***SNAKE BITE SIGNS AND PREVENTION***

*Welcome to summer and things that bite!*

The Shoalhaven is home to many forms of wildlife, including snakes, and we do see many pets that have been bitten. Black, Tiger and Brown snakes are seen in suburban backyards as well as the rural areas, and if left alone generally do not cause trouble. However, when dogs and cats try to kill snakes they often get bitten and envenomated.

**If you see your pet playing with a snake or actively trying to kill a snake, *DO NOT GO NEAR IT!* The majority of snake bites in humans are caused by people trying to kill the snake themselves.**

Wait until you can *safely* get your pet away from the snake.

Immediate veterinary attention is required and if within normal business hours, drive (safely please!) directly to the hospital. Outside of hours phone 0408 428 540 and follow the advice given by the vet on call.

If you can tell us what type of snake it was, it will help with treatment.

**Common early signs are vomiting and collapse. Tiger and brown snakes cause neurological signs such as vomiting, weakness, fitting/trembling or frothing at the mouth. A pet bitten by a black snake may not show signs for several days: your pet may vomit, become lethargic, appetite may be reduced and the urine may be blood-tinged.**

**Pets that are bitten may show initial signs, and then appear to recover for a period of time*; if left untreated, they will start to show more severe signs.***

**Early treatment means the best chance of full recovery.**

**Treatment is costly, so prevention is the best cure!**

To reduce the risk, keep the yard around your house clean and tidy, and the lawns mowed; remove any piles of timber or debris near your home.

If you see a snake, bring the pets inside and phone **Dusty** from Wildlife Rescue South Coast for help and advice. The number is **0423 958 059**, or Wildlife Rescue South Coast 0418 427 214.