

FINGER LAKES FOUND CAT

Tips and Resources Recommended by Frank Vacarro, 7/23/20

About your found cat:

Anyone who has found a stray cat may post on Facebook: Finger Lakes Cats Lost and Found. Include photo(s), location, your contact information. If you'd like I'll repost to many other rescue pages and groups and tag you in each so you'll be part of the conversations. These pages reach thousands of people in your area, many of them dedicated and skillful cat and dog rescuers. Please request or accept friend request - Frank Vaccaro - so I can tag you in each repost to rescue groups and pages. Once friends, I'll invite you to be a member of those rescue groups so you'll be able to communicate within the groups. (You'll need to accept the invitation to be a member and you can remove yourself as group member anytime.) Since I may not be familiar with your area, feel free to send me a listing of any Facebook pages or groups of which you are aware.

There are many rescuers, including me, who help for free. All we want is to see stray pets reunited with their families!

Perhaps the following tips will help you deal with your found cat:

CAT AT YOUR DOOR - WHAT TO DO?

You see a dog roaming the neighborhood, you immediately think "There's something wrong with this picture!" Dogs running free are a danger to themselves and possibly to others! They seem to be very dependent on their best friends---us! So the community works hard and quickly to capture stray dogs and hopefully return them to their families.

So next you see a cat roaming in your yard and you say, "There's something wrong with this picture!" Or is there? We don't get nearly as excited as with dogs but we should still be concerned! However, our response now should be a cautious one. "Cats at your door" fall into different categories and your response should reflect an understanding of their differences:

There are escaped indoor-only cats (someone is looking now),

indoor/outdoor cats (someone will be looking in a day or so),

outdoor only cats, also sometimes known as neighborhood cats (someone might miss them but without the same urgency),

abandoned cats- someone has refused to continue their responsibility to care for them - no one is looking for them, and there are

feral cats- cats born in the wild and perfectly happy there with a little help from humans.

If it's your first sighting and the cat seems healthy and cared for, your best response should be one of WAIT AND SEE if it comes around again. It might just be a neighbor's indoor/outdoor cat or a neighborhood cat!

If you start feeding it, or like me you have food out 24/7 for all creatures, you're pretty much telling this kitty that you are its new family! And it probably will hang around.

If it is a neighbor's indoor/outdoor or escaped indoor-only cat they might be looking for it at the same time you are assuming that it's abandoned. You might be tempted to adopt it, give it to a friend, or bring it to a shelter. **BUT WAIT!!! DON'T DO ANY OF THOSE THINGS JUST YET!**

It's a good excuse to walk around and meet your neighbors and start asking if anyone knows this kitty!

Now if it keeps coming around or looks like it needs food/water/medical care or if it appears to be in some danger you'll need to take further action. Certainly if it needs medical care take it for treatment, and that might mean your own vet, emergency vet, or shelter. If it's showing signs of malnourishment, go ahead and start feeding it, knowing that now you'll have to work harder at finding its owner, while it is adopting you as its new "momma."

BUT PLEASE DO NOT TAKE A HEALTHY CAT TO A SHELTER IF YOU HAVE NOT FIRST TRIED THE FOLLOWING TIPS TO FIND THE OWNERS:

- 1- If you can, take the cat for a free "Chip Check" at any vet or pet store, no appointment needed.
- 2- Talk to neighbors and deliver flyers house-to-house, post flyers on poles, trees, etc. (please no nails in trees!)
- 3- Check shelters in your area for missing cat reports.
- 4- Search Facebook: Finger Lakes Cats Lost and Found and other pet rescue pages in your area.
- 5- Post on Facebook: Finger Lakes Cats Lost and Found (I'll repost to rescue groups and pages in your area for you.)
- 6- Check Craigslist for missing cats.
- 7- Post to Craigslist.
- 8- If cat comes and goes, make a paper collar (or put on a break-away collar) with your contact info and wrap around cat's neck to see if it's a neighbor's cat or a neighborhood cat. See if you get any calls....
- 9- If someone claims the cat, be sure to ask for proof: photos very different from your posted photos.

If no one claims it and you've decided to adopt it please be open to the idea that the owner might still one day show up. (I have no idea what to do if that happens!)

If you determine that it's a feral cat or a neighborhood cat the responsible thing to do would be to have it spayed or neutered. And you can continue caring for it outdoors with a low cost winter shelter that will keep kitty warm and dry even in the harshest winter conditions.

Thanks for reading all of this and especially for caring for cats that come to your door.

To see if someone has posted a missing cat, possibly the one you've found visit:

Finger Lakes Cats Lost and Found

<https://www.facebook.com/Finger-Lakes-Cats-Lost-and-Found-1525274414453885/>

For additional search resources visit:

Finger Lakes Cat / Dog Search Resources:

<https://www.facebook.com/Finger-Lakes-Cat-Dog-Search-Resources-461113647410836/>

Find your county and check webpages, Facebook pages and groups.

~Frank Vaccaro

Missing Cats Rochester New York

Found Stray Cats Rochester NY

Monroe County New York Lost and Found Pets

Orleans County NY Lost and Found Pets

Finger Lakes Cats Lost and Found

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