



WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CAT IS LOST

DON'T WAIT - Begin searching NOW, and then keep searching in the evening when it is quieter

- Don't wait and hope the cat will return, you need to be proactive.
- Get help from friends, family; take time off work if necessary.
- Keep searches calm and quiet, if the cat is seen, have searchers call you rather than give chase.
- Walk around the neighborhood shaking treats and softly calling the cat's name.
- Use daylight hours to scope out likely hiding spots, put up posters and talk to neighbors.
- When it's dark, take a flashlight to shine under bushes or cars and look for the reflection of the cats' eyes.
- Search at dusk and again after dark (11pm – 2 am)
- DON'T GIVE UP – it can sometimes take several weeks for your cat to make it home.

Set a live trap

- Sometimes a trap baited with smelly food (like fresh fish, fried chicken, sardines, canned tuna in water) is the quickest and safest way to capture a lost cat.

Help your kitty stay nearby

- Put a dish of water and your cat's favorite food on your porch or back step.
- Consider leaving a window open if you think your cat is likely to come back into the house. (Only if you are sure the cat is not hiding in the house) Make sure other pets are kept secure in a closed room. Leave smelly food out in a couple of rooms and see if it is eaten.
- Leave an article of your unwashed clothing on the porch/back step.
- Put dirty litter box outside the home so that your cat can find the scent of home.
- Consider using a Trail or Nest camera to keep watch and see if your cat comes back when you are asleep.

Poster the neighborhood

- Put up posters immediately. If raining, put the posters in plastic sleeves. Post on all mailboxes and corners within a two-block radius. Contact all neighbors. After 24 hours, expand your posters to a five-block radius.
- Posters, printed on bright colored paper, should include a color photo of the cat, his/her name, where and when it became lost (date and address), a brief description and a phone number where you can be reached 24/7. Specify "DO NOT TRY AND CATCH" and ask people to call with the location of where he cat was sighted and at what time.
- Follow up on every lead.

Check your neighborhood

- Cats are quick to hide once outside and will avoid wide-open spaces.
- In the first 24 hours, look close to home in a one-block radius. After 24 hours, expand your search to a 4-5-block radius.
- Look in crawl spaces, garages, shed, under decks and sheltered spots that are only 3-4" in height.
- Note likely hiding places and return to them repeatedly.
- Walk a round the neighborhood shaking treats and gently calling the cat's name.
- Ask your neighbors for permission to look in their yards, inside garages or sheds.

If you see your cat

- Stop, sit and calmly call the cat. Try shaking treats and toss them near the cat. Be patient. If the cat comes to you, scruff it firmly, hold it close and get into the house if possible. Have a towel with you to cover the cats face will help it stay calm.
- Walk away, leaving a trail of treats every two to three feet. The cat may follow and walk into the home.
- If the cat is not responding to you DO NOT approach.
- A live trap may be the best option.

Notify all relevant agencies

- **Gulf Island Vet Clinic** - 250 537- 5334
- **Salt Spring Vet Services** – 250- 537-9464
- **SPCA Salt Spring Island** – 250 537 – 2123 Contact them every day to see if the cat has been found
- **Salt Spring Exchange** - post a photo along with location and date cat went missing.
- **Face Book** – SSI Lost and Found Pets – post photo, location and date cat went missing.
- **Petsearchescanada.com** – has tips and offers bloodhound service to track lost pets.
- **ROAM – Reuniting Owners with Animals Missing** – resources for pet searches
- **Microchip or tattoo** – make sure your contact information is up to date with your microchip company, or with the vet clinic where your cat was tattooed.

Let all agencies know when cat has been safely found and remove posters.