



7th Annual

NATIONAL KITTEN COALITION VETERINARY CONFERENCE

October 18, 2026

SPONSORED BY:





2026 National Kitten Coalition Veterinary Conference
Sunday, October 18, 2026

Session Schedule: All times are U. S. Eastern Daylight Time (UTC -4)

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SESSION TIME (EDT)	SESSION TITLE – PRESENTER – LIVE, INTERACTIVE RACE® CE CREDITS
9:45 am - 10:00 am	<i>Welcome and Technology Check</i>
10:00 am - 11:00 am	<u>COMMON SURGICAL CONDITIONS OF KITTENS (AND HOW TO SAVE THEM THROUGH TEACHING)</u> - Catriona MacPhail, DVM, PhD, Diplomate ACVS * 1.0 RACE® CE credit
11:00 am - 11:15 am	<i>Break</i>
11:15 am - 12:15 pm	<u>FELINE OPHTHALMOLOGY – PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DIAGNOSING AND TREATING COMMON KITTEN EYE CONDITIONS</u> - Rachel A. Allbaugh, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVO * 1.0 RACE® CE credit
12:15 pm – 12:30 pm	<i>Break</i>
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	<u>RESPONSE TO RABIES VACCINE IN KITTENS UNDER 12 WEEKS OF AGE IN TNVR PROGRAMS</u> - G. Robert Weedon, DVM, MPH * 0.5 RACE® CE credit
1:00 pm - 1:15 pm	<i>Break</i>
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm	<u>FROM FEARFUL TO THRIVING: APPLYING KITTEN SOCIALIZATION SCIENCE IN VETERINARY PRACTICE AND SHELTER CARE</u> - Jacklyn Ellis, PhD, CAAB, CSB-C * 1.0 RACE® CE credit
2:15 pm – 2:30 pm	<i>Break</i>
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm	<u>A TRANSFORMATIONAL APPROACH TO MANAGING ALLERGIES TO CATS</u> - Ebenezer Satyaraj, PhD * 1.0 RACE® CE credit
3:30 pm – 3:45 pm	<i>Break</i>
3:45 pm - 4:45 pm	<u>FRACTURE MANAGEMENT IN KITTENS – OPTIMIZING APPROACHES TO MAXIMIZE PATIENT OUTCOMES</u> - Karen L. Perry, BVM&S, CertSAS, DipECVS, MSc Vet Ed, FHEA, FRCVS * 1.0. RACE® CE credit
4:45 pm – 5:00 pm	<i>Break</i>
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	<u>ANESTHESIA AND PERIOPERATIVE CARE OF KITTENS</u> - Sheilah Robertson, BVMS (Hons), PhD, DACVAA, DECVAA, DACAW, DECAWBM (WSEL), CertVA, FRCVS * 1.0 RACE® CE credit
6:00 pm - 6:15 pm	<i>Closing Information: CE Certificates & Access to Post Conference Recording/Quizzes/CE</i>

* The National Kitten Coalition is an AAVSB RACE®-approved CE provider. This conference program has been approved by the AAVSB for 6.5 credits of RACE® live, interactive CE for veterinarians and veterinary technicians/nurses in jurisdictions that recognize RACE® approval. NKCVC 2026 will be recorded. Recordings of all sessions, including optional RACE® approved CE Quizzes, will be available for all registrants through December 31, 2026.



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9:45 am -10:00 am EDT

WELCOME AND TECHNOLOGY CHECK

Emily A. Coleman, DVM & Rosemarie Crawford, LVT

Session Description:

Welcome to the 2026 National Kitten Coalition Veterinary Conference! Start your day with a friendly check-in and a quick tour of what's ahead. We'll walk through the session lineup, break schedule, and key tech tips to help you navigate the platform with ease. Pop in to say hello, confirm your audio and video are working well, and get set for a smooth, engaging, and educational experience!



Learning for Life Fund

Supporting Lifelong Learning, Saving Kitten Lives

Thanks to a generous founding gift—and the continued support of donors like you—the Learning for Life Fund makes it possible to offer high-quality, AAVSB RACE® CE learning experiences at a reasonable cost. This fund fuels ongoing education for veterinarians, students, and technicians, ensuring their access to the specialized knowledge needed to care for kittens.

The **Learning for Life Fund** proudly sponsors the NKC Veterinary Conference and our Classroom to Clinic initiative, supporting veterinary students before graduation and helping professionals continue learning throughout their careers.

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Your contribution helps provide scholarships, sustain affordable CE programming, and empower every veterinary professional to make a difference—one kitten at a time.



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10:00 am – 11:00 am EDT

COMMON SURGICAL CONDITIONS OF KITTENS (AND HOW TO SAVE THEM THROUGH TEACHING)

Catriona MacPhail, DVM, PhD, Diplomate ACVS

Session Description:

This session will provide a case-based review of common surgical conditions encountered in kittens, with a primary focus on congenital abnormalities and selected traumatic injuries unique to pediatric feline patients. Conditions discussed will include, but are not limited to, patent ductus arteriosus, vascular ring anomalies, pectus excavatum, preputial stenosis, and capital physal fractures. Emphasis will be placed on early recognition, diagnostic evaluation, perioperative considerations, surgical decision-making, and postoperative management tailored to the unique needs of growing kittens. In addition, the seminar will highlight an innovative teaching program that provides life-saving surgical care for unowned kittens with surgically correctable conditions while offering valuable hands-on educational opportunities for veterinary students, interns, and residents.

Speaker Bio:

Dr. MacPhail is a Professor of Small Animal Surgery at Colorado State University (CSU) Veterinary Teaching Hospital. After receiving her veterinary degree from Texas A&M University in 1996, Dr. MacPhail completed a rotating internship, surgical residency, soft tissue & surgical oncology fellowship, and PhD all at CSU. Dr. MacPhail has been on faculty at CSU since 2004. She is a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons (ACVS), and an ACVS Founding Fellow in Surgical Oncology. Dr. MacPhail is a frequent speaker at national and international meetings, and has authored numerous journal articles and book chapters. She is a major contributing author for the 4th, 5th, and 6th editions of Fossum's textbook, Small Animal Surgery. Dr. MacPhail's primary clinical and research interests include trauma, wound care and reconstruction, upper and lower respiratory surgery, gastrointestinal and urinary surgery, and surgical training of the veterinary student.

11:00 am -11:15 am EDT

Break



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11:15 am – 12:15 pm EDT

FELINE OPHTHALMOLOGY – PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DIAGNOSING AND TREATING COMMON KITTEN EYE CONDITIONS

Rachel A. Allbaugh, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVO

Session Description:

Diagnosis and management of common kitten ophthalmic issues will be addressed. Topics include conjunctivitis, corneal ulcers, symblepharon, uveitis, and toxic retinopathy. Enucleation surgery will also be discussed including tips to avoid postoperative complications.

This session will equip practitioners with practical, confidence-building strategies for recognizing and treating the ophthalmic conditions most frequently encountered in kittens. Attendees will learn how to differentiate key clinical presentations, select appropriate diagnostic approaches, and implement effective medical therapies for a range of ocular diseases. Guidance will also be provided on when surgical intervention is indicated, with a focus on performing enucleation safely and minimizing postoperative complications. By the end of the session, participants will feel more prepared to manage both routine and urgent kitten eye cases in everyday practice.

Speaker Bio:

Dr. Rachel Allbaugh is a veterinary ophthalmologist at Iowa State University, where she also received both her BS and DVM degrees. After graduation, she completed a private practice internship in North Carolina and then a veterinary ophthalmology residency and master's degree at Kansas State University. She was on faculty at Kansas State University until 2011, then returned home to Iowa and is a full professor in ISU's Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences and the Lora and Russ Talbot Endowed Professor in Veterinary Medicine. Rachel's passion for veterinary ophthalmology began with her childhood cat's nearly blinding eye disease. Since that time, she has been devoted to the field, enjoying clinical practice, teaching, and research. She is passionate about sharing knowledge and helping advance veterinary medicine through educational efforts and scholarly pursuits with 80 peer-reviewed publications, over 200 presentations, and her professional efforts have resulted in multiple awards.



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12:15 pm -12:30 pm EDT

Break

12:30 pm – 1:00 pm EDT

RESPONSE TO RABIES VACCINE IN KITTENS UNDER 12 WEEKS OF AGE IN TNVR PROGRAMS

G. Robert Weedon, DVM, MPH

Session Description:

For decades, we've been sterilizing community cats in order to help reduce their population, with the primary goal of improving their wellbeing. But what if I told you there is an additional benefit to Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate, Return (TNVR) programs – one that protects the health of pets and people in our communities by vaccinating for rabies?

By integrating rabies vaccinations into TNVR efforts, we create a proactive barrier against the disease, reducing the risk of transmission from wildlife to both pets and people. This added layer of protection has garnered the attention and support of public health officials across the country. The question then becomes, what to do with kittens that are under the minimum label age for rabies vaccine, but cannot be diverted to foster care for socialization and adoption, and must be returned to their colony? In this presentation, we'll also explore what to do with kittens that are under the minimum label age of 12 weeks for rabies vaccination. Ultimately, TNVR not only reduces community cat populations but also plays a critical role in safeguarding public health.

Speaker Bio:

G. Robert Weedon, DVM, MPH is a High Quality, High Volume Spay-Neuter (HQHVSN) Surgeon in Lakeland, FL, after retiring as a Clinical Assistant Professor and Service Head of Shelter Medicine at the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine, where he trained veterinary students in HQHVSN techniques. He received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Purdue University and his Master of Public Health from the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. As an advocate for solving the problem of pet overpopulation, Dr. Weedon serves on the Board of Directors of the Alliance for Contraception in Cats & Dogs, an international organization whose goal is to develop and implement non-surgical sterilants to help solve the problem of pet overpopulation worldwide. He also sterilizes community cats at Paws Plus Veterinary in Lakeland. Dr. Weedon is the coauthor of the chapter on rabies in the textbook,



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Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters, 2nd Edition, as well as coauthor of two chapters in the recently published textbook, High-Quality, High-Volume Spay and Neuter and Other Shelter Surgeries, and has authored, or coauthored, numerous papers on the humane and effective management of feral and free-roaming cats. His most recent publication, "Response to Rabies Vaccine in Kittens Under 12 Weeks of Age," published in the Journal of Shelter Medicine and Community Animal Health, is the first peer-reviewed evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of vaccinating young kittens that cannot be diverted to foster care for socialization and adoption and are returned to their colony.

1:00 pm – 1:15 pm EDT

Break

1:15 pm – 2:15 pm EDT

FROM FEARFUL TO THRIVING: APPLYING KITTEN SOCIALIZATION SCIENCE IN VETERINARY PRACTICE AND SHELTER CARE

Jacklyn Ellis, PhD, CAAB, CSB-C

Session Description:

Undersocialized kittens are commonly encountered not only in shelters and rescue programs, but also in private veterinary practice. They present as fearful or difficult to handle and are often misunderstood by caregivers. While many organizations recognize the importance of early socialization, translating behavioural science into practical, efficient interventions remains a challenge across settings. This session presents a structured, evidence-based approach to kitten socialization developed at Toronto Humane Society, combining practical implementation strategies with outcome data. Attendees will learn how thoughtful housing, enrichment, and handling techniques, paired with systematic desensitization and counterconditioning, can help kittens develop positive associations with people.

A key component of this approach is the use of simple, standardized behavioural rating scales, including measures of fear, response to petting, play, and food intake, which allow for consistent monitoring of welfare and progress over time. These tools have demonstrated strong interobserver reliability and can be used effectively by both trained volunteers and veterinary teams. Importantly, this session extends beyond shelter care to highlight how these



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principles can support veterinary teams in clinical settings. Participants will explore strategies for handling fearful kittens during examinations, identifying appropriate intervention pathways, and communicating clearly with clients about expectations and outcomes. Post-adoption findings show that, although undersocialized kittens may remain cautious with strangers, most form strong bonds with their caregivers and achieve high levels of adopter satisfaction. Attendees will leave with practical language and tools to provide concise, on-the-spot client education, helping improve kitten welfare, strengthen the human-animal bond, and support successful long-term outcomes in both clinical and home environments.

Speaker Bio:

Jacklyn Ellis is board certified by the Animal Behavior Society as a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist, is Certified in Shelter Behavior – Cat by the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants, and is the Director of Behaviour at Toronto Humane Society. She earned her PhD in Animal Welfare at the Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island, where she conducted research on methods for reducing stress in shelter cats. Her work has been published widely in peer-reviewed journals and she has presented at many national and international conferences, particularly on feline stress and elimination behaviour. She has recently authored two chapters for a new edition of the leading textbook on the behaviour and welfare of shelter animals.

2:15 pm – 2:30 pm EDT

Break

2:30 pm – 3:30 pm EDT

A TRANSFORMATIONAL APPROACH TO MANAGING ALLERGIES TO CATS

Ebenezer Satyaraj, PhD

Session Description:

Allergies to cats are among the most common animal-origin allergies, affecting nearly one in five adults worldwide. More than 96% of individuals with cat sensitivities primarily react to Fel d 1, a protein produced in the cat's saliva and sebaceous glands. During grooming, Fel d 1 is deposited onto the fur and subsequently dispersed into the environment, making exposure difficult to avoid. Current management strategies rely largely on allergen avoidance, which may require limiting interaction with the cat or, in severe cases, relinquishing the pet.



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This presentation explores a novel nutritional strategy to reduce allergen exposure at its source through the inclusion of anti-Fel d 1 IgY antibodies, derived from chicken eggs, in the cat's diet. These antibodies bind specifically to Fel d 1 in saliva, reducing the amount of active allergen transferred to the fur and released into the environment. Evidence from in vitro, ex vivo, and in vivo studies demonstrates that this approach can significantly lower active Fel d 1 levels. This safe, non-invasive dietary intervention represents a promising strategy for managing cat allergens while preserving the human-animal bond.

Speaker Bio:

Dr. Ebenezer Satyaraj, PhD is a globally recognized immunologist and the architect of Nestlé's nutritional immunology platform. He holds a PhD in Immunology from the National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi, and completed a Fellowship in Molecular Immunology at the University of Chicago, followed by a faculty appointment at Northwestern University Medical School. Since joining Nestlé Research in 2003, Dr. Satyaraj has built one of the industry's leading nutritional immunology programs — launching breakthrough products including Pro Plan LiveClear, pioneering the first multiplex cytokine assay panels for companion animals, and publishing across cellular immunology, cytokine biology, and nutritional science, including in the journal Science. He currently serves as Director of Molecular Nutrition at Nestlé Research and holds an Adjunct Faculty appointment at Cornell University. He is a Fellow of the Academy of Science, St. Louis, and a member of the American Association of Immunologists.

3:30 pm -3:45 pm EDT

Break

3:45 PM – 4:45 PM EDT

FRACTURE MANAGEMENT IN KITTENS – OPTIMIZING APPROACHES TO MAXIMIZE PATIENT OUTCOMES

Karen L. Perry, BVM&S, CertSAS, DipECVS, MSc Vet Ed, FHEA, FRCVS

Session Description:

Fracture management in kittens is associated with many challenges, particularly in kittens under six months of age. Physeal fractures are commonly encountered and must be diagnosed promptly if satisfactory results following reduction and stabilization are to be



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achieved, however, even achieving an accurate diagnosis is not always easy. When physal fractures are encountered, closed reduction and stabilization using Kirschner wires applied in various configurations is generally recommended, but there are some key differences between dogs and cats that necessitate different approaches in our feline patients if optimal patient outcomes are to be achieved.

Careful adherence to the principles of physal fracture repair is also critical in terms of reducing the risks of postoperative complications including the development of subsequent growth deformity. Treatment of diaphyseal fractures in kittens may also differ to that in the mature cat. External coaptation may lead to serious complications if inappropriately applied or managed and must be monitored closely if used. Elastic plate osteosynthesis was developed specifically for use in growing animals and may offer an advantage in terms of reducing risks of screw pull-out, however, this is not appropriate for use in all cases. The use of intramedullary implants warrants meticulous technique to avoid damage to adjacent physes and vascular structures which may disrupt normal growth. For both physal and diaphyseal fractures, minimally invasive techniques may be beneficial in kittens where case presentation allows.

Speaker Bio:

Karen Perry graduated from The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, Edinburgh in 2005. After a short period in mixed practice and an internship in small animal orthopedics, Dr. Perry returned to the R(D)SVS to complete a residency in small animal surgery from 2007 to 2010. Following achievement of ECVS status in 2011, Dr. Perry joined the Royal Veterinary College (RVC), London as a lecturer in small animal orthopedics.

After four years at the RVC, Dr. Perry moved to Michigan State University where she remained for 11 years, becoming a Tenured Professor in Small Animal Orthopedics and achieving an endowed, named professorship, as the Pat Carrigan Professor of Feline Health. Earlier this year, Dr. Perry moved to The Ohio State University as a Tenured Professor in Small Animal Orthopedics. Dr. Perry has published widely in the veterinary literature with her main research interests being feline orthopedics, traumatology, and joint replacement.



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Break

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM EDT

ANESTHESIA AND PERIOPERATIVE CARE OF KITTENS

**Sheilah Robertson, BVMS (Hons), PhD, DACVAA, DECVA, DACAW, DECAWBM (WSEL),
CertVA, FRCVS**

Session Description:

Risks faced by pediatric patients undergoing anesthesia include hypothermia, stress, and pain. Because of their size, monitoring of vital signs can be challenging. However, by choosing the correct combinations of anesthetics and analgesics, adapting monitoring equipment, and being proactive with thermal strategies, they can sail through the process. This session will cover pre-anesthetic fasting, preemptive and multimodal analgesia, and anesthetic monitoring for kittens. Analgesic techniques can only be said to be effective if there are outcome measures. The use of the feline grimace scale (available as an app for smart phones) to score pain will be reviewed, and attendees will score a kitten using this tool. The adverse effects of hypothermia include bradycardia and delayed recovery, and techniques for preventing heat loss will be discussed.

Speaker Bio:

Sheilah Robertson BVMS (Hons), PhD, DACVAA, DECVA, DACAW, DECAWBM (WSEL), CertVA, FRCVS. After graduating from the University of Glasgow in Scotland, Dr. Robertson spent time in mixed animal practice before she undertook specialized training in anesthesia and pain management. She is board certified in anesthesia and in animal welfare by the respective American and European Colleges. She received her graduate certificate in shelter medicine from the University of Florida where she is a courtesy lecturer. She has worked in academia, private practice and as an assistant director in the animal welfare division of the American Veterinary Medical Association. Dr. Robertson has volunteered for many years in spay and neuter programs, taking a special interest in anesthesia and pain management for pediatric patients.



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6:00 pm – 6:15 pm EDT

CONFERENCE CLOSE

Emily A. Coleman, DVM & Rosemarie Crawford, LVT

Session Description:

Stay for our quick closing session, where we will outline our process for providing participants with CE Certificates. We will also provide information on accessing the Conference recordings and optional CE Quizzes for any sessions you may have missed or want to review.

Thank you for being a part of the 7th Annual National Kitten Coalition Veterinary Conference!

The Conference would not be possible without the expertise and insight of our speakers and the generosity of our sponsors. The National Kitten Coalition would like to thank our speakers, sponsors, and participants for trusting us with providing these continuing education opportunities. We look forward to seeing you next year!

Save the Date for NKCVC 2027

October 17, 2027



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