

This Summer, watch out for these cat hazards

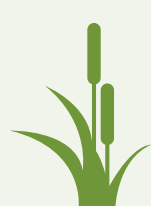
Out and about



Hot weather

Danger: Cats love sunbathing but be careful they don't overexert themselves in the middle of the day or lock themselves in a greenhouse, conservatory or car by accident. Heat stroke can be fatal and sunburn is also a risk.

How to avoid: Keep cats cool by turning on a fan, providing cool drinking water and creating a shaded retreat indoors and outdoors.



Blue-green algae

Danger: This bacteria forms on top of lakes and ponds but often can't be seen with the naked eye. It is most common during warm, dry spells and even swallowing a few mouthfuls can be fatal.

How to avoid: Try to keep your cat away from water that may contain blue-green algae as the wind often blows poisonous blooms to the edges.



Toads

Danger: Cats who come across toads may try to lick them. Toads respond by releasing poisonous venom from glands on their skin. This can be lethal if not treated immediately.

How to avoid: If you live in an area where toads are common, keep a close eye on potential water sources for your cat as there may be toads living in them.



Fish Hooks

Danger: Cats are often tempted to swallow the shiny lure and tasty bait attached to fish hooks. These can cause nasty injuries if embedded in the mouth, stomach or paws.

How to avoid: Fish hooks are often discarded by fishermen, so be on your guard if you live in an area where fishing is popular.

Home and garden



Open windows

Danger: Cats are curious animals and may find an open window too tempting to ignore. Be careful if you live in a high-rise flat or even a two-storey house.

How to avoid: Aside from keeping upstairs windows closed, you could try using netting, a screen or installing a child safety device that limits how far they can open.



Antihistamines

Danger: If your cat swallows a large number of antihistamines it's likely to lead to vomiting, lethargy, incoordination, wobbliness and tremors.

How to avoid: Always keep drugs and medicines well out of reach.



Luminous necklaces

Danger: Popular during music festival season, these contain luminescent chemicals which are attractive to cats. If swallowed, the liquid inside can cause drooling, vomiting and stomach pain.

How to avoid: Keep well out of reach and carefully dispose of any you've used.



Slug & snail pellets

Danger: Tiny pellets used to control slugs and snails can cause severe poisoning in cats within an hour of being swallowed.

How to avoid: Avoid any products containing a substance called metaldehyde and scatter any pellets you do use sporadically.



Plants & flowers

Danger: Several flowers and plants that are popular in the summer are potentially toxic to cats, including lilies, poppies, clematis, peony, foxglove, geranium, chrysanthemum, oleander and yew.

How to avoid: Read up on which plants are toxic and avoid buying those listed as dangerous.



Grass blades

Danger: Cats who have a penchant for eating grass run the risk of getting blades stuck in their nose and throat. This can cause breathing problems, sneezing and nasal discharge.

How to avoid: Keep your lawn short and avoid planting coarse and ornamental grass in your garden.



Fleas & ticks

Danger: Young kittens can become severely anaemic with a heavy flea infestation which can be a life-threatening emergency. If you see multiple fleas on a small kitten or they become lethargic, contact your vet immediately.

How to avoid: Regular treatment should keep things under control. Just remember to check your cat's fur frequently for any signs of fleas or flea dirt.



Insect stings

Danger: If your cat is stung in the mouth or throat the airway may swell and restrict breathing. Most stings and bites aren't serious but some cats may be allergic to bee and wasp stings. If you notice your cat has swollen paws, chin or mouth, contact your vet for advice.

How to avoid: Keeping your cat indoors reduces the risk but not always possible, so just remember to check your home and outdoors for hives and nests.

Common poisons



Flea products

Danger: Household or spot-on dog flea products containing the insecticide permethrin can be deadly for cats.

How to avoid: Read the label carefully and avoid using any products containing permethrin.



Engine coolant

Danger: Engine coolant is a mixture of water and antifreeze — its main ingredient is usually the sweet tasting but highly toxic ethylene glycol.

How to avoid: Keep out of reach, clean up spills immediately, or better still, use a pet-friendly product containing propylene glycol instead.



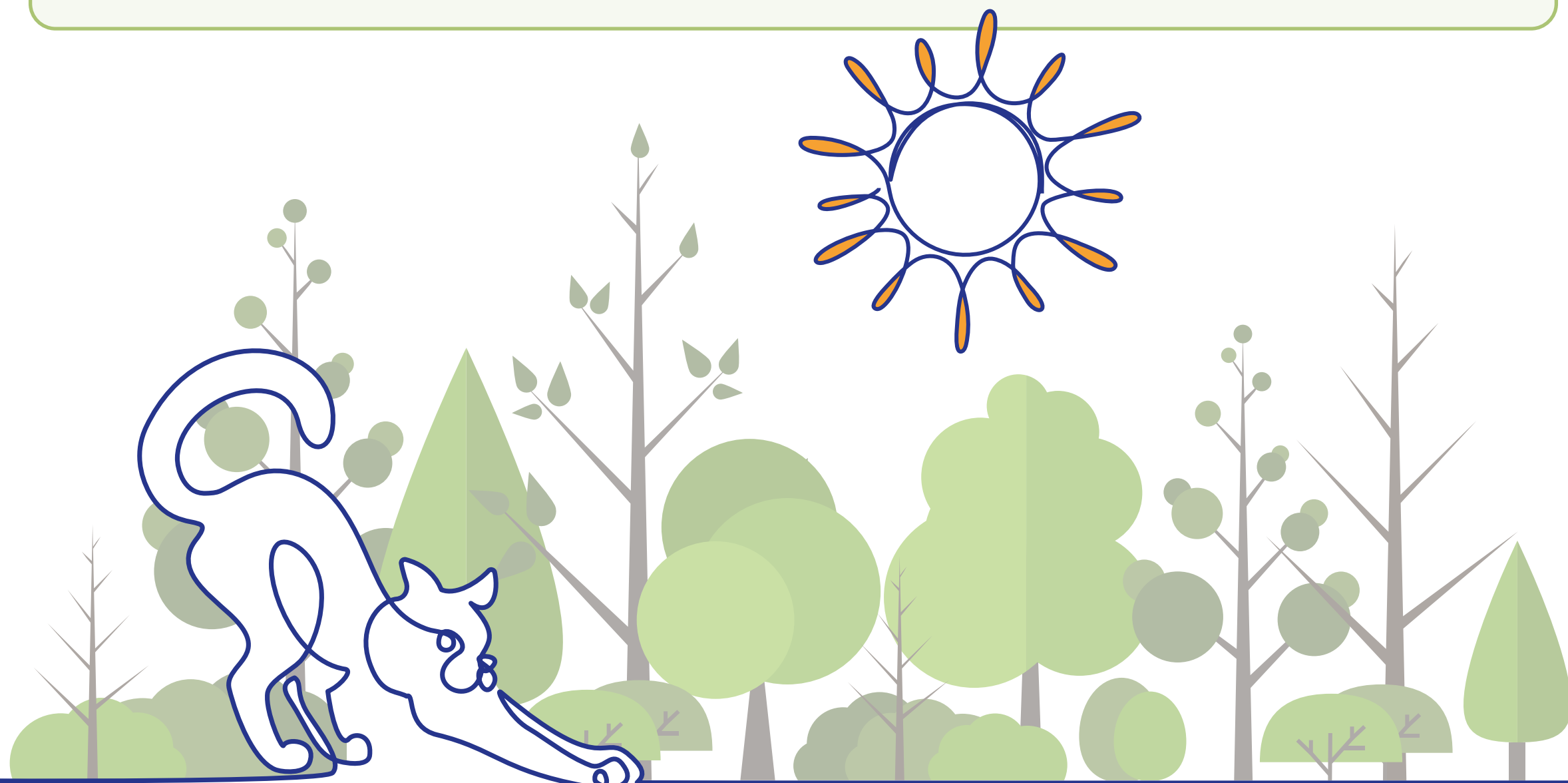
Rat poison, weed killer & ant powder

Danger: Many of these products are extremely dangerous if swallowed, licked or even brushed against.

How to avoid: If the label states the product is toxic to animals, avoid & opt for a pet-friendly alternative instead.

Why do some cats eat anything and everything?

- Curiosity about smell
- Stress relief
- Boredom
- Possible nutrient deficiency
- To mimic the shearing of prey
- Possible obsessive behaviour
- Genetic predisposition
- Dental reasons like teething



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