

Find a Cat? - Lost or Abandoned Pets

First you need to determine if the cat is lost or truly a stray (feral). Is the cat friendly? Feral cats will not let you pet them and are generally frightened. (See section on feral cats). If the cat is friendly, you should do the following:

Posters:

The first thing you should do is put up posters in the neighborhood. (see wording below).

Newspapers:

You should also check Newsday and local papers to see if anyone has reported a cat missing. Also, Newsday and other local papers may allow you to place an ad for free when you find a cat. (see wording below). For Newsday call 843-3000 and ask specifically for their free found a pet ad..

Veterinarians:

Check with local veterinary offices to see if they have a client who reported a missing cat.

Municipal Shelters:

Call shelters as they sometimes have a list of lost pets.

Hotlines:

Call these Pet Finders lines 800-545-3463 and 800-564-5704

Wording an ad or poster:

List only the basic color of the cat (no detailed markings), where found and when. Do not even list male or female. The reason is to avoid having the cat "claimed" by people who sell cats to laboratories, throw them into the dog fighting rings, use them in animal sacrifice, and feed kittens to snakes. If the true owner is looking for their lost cat, they will call any ad that seems even remotely likely to be their cat. List something like "Found black and white cat 1/5/99 in Commack on Smithtown Rd" Keep in mind too that cats can "travel" by getting into the back of a repair or delivery truck - they can end up miles from home.

Handling the calls:

When you get a call, ask the caller to describe the cat in detail. Do not give out any information or confirm any information they give. If their description is inaccurate just say "I'm sorry the cat I have does not match that description." For instance, if they are looking for a male and you have a female, let them provide more details and do not even say, "Sorry we have a female" because they can have someone else call back and give the description you just told them! In the wrong hands, the cat can die a horrible death. I know this must sound paranoid, but these things happen all the time.

Extremely Important - You should ask the person for his veterinarian's name and phone number first to validate that they are the cat's rightful owner. You could also ask them to bring a photo of the cat

One Final Note - Be cautious about having strangers come to your home. Never meet anyone alone in your home.