

One persons pet can be another ones pest!!

As pet owners we have a responsibility, not only to care for and protect our pets, but to make sure that they do not become a pest to others.

One of the main things that one notices when visiting or living in Portugal is the amount of barking dogs. Once the sun goes down all the dogs in the neighbourhood decide that it is time to gossip to their friends across the valley! But for people without dogs or on holiday, the consistent barking can be very annoying. Try and keep your dogs barking to a minimum – at night limit their trips outside to short wee trips, (night-time trips outside should be limited anyway to reduce the risk of sandfly bites!) Training disks are a good way of controlling bad behaviour – like barking – another method is an anti-bark collar which releases a spray of citronella when the dog barks, the dog soon associates barking with the spray that they don't like. Dog faeces is another annoying thing for all of us, so if you are out with your dogs, please clean up after them. Dog poop scoop bags and scoops are available to help with this task.

Cats can be potential pests because of two of their natural habits – digging holes and spraying. Cats are tidy animals in the way that when they go to the toilet, they dig a hole and bury it. There is nothing wrong with this except when they decide to do it in your neighbours newly planted flower bed. Lion wee is meant to be a very good cat repellent but is not easy to come by and may repel you from the garden as well! Alternatives are electronic devices like SSSCAT; you could try onions – rubbing raw onions over the area to be protected. Another easy option is the use of vinegar – cats hate it! Crushing the leaves of an aromatic bush called 'Rue' is another possibility but I don't know about its availability in Portugal. There are special sprays and crystals available from pet shops which can deter and prevent cats from spraying.

As long as you deal with the problem when it arises then you will be able to stop any problems getting out of hand.

Protect your pet with knowledge

Julie Pickering

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