

Lost Pet Database Services

Computer tracking may help owners find a lost pet. Several companies offer database services to help track animals.

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Computers and voice mail systems have spawned a whole new era in returning lost pets to their owners. Several companies provide registry services with their ID tags.

With the FIND R PET service, you buy a collar embroidered with the phrase "I'm Lost! Call 1-800 FIND R PET." If your cat becomes lost, the owner calls the same number, describes the pet and explains where it was lost. If someone finds the cat and calls the toll-free number with a description of the cat and location where it was found, the company will match the two callers and will tell the owner where to pick up the pet. Registering your cat involves a one-time fee of \$19.95. FIND R PET offers a safety cat collar with an elastic inset so it will give way if the cat is caught on a branch or fence. Collars are available by calling the 800 number.

Lost Paws features a toll-free number and voice mail with the capacity to accept and convey messages 24 hours a day. Your cat wears a Lost Paws tag, and if the cat becomes lost, the finder calls the number on the tag, which is your assigned voice mailbox. You can leave and receive messages anytime and retrieve them from anywhere. The service costs \$19.95 a year, including the tag, with discounts for additional pets.

The service is particularly beneficial for pet owners who are on vacation or who frequently travel for business and cannot access or place a new message on their home answering machines, said owner Judy Peeples. She recommends that cat owners have tags on their pets, even cats that have microchips.

As part of their services, all the microchip companies-AVID, InfoPet and Schering-Plough-maintain databases of registered pets.

With Pet Detectives Inc., you register your home and work number, and can call the toll-free hotline to update your location if your cat is lost while traveling. For \$29.95, you receive two wallet ID cards, a brass ID tag and one year of monitoring; a one-year renewal costs \$19.95.