



Cats & *Lilies* are not best friends

Most people are fascinated by lilies. But for cats, many lilies can be as lethal as they are lovely. The more well-known lilies are: Stargazer lily, Easter lily, Day lily, Asian lily and Tiger lily.

We will easily purchase them at the nursery or have them included in a flower bouquet as a gift to someone - not realising that they could very well be responsible for the death of one of our pet companions; the harmless and sleepy house cat.

What makes lilies toxic for cats is still unknown, but what is known is that the toxin is soluble in water and is deadly! The cause of deaths in cats, as a result of lily poisoning, is kidney failure. Poisoning can occur if cats ingest tiny parts of the plant, the flower and even the pollen.

Asian lily

The most poisonous part is the flower with all of its components.

It is a well-known fact that lilies produce huge amounts of pollen. The pollen can easily end up on one's clothing hands and/or face as well as the furniture in one's home. As cats often clean themselves by meticulous grooming - it is in this way that it is very easy for them to ingest the pollen. The first signs of poisoning usually develop 6-12 hours after ingestion. These signs are vomiting, lethargy, muscle tremors, seizures, loss of appetite, increased thirst, multiple attempts to urinate, dehydration and eventually death occurs anywhere between 36-72 hours after ingestion. Because the toxin is not known an antidote is not available - however, it is possible for a veterinarian to save a cat that has ingested pollen or parts of the lily plant, if treated within 18 hours of exposure. Treatment comes in the form of aggressive intravenous fluid therapy. The mortality rate has been reported as high as 100% if untreated or only treated more than 18 hours after exposure.

So remember...



Tiger lily



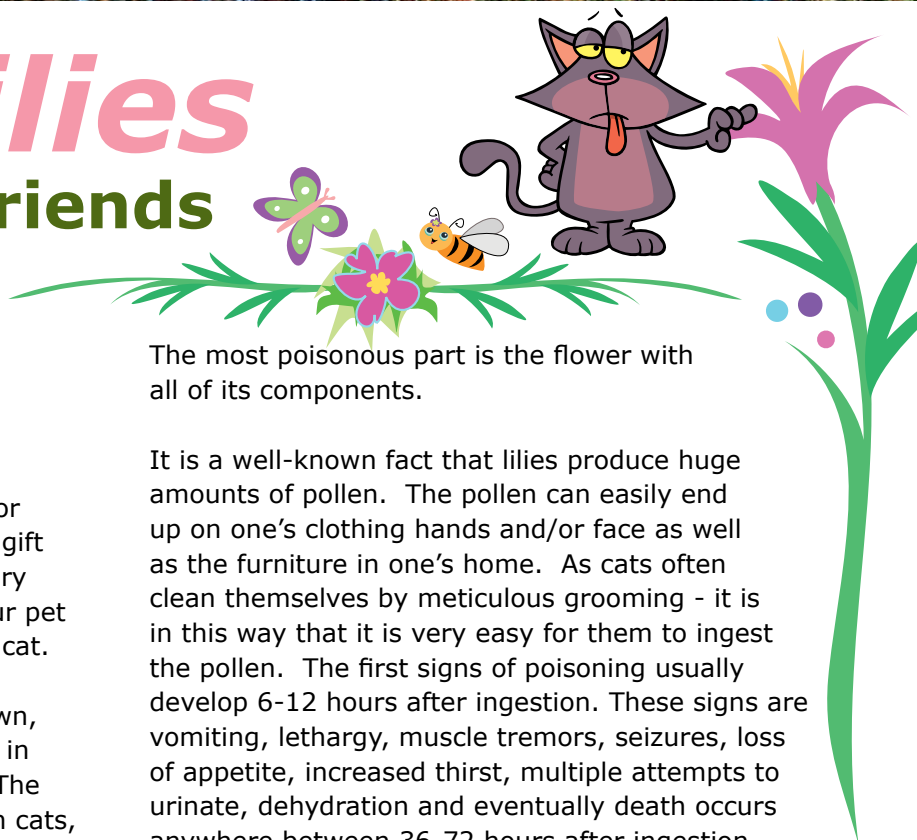
Stargazer lily



Easter lily



Day lily



Ever heard of a *shoebill?*

A Shoebill, also known as Whalehead or Shoebilled Stork (**Balaeniceps rex**) is a bird species that is found in swamp areas in the central parts of Zambia and in some parts of Southern Sudan, Rwanda, eastern Congo and Uganda.

The name derives from its large shoe-shaped bill. The adult is mainly grey while the juveniles are brownish in colour. The Shoebill was only classified in the 19th century when some skins were taken to Europe. Scientific studies have revealed that the Shoebill is in some way related to the Hamerkop (**Scopus umbretta**).

The upper beak of the Shoebill is strongly keeled and ends in a sharp nail. This bird is attracted to marsh areas with poorly oxygenated waters where fish frequently surface to breath.

They are particularly fond of various fish species but will also eat frogs, water snakes, monitor lizards and baby crocodiles. Usually after the rainy season has come to an end the Shoebills will start to build a nest on top of a floating platform that



they have created. Both the nest and the platform are made from aquatic vegetation. Up to three white eggs are laid and incubation lasts for approximately 30 days. Rarely more than one chick is raised.



Both the male and the female Shoebill play an active role in protecting, feeding and shading the new born. It will take the young Shoebill 3 years before they become sexually mature.

The total Shoebill population is estimated to be between 5000 and 8000 individuals and is undoubtedly considered one of the five most desirable birds in Africa by ornithologists.

AMAZING BUT TRUE

When it comes to the animal kingdom we often think we have seen it all. Often we are amazed when we see creatures we have never seen before and often with beautiful colouration.

BAM



The animal in the picture is called a **blue dragon**, a **blue ocean slug**, **sea swallow** or *Glaucus atlanticus*. In plain English it is a shell-less marine mollusc.

They can grow up to 3 cm in length. The dorsal side is silver grey whereas the ventral side is both dark and pale blue. This mollusc is found in tropical waters such as the East and South Coast of South Africa, European waters, the east coast of Australia and the coastal waters of Mozambique.

This species floats upside down on the surface tension of the ocean and makes use of a gas-filled sac in its stomach. It usually feeds on other larger pelagic organisms found in the ocean. This blue dragon will often feed on *Physalia physalis* (**Bloublasie** or **Blue Bottle**) and will store the venomous nematocysts in specialized sacs called cnidosacs, on the tip of their cerata, the thin feather-like 'fingers' on its body. This makes the blue dragon a dangerous little creature.



Another interesting creature is the **Opalescent sea slug** or *Hermisenda crassicornis*.

It occurs on the West Coast of North America, around Japan and also South Korea. It can grow up to 5 cm in length and the colours are absolutely magnificent.

The blue dragon is a hermaphrodite, having both male and female reproductive organs. Two blue dragons will mate with their ventral sides facing, thereafter both animals produce egg strings.



A land snail that has breath taking colours on its shell is the **Candy-Striped Snail** or *Liguus virgineus*.

They are found on the Island of Hispaniola (Haiti and Dominican Republic), east of Cuba. It is pretty obvious from where they get their name.

They are often seen hanging from tree branches.



Chromodoris roboi or **Robo's Chromodoris** is another example of a very pretty sea slug found along the east coast of Australia from the Great Barrier Reef in Queensland to Sydney in New South Wales. They can grow up to 60 mm in length.

This species was identified for the first time around 1998.



Picture by Shek Graham



Wildlife Quiz



1.	A house cat will cover it's droppings with sand.	True or False
2.	Only the male mosquito feeds on blood.	True or False
3.	The tissue cells of chameleon contain chlorophyll.	True or False
4.	A blue wildebeest will die from 'snotsiekte' or malignant caterrhal fever.	True or False
5.	Heartwater is a disease that can kill an eland.	True or False
6.	A springbuck will survive on Ledibeng.	True or False
7.	Snakes cannot swim.	True or False
8.	An otter feeds on fish.	True or False
9.	A beaver can be seen on Ledibeng.	True or False
10.	A cicada is a type of tree.	True or False



From your Wildlife Management Team



For information on property sales contact:
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We would like to hear your story!

Should you have an event or story you would like to share, please send us your photos and a few words to wildlife@lantic.net



Answers: 1.(True), 2.(False), 3.(False), 4.(False), 5.(True), 6.(False), 7.(False), 8.(True), 9.(False), 10.(False).