

Found Cat: What to Do?

Have you found a lost cat? Follow these tips to help a lost or feral cat find its home.

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Millions of cats are homeless in the United States. Humans are largely responsible for their predicament. We domesticated these animals and abandoned them. We failed to spay and neuter and they reproduced. While we cannot save every homeless cat, we owe it to them to try! What is Feral? By definition, a feral cat is one that has had little or no human contact. Merriam Webster defines feral as, wild, untamed, and undomesticated. Jacquie Schultz of the ASPCA National Shelter Outreach/Companion Animal Program says, Most times, if you can get near enough to a stray cat without using a humane trap, the cat is not feral. Feral cats are not tame animals and have the natural wariness most wild animals have toward humans. Feral cats are best left to professional animal groups. Many no-kill groups trap feral cats, test them for disease, vaccinate, spay or neuter, and rehabilitate the ones that can be socialized and matched for adoption. Sadly, the ones that cannot be tamed to live in a social environment will be returned to their colony. They of course, will not be able to reproduce. Strays in Need Inevitably, we all cross paths with a stray cat. A pair of frightened eyes stare back at you, and you wonder, Is he hurt, cold, hungry? Is he trying to reach out for help? Suddenly, this little creature is tugging at your heart. You can't walk away but you don't know what to do. Does he belong to someone? Can you pick him up? If taken to a shelter, will he be euthanized? We need to remember that stray cats need us. One caring individual can make the difference as to whether that cat is happy or sad, lives or dies. Most of us want to help, but don't know what to do. Ignoring a stray is exactly how this problem started, and walking away only perpetuates the problem.

So there he is looking back at you, uncertain as to whether he can trust you. You look at him, unsure of what to do! There is no written-in-stone rule. Common sense and compassion is the answer. However, there are some steps you can take to gain his trust:

1. Get down on the cat's level. You will be less intimidating.