBC or its members.

With a new Membership Selection Committee, chaired by Claire Guest BSc (Hons), in place to review applications to The Association, it is hoped that more professional, competent, caring Animal Behaviour Counsellors will join the existing members to expand the group and provide a greater forum for the exchange of ideas. The APBC hopes to see an increase in numbers without a decline in the very high standards it has set over the

years.

Diploma in Advanced Studies

The Certificate in Companion Animal Behaviour Counselling at [Southampton University](#) has now been upgraded to a Diploma course of 8 modules including Ethology, Learning Theory, Companion Animals and the Law, Psychopharmacology and Human Psychology. There are currently 70 registered students of which around half are practising veterinary surgeons. The original certificate produced 3 graduates, one of whom is a member of the APBC. *For further information, contact Dr Anne McBride at Southampton University on 023 80593 469*

Annual Symposium

The Annual Symposium sponsored by The [WALTHAM](#) Centre for Pet Nutrition continues to attract hundreds of delegates. Speakers from outside the APBC join members to present papers on each years topic.

Click here for [transcript details](#).

INTRODUCTION

The Annual Report aims to build on previous years and introduce new data. The trends described in this report are reflections of cases reported. This year, the emphasis of behavioural problems has been placed on the relationships between age that pets are obtained, the type of environment from which they are obtained and whether or not they have been socialised. Last year's data has been combined for the feline section to illustrate seasonal trends of reported behaviours.

BREAKDOWN OF CASES		
DOGS	Males	1045 (61%)
	Females	672 (39%)
CATS	Males	73 (56%)
	Females	57 (44%)

MOST COMMON BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

Dogs

- Learned Nuisance Behaviours
- Fear Aggression to People
- Dominance Aggression

Cats

- Social Aggression
- Spraying

- Inappropriate Toileting

CANINE BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

Most Common Age to be Referred

- Age
- 0 - 6 months 5.14%
- 6 months - 1 year 20.62%
- 1 year - 1.5 years 14.72%
- 1.5 years - 2 years 14.08%
- 2 years - 3 years 13.38%
- 3 years- 8 years 26.7%
- over 8 years 5.36%

The majority of dogs were referred with a behaviour problem between 6 months and 1 year of age. Over 50% of dogs were referred under 2 years of age - clearly highlighting the effects of dogs progressing through puberty to maturity. Figures obtained from The Blue Cross (UK) for 1991 and 1992 show that an average of 31% of dogs are given up for rehoming between 6 months and 2 years.

Most Common Breeds Referred	Most Frequent (UK) Kennel Club Registrations 1994
Mongrels	Labrador
German Shepherd Dogs	German Shepherd Dogs
Border Collies	Golden Retrievers
Border Collie crosses	West Highland Terriers
German Shepherd crosses	Cavalier King Charles
Labrador crosses	Cocker Spaniels
Labradors	Yorkshire Terriers
Cocker Spaniels	English Springers
Golden Retrievers	Boxers
Jack Russell Terriers	Staff. Bull Terriers

Relationship Between Age Obtained, Environment Obtained From and Most Frequently Presented Behaviour Problems

	Domestic	Kennel*
Obtained up to 6 Weeks	Status Related Aggression Learned Nuisance Behaviours Separation Problems	Fear Aggression (People) Status Related Aggression Learned Nuisance Behaviours

Obtained between 6 and 9 Weeks	Learned Nuisance Behaviours Status Related Aggression Separation Problems	Learned Nuisance Behaviours Fear Aggression (People) Status Related Aggression
Obtained between 9 and 12 Weeks	Learned Nuisance Behaviours Separation Problems Status Related Aggression	Fear Aggression (People) Fear Aggression (Dogs) Fears/Phobias
Obtained Between 12 and 16 Weeks	Fear Aggression (People) Status Related Aggression Separation Problems	Fear Aggression (People) Learned Nuisance Behaviours Fear Aggression (Dogs)

*Kennel = kennel, barn, shed etc.

What the data showed

Dominance aggression, learned nuisance behaviours and separation problems (due to owner attachment) are likely to occur in dogs obtained from 'domestic' environments. Fear aggression (towards strangers or dogs) and fears/phobias come to the forefront in dogs raised in a 'kennel' environment, particularly after 9 weeks of age. The regular occurrence of separation problems in a 'domestic' environment highlights the need for adequate training to ensure puppies can tolerate periods of separation from the owners.

(Learned nuisance attention-seeking behaviours are problematic and often bizarre behaviours used by dogs to attract the owners attention. Common examples include stealing tissues or clothing or barking whilst the owner is on the telephone).

Socialisation is the process of introducing young pets to a variety of people and animals. Habituation is the process of introducing unusual environmental stimuli such as busy roads, building sites and shopping centres.

Adequate socialisation and environmental experiences of puppies must be introduced as soon as possible and maintained throughout the first year of life. This table pinpoints the differences between socialised and unsocialised dogs. Data for dogs obtained between 12 and 16 weeks has been eliminated due to low numbers.

Fear aggression towards strangers is more likely to be reported in unsocialised dogs, particularly from a 'kennel' environment. Socialised dogs will exhibit this but the chance decreases if the dog was from a 'domestic' environment. This is the only fear behaviour studied where environmental experience prior to 6 weeks appears to be less critical.

Fear Aggression (towards dogs)

Unsocialised dogs from either environment are more likely to be reported as showing this behaviour than socialised dogs. The incidence in socialised dogs in either environment increases in line with age obtained.

Fears and Phobias

Fears and phobias are more likely to be reported in unsocialised dogs, particularly from a 'kennel' environment. Again, the incidence increases in line with age obtained.

Separation Problems (due to fear)

Separation problems due to fear are more commonly reported in dogs raised in a 'kennel' environment when unsocialised. Socialisation appears to reduce the problem if instigated prior to 9 weeks. It is unclear as to why unsocialised dogs from a 'domestic' environment show less separation problems due to fear than socialised dogs of 6-9 weeks.

Summary

Over 50% of dogs referred with a behaviour problem are between 6 months and 1 year of age.

Labrador crosses are seen more frequently than Labradors.

The most frequently presented behaviour problems for Border Collies, German Shepherd Dogs and Labrador crosses vary when compared with the behaviours seen in the pure breed.

Fear-related behaviours are more likely to be reported in dogs obtained from a 'kennel' environment who are not adequately socialised.

Socialised dogs from a 'domestic' environment are reported with less fear aggression and fears/phobias.

FELINE BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

Most Common Age to be Referred

- Age
- 0 - 6 months - 4.62%
- 6 months - 1 year - 7.69%
- 1 year - 1½ years - 6.92%
- 1½ years - 2 years - 13.85%
- 2 years - 3 years - 20.00%
- 3 years- 4 years - 9.23
- 4 years - 6 years - 17.69
- 6 years - 10 years - 16.15
- over 10 years - 3.85

The majority of cats with behavioural problems are referred between 2 and 3. Although cats mature earlier than dogs, over 30% are being referred between 4 and 10 years of age.

Most Common Breeds

- 1 Domestic (Moggie)
- 2 Persian
- 3 Burmese
- 4 Siamese

- 5 Birman

Relationship Between Age Obtained, Environment Obtained From and Most Frequently Presented Behaviour Problems.

Social aggression is likely to occur in cats, regardless of age obtained or environment obtained from. Inappropriate toileting (i.e. other than marking behaviour) is more likely to be reported the later the cat is obtained.

Fearful behaviour is likely to be reported more frequently in unsocialised cats obtained from a 'non-domestic' environment. Spraying will occur in cats obtained from a 'domestic' environment and socialised cats from a 'non-domestic' environment. Social aggression is reported more frequently in socialised cats from a 'domestic' environment and cats obtained from a 'non-domestic' environment.

Monthly and Seasonal Trends of Most Common Behaviours

SPRING - March, April and May

SUMMER - June, July and August

AUTUMN - September, October and November

WINTER - December, January and February

Spraying

The reporting of spraying is higher during the summer months. The high percentage in January is interesting when the figures for the other winter months are so low. This may be caused by a reluctance on the part of the owners to report cases prior to Christmas.

Social Aggression

The reporting of social aggression increases during the summer months. Again, January is unusually high probably for the same reasons as for spraying.

Inappropriate Toileting

The reporting of this behaviour increases markedly during Autumn and Winter.

Summary

- The majority of cats are referred with behaviour problems between 2 and 3 years of age.
- The most commonly referred breed of cat is a domestic moggie (the high numbers kept in the UK must be taken into account).
- More cases of spraying are likely to be reported during the summer months.
- Social aggression is likely to occur in cats from a 'non-domestic' environment and is also higher during the summer months.
- The reporting of inappropriate toileting is higher during autumn and winter months.
- Peaks in January and July/August may reflect client reporting behaviour rather than incidence of behaviour problems