

Nutrition Excellence!

August 2011



Lost Pets: What to Do and Where to Start

Generally pets run away because of boredom, loneliness, sexual urges (if they aren't spayed or neutered), fear or an unexpected event, curiosity, or if they're in a new home and trying to get back to something familiar. Our pets are part of our family, often some of our best friends, so when we can't find them, it can be stressful and emotional. Knowing where to start in your search can help save valuable time that could be the difference in whether or not you and your pet are reunited.

One of the most helpful things you can do is something that should be done before your pet is lost. Collars, ID tags with contact information and up-to-date city and vaccination tags will make identification and getting in touch with you much easier for anyone that might find your pet. You can also have your veterinarian implant a traceable microchip into your pet's skin. Most shelters scan incoming dogs for these chips when they come in. Even if you have a microchip, your pet should still have a collar with your contact information to make it easier for individuals that might find your pet.

If you notice your pet is missing, the first step is to search your home and property. Pets often get into some peculiar spaces, so be sure to check behind and under furniture, in closets, under your porch, house or car and in barns or sheds. Once you've confirmed they are missing, try to figure out how and why they escaped. This can help you determine where to search.

Walk around your neighborhood with a friend or family member. Call for your pet and try to talk to as many people as you can that might have seen him or her. Bring a photo so you can show them what your pet looks like. If your dog is very social, parks and neighborhood yards are good places to look. If they're shy, look for places he or she might be hiding. Bring a leash, some



treats, a favorite toy and a light with you. These will be helpful when you find your dog or if your dog is hiding in a dark place, which they often do when injured. Have someone stay at your house in case your pet wanders back while you're out searching. You can also put something of yours or your dog's outside your house, such as their bed or used towels, so they have a familiar scent to detect.

If you still can't find your dog after searching, call to see if your dog has been picked up and taken to a local veterinarian, shelter or animal control facility. If any of the dogs they have found sound remotely like yours, go in and check, as often your description and someone else's might not match. If they don't have your dog, be sure to leave a description and photo of your dog along with your contact information. Visit these locations every few days for the first couple of weeks then once a week for following weeks.

Rarely will people try to keep a pet that's not theirs, but they will often try to find its owner for a few days before taking it to a shelter, so put up fliers and posters throughout your neighborhood, at major intersections, at parks, at grocery stores, coffee shops and on any community bulletin boards. Although an old tactic, it's still effective. Use bright colors and other things that attract attention. Include a photo of your dog with a description, where your dog disappeared from, if you know, and on what date. Don't put your name and address on the flier, instead list a phone number for people to contact you.

You can also create an electronic version of your flier to share online and to send to shelters and veterinarians. There are websites specifically for lost pets that you can register on and you can also post free ads on sites like Craigslist. Many local newspapers or advertisers will also run lost pet ads for free.

If someone does contact you about finding your dog, never go to pick up your dog alone. Bring a friend or two and always meet in a public place. Never give your address out to someone that says they found your pet. Be cautious of people that are trying to take advantage of your situation and trying to scam you. Most importantly, don't give up!

A PROUD SUPPLIER OF PURINA FEEDS

WFS • PO Box 68 • Truman, MN 56088
507.776.2831 • www.wfsag.com



Purina Mills