

New Jersey Sanctuary Rescues Paralyzed Kitten

Feline arrives at Tabby's Place from Ohio feral cat colony.

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Tashi, whose hind legs are paralyzed, was discovered living in a feral cat colony. Photo courtesy Tabby's Place. Volunteers from Cat Welfare in Ohio discovered a paralyzed kitten living in a feral cat colony and knew they had to find him a place where he would get special attention. The 14-week-old kitten, named Tashi, would likely be euthanized at most shelters.

The volunteers teamed up with another Ohio-based group, Colony Cats, to seek the help of Best Friends Animal Society in Utah. The idea was to have Tashi placed in the organization's "Incontinental Suite," a home for cats who can't control going to the bathroom. However, no vacancies were available.

At the advice of Best Friends, the volunteers contacted Tabby's Place, a no-kill, cage-free sanctuary for felines in desperate circumstances. Having cared for and recently adopted out another paralyzed cat, the sanctuary in Ringoes, N.J., welcomed Tashi on Nov. 1.

Angela Townsend, development director, said Tabby's Place is ideal for cats like Tashi, who are in hopeless situations and in need of being saved. "He cannot walk; he was dragging his rear legs completely," she said.

The sanctuary found a new home for its first paraplegic feline, a large black cat named Bagheera, in August. "Baby Bags," as the cat was nicknamed, was adopted by a veterinarian in Connecticut.

Bagheera was paralyzed in his hind legs after being struck by a car. He used a mobility cart to get around during his three-year stay at the sanctuary. While the cause of Tashi's condition has not been determined, Townsend said the possibilities include a birth defect, a traumatic injury or cruelty.

"We may never know quite what the cause is," she said, adding, "having cared for another paralyzed cat, we know we could give him a very happy life here."

Tashi will have a home for life at Tabby's Place if he is not adopted. However, Jonathan Rosenberg, the executive director, said "anything is possible."

The staff and volunteers have been providing Tashi with highly skilled care since his arrival, Townsend said, including hydrotherapy to support any remaining mobility in his rear legs. "We discovered he does really want to walk and he has a tiny bit of mobility in those legs," she said.