

# ...and a Partridge in a Pear Tree

Like most vets at this time of year I reminisce over the clinical victories, raise a glass to those who left us for a better place and try and work out how many birds I treated from the carol – The Twelve Days of Xmas. Doesn't everyone do that?

Twenty three birds participate in the much loved carol and although I have not managed to treat Seven Swans-a-Swimming I did finally get to Slimbridge Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and enjoyed a great day out with the family. I did observe some swans fighting but fearing I could suffer a broken arm did not seek to separate them. They were fine anyhow.

I probably racked up a couple of geese, not a half dozen I admit, who seemed to suffer from a lot of fungal throat infections – funny that's not mentioned in the rhyme easily treated though. Check.

Four calling birds are easy – surely the talkative budgerigars and parrots of Monmouthshire

qualify and many have chattered, chirped but mostly sworn their way in and out the consult room with various ailments.

Welsh hens – definitely dozens not just three have been examined, blood tested, x-rayed and even surgically mended to lay another day at Abbey Vets, Abergavenny. French Hens – alas non(e).

Turtle Doves stumped me for a while until I realised I was going about it the wrong way. We get quite a few turtles, well their land loving cousins the tortoises if I am honest, who are poorly, under the weather( but most commonly under the lawnmower) and consequently need patching up.

And so the finale, I have only the month of December to welcome an ailing Partridge into my consult room and thus offer a free consultation to anyone this month. You do not, repeat not, need to bring the tree. Merry Xmas!!

