

## **Mad, mad cows...**

A couple of weeks ago I decided to walk my dogs in a field that I hadn't been in for a little while. We did the usual sit stay as I clambered over the stile, then I brought my dogs through and released them. My big pale cream goldie was off tearing across the field as he so often does, slammed his brakes on and dropped into a ecstatic roll.

As he got up I saw the telltale green smear down his right shoulder... cow pat!

Oh no - where are the cows? This field had been empty since I moved to the area 3 months ago... A quick scan of the fence line and there they were, 100 yards to the left coming into the field through an open gate at a fast trot.

Well ! We were out of the field quicker than you could stay flipperty jibbert.

We stood in the next field while I put the leads back on my dogs to an audience of black and white all gazing intently at us over the fence. A lucky escape...

There's been a number of cattle stampedes and attacks in the news lately; tragically a dog walker and a vet lost their lives and you may have read of David Blunkett getting hurt.

The cows are only doing what comes naturally and 'seeing off' a predator in their midst. Although we tend to forget that our gorgeous pet dogs are formidable hunters, we are the only animals on the planet to do so.

If you do happen to find yourself in a field of cows get out of there as quickly, calmly and unobtrusively as possible.

If they start heading towards you remember you're not the threat your dog is.

Take off it's lead and get out of there fast - run. The cows should ignore you and go after your dog... don't worry about him, he's faster than the cows and can get out of the field through gaps or under fences - you need to keep yourself safe.

If you have time take off the lead rather than letting it go to prevent your dog potentially being caught up in it, however, if you don't have time just let it go - it may save both of your lives.

<http://uk.news.yahoo.com/5/20090621/tuk-dog-walker-is-killed-by-stampeding-c-45dbed5.html>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/8114529.stm>