

Virus stays within pound

TOM ROBINSON

An outbreak of canine parvovirus in Kalgoorlie-Boulder appears to have been contained to the pound after the council quarantined it.

The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder's animal management facility was temporarily closed this week after four dogs were infected with the virus.

This is the second pound closure because of a canine parvovirus outbreak since June, with City environmental health and ranger staff expecting the disease to be more prevalent as the weather heats up in summer.

Canine parvovirus, known as parvo, is a highly contagious infection which can affect dogs of any age, attacking the lining of the animal's gut and the bone marrow, and has a high mortality rate if left untreated.

The virus is easily preventable through vaccination. But Kalgoorlie Animal Hospital vet Catherine Conner said the virus did not seem to be spreading between the community's pets, with no parvo cases reported at the clinic since mid-September.

She said the outbreak in the pound was probably caused by an infected dog from a remote Goldfields community, where there was no easy access to parvo vaccines.

"We haven't seen an upkick in parvo at the clinic, it sort of ticks along and it's always around, but the pound situation I believe is they've got some dogs from out of town," Dr Conner said. "They don't have access to vaccinations unless they come to Kalgoorlie."

Dr Conner said the hospital used to be funded to run mobile vaccination clinics in remote parts of the Goldfields, but the government funding had stopped and parvo had returned to the communities.

"We used to do community drives out there a long time ago, I'm talking 15-20 years ago, to go and vaccinate pets in remote communities but it was funded by the Government," she said.

Dr Conner said parvo could only be prevented via vaccination and was very difficult to treat once a dog was infected.

"Your puppy (vaccinations) are the most important but you still need to keep up to date with your annual ones as well," she said. The City's animal management facility is expected to reopen on Wednesday.



Wiluna Remote Community School student Zarvalah Wongawol with some bird week art.

Matuwa lore for Wiluna students

ELENA MORABITO

Students at Wiluna Remote Community School have celebrated bird week for the 10th year, camping at Matuwa Station to learn from elders, rangers and scientists.

Wiluna school principal Bernadette Delaney said the Year 5 and 6 students attended on-country two-way education activities, including setting up bird sound recorders and cameras, visiting a bowerbird bower and night spotting.

"Two-way science is a place-based culturally responsive approach to education that connects the science curriculum to Aboriginal knowledge through local school and community partnerships," she said.

Ms Delaney said Wiluna Martu Rangers alongside "western" scientists undertook bird surveys and hosted 21 students.

Tarlka Matuwa Piarku Aboriginal Corporation environment manager and ranger co-ordinator Dorian Moro said the Martu children were learning the importance of having an education from elders.

"It's experiential learning and I think that's what the Martu kids here are taking away. They're learning from the elders, the elders are teaching the young kids, and the kids are seeing and doing, and touching and feeling, and that's taking them away from the four walls that is a classroom," Mr Moro said.

"It's been going for six years... we take them here to Matuwa, which is an Indigenous protected area. This week, we've got 10 rangers, men and ladies, elders. And together, we all go out on country and we look at different activities that scientists do with birds."

Mr Moro said it was motivating to see the children actively listening, and the rangers were enjoying passing on the Martu knowledge: "It's a really good, well-rounded and balanced relationship, I think."



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