

Found a Stray?

By Andrea Craun

Most pet parents don't want to think about the loss of their animal. How would you feel if your pet ran away or got lost by accident? You would want someone to keep them safe and try to find you, right? Most animal lovers would not be able to ignore a stray animal; however, there are several things to consider before trying to help.

Don't assume all strays are unwanted or abandoned animals. Accidents do happen and an owner could be looking for the animal. If it's been on its own for weeks it will probably be dirty, skinny, and have fleas.

If you find the animal near a roadway be careful to not cause an accident. Use your blinkers, mirrors, and turn signals appropriately. Turn on hazard lights and use road flares if available. Direct any traffic to slow down.

Use caution when trying to catch the animal. Animals that are scared or injured can act unpredictably. Do not make sudden movement and speak calmly, reassuring the animal. If the animal seems aggressive or skittish stay in your car and call your local animal control or police. Leave your phone number with the dispatcher and try to get an estimate on how long it will take them to respond. You do not want the animal to spook and run into the road. Try enticing the animal with strong smelling food such as canned tuna or hot dogs.

If you are able to transport the animal take it to the nearest animal shelter. Call animal control and report the found animal whether you have it or it's at the local veterinary hospital for treatment. You can post free advertisements stating you found the animal in the local newspaper or on certain website. Posting a found animal on social media can also be helpful.

While there are several issues to consider before trying to help a stray, isn't it better to give the animal a chance at life rather than leaving them to get hit by a car? If I were to lose one of my cherished pets I would hope someone would help them and try to find me.

