



Trapping Volunteer Opportunities

Trapping

Trappers are our direct link to the streets. Trappers are responsible for humanely trapping pets and directly assisting with their rescue. Trapping can be very exciting and rewarding as you get to be the “rescuer”! We offer free trap rental and education to volunteers. We request that all traps are returned in CLEAN and WORKING condition. We offer free volunteer trapping services to the public based on availability. Once we receive a request, it is paired with a trapper who services that area. You are never obligated to accept a request but we do request a response. You, as a trapper, are also available to request help for any colonies you are working on as well. All requests must be completed using our form so that they can be logged and managed (<https://new.shelterluv.com/form/community/HWFL/29061-tnr-request>).

Who Can Be Trapped: The clinic you use will have their own protocol. Please contact them for information on minimum weight/age as well as their policy for pregnant females. It is recommended that cats not be in heat at the time of the surgery as this increases some risks and may be more expensive depending on the clinic. If a mother is nursing, it is recommended to wait until she is done nursing for at least 2 weeks. Kittens must be at least 3 months old for TNR programs.

Required Supplies:

- Trap, small paper plate for bait, bait, absorbent pee pads, zip ties and/or carabiners to secure trap, trap cover (can be a twin sheet, a small blanket, or a large beach towel), a quiet AC controlled place for them to recover after surgery like a bathroom or garage with mini-split. All required supplies can be provided (even boarding), please ask!

Recommended Supplies:

- Bite proof gloves, thick towel to help with transporting trap, catnip and/or silvervine, Happy Whiskers t-shirt/cards/merch (some people will not work with any trapper out of fear for safety of their community cats), bug spray, sunscreen, long-range flashlight, wet wipes, small trash bag, clothes that cover as much of your body as possible to reduce bug bites and possibly injury (long sleeve shirts, long pants, hard toed boots, etc).

Suggested Bait: seafood based wet foods that are GRAVY like (NOT PATE) are easiest to spread and create a “trail” to bait cats in. Plain sardines, tuna, and rotisserie chicken are all great options. Catnip and/or Silvervine can also be used to attract cats to the trap as well for particularly hard to catch cats. You can ask the feeders what they normally feed and try to use a food they might be familiar with.

When to Trap: Most cats are nocturnal, meaning they usually active at night (9PM-6AM). If the cat has a feeder, it is best to work with the feeder to determine the best time to attempt trapping. It is recommended that food be withheld for 24hrs prior to trapping for the best results. **A cat is not motivated to enter a trap unless they are hungry!** If the cat has a feeder, attempt to trap right

before their usual mealtime. Without cooperation from the feeder, it is almost impossible to catch some cats. Traps should be set only when they are able to be monitored. NEVER LEAVE A TRAP OUT UNATTENDED. Your trap should be viewable at all times. Some savvy trappers zip-tie neon glow in the dark fishing lures to the lids of their trap doors to make it easier to see at night.

Placing the Trap: We recommend lining the inside of the trap with newspaper or a pee pad. This is to protect your car during transport and can make cats more willing to walk inside the trap. Place the trap in an area that the cat usually frequents. If the cat comes to a certain place every day to eat, try to place the trap there. Place the trap on flat, even ground somewhere hidden, like in between bushes. Cats will feel more comfortable entering the trap if it is not located out in the open.

Use a small, bowl or tray and place bait at the far end of the trap. **DO NOT leave the food in a can.** Cats can cut their mouths on the edges of the metal can and it is very difficult for them to eat out of. We recommend dripping some of the bait on the ground, leading the cat up to the end of the trap where the rest of the bait is placed. This helps when a cat continues to smell the bait through the side of the trap but will not walk in the actual trap.

Set the Trap: You will be shown how to set your trap properly. The mechanism is different depending on the trap. If you are trying to trap for only 1 cat in a colony of many, don't set the trap. Prop open the door using a filled water bottle or some other sort of prop. Tie a string to the water bottle so that when the cat you do want to trap enters you can pull the string, forcing the trap to close without being triggered by the plate. We also offer drop traps for more tricky situations or for cats that do not fall for normal traps.

In some occasions, you will end up trapping a different animal other than your target such as a raccoon or a different cat. Most of our traps (Tru-Catch LTDs and FCs) are designed to open when placed upside down. For example, if you accidentally trap a raccoon, use a stick or a hard soled shoe to roll the trap until it's flipped upside down. This will cause the door to open on its own, allowing the raccoon to safely exit without requiring you to place your hands near the trap.

After the trap has been set, walk away as far as you can while still being able to see the trap. Many cats will not walk in if there is a stranger nearby. Most trappers will wait in their cars. When the trap is triggered, it will be very quiet meaning you may not hear it. **This is why it is important that you always have eyes on the trap.** It is very important to have a trap cover ready for when the cat enters the trap. A trap cover can be any sort of light weight fabric that can be used to cover the trap completely. Many trappers like to use twin sheets.

Covering the Trap: Many cats do not react well to being trapped. Some cats, especially kittens, may simply continue eating the bait like nothing ever happened while most feral cats will try everything they can to escape. This can result in injuries to the cat as they try to escape. Most common injuries include scraped noses but can be severe. To limit this, **COVER THE TRAP WITH A TRAP COVER IMMEDIATELY AS THE DOOR CLOSES**. Most cats will completely calm down and stop moving once they are unable to see their surroundings. Cover the trap, and then you can pick the trap safely by the handle to move the trap after. **Trying to move a cat in a trap without a cover can result in injury to both you and the cat.**

Securing the Trap: Most traps we use have a safety feature which causes them to open when flipped upside down. We recommend at this point to use zip ties to zip tie the door to the trap closed. You can secure the opposite side with zip ties or carabiner if you are using a two-door trap. This is best done with gloves to avoid any accidental injuries. It is not necessary, but it will prevent the feral cat from escaping and running around your car while you are driving.

Transporting the Trap: Even though the animal is in the cage, it can still attempt to bite or scratch you. We recommend all trappers to carry bite proof gloves to aid in transporting and for general safety reasons. All our traps have a handle that can be used to carry the trap by but with very large cats or cats that are moving, it can be easier and safer to grab the trap by the bottom, using a thick towel or gloves to protect your hands. Even when using the handle, make sure to keep the cat away from your body. We recommend lining your car with absorbent pee pads under the trap to catch any spilled wet food or urine. Keep the cat covered at all times to avoid unnecessary stress.

Once the cat is trapped, there are a few options (these VARY, please contact the clinics directly to confirm details and availability):

Broward County Animal Care (BCAC): FREE. Can bring up to 2 cats per day ANYDAY between 11AM – 5PM (no appointment needed). Must be trapped in a Broward Area code and must show photo ID with Broward County proof of address. Some days they are closed, check their website for specific dates ahead of time. Cats do not need to be fasted. Drive to the Pet Help entrance and remain in your car. Cats must be brought 1 cat per trap. Happy Whiskers or BCAC can provide a trap for you to borrow. Cats receive spay/neuter, FVRCP, Rabies, flea medication and ear tip. Even if a cat is already fixed, they will provide any necessary medical treatment. BCAC offers two different programs:

RTF: the cat will be returned to the address you provided by BCAC THEMSELVES. YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO HOLD THEM FOR RECOVERY OR RELEASE THEM. This is the most convenient option for mass trappers however it is NOT ideal for any cats that need to be held for an extended period for recovery or cats that were trapped somewhere inaccessible to BCAC for whatever reason

TNR: they will allow you to pick the cat up after. You MUST hold the cat until at least the next day when the anesthesia wears off. Imagine waking up drugged after having surgery and being back on the street having to fend for yourself!

2400 SW 42nd Street, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

<https://www.broward.org/Animal/ProgramsServices/pages/community-cat-management-programs.aspx>

Communitycats@Broward.org

PURRR: Offers both ear tipped and non-ear tip options as well as some add-ons. Free with ear tip if vouchers are available. If no vouchers are available it is \$50 for ear tip package (MUST arrive in trap, includes spay/neuter and Rabies, sometimes FVRCP depending on availability). By appointment only, booking is done online. Days vary but range from Monday – Wednesday and Saturdays. No food allowed after midnight. Drop off time is between 8AM-9AM. Pickup time is usually between 3-4PM, you will receive a text or call if they are ready sooner. All cats must be picked up before 4PM.

1556 E Commercial Blvd, Oakland Park, FL 33334

<https://www.purrr.org/>

spayneuter@purrr.org

Saving Sage Animal Rescue Clinic: Offers both ear tipped and non-ear tip options as well as some add-ons. Free with ear tip if vouchers are available and must arrive in trap. \$75 for no ear tip (includes FVRCP, Rabies, flea medication), must arrive in hard carrier. \$75 for ferals when no vouchers are available and includes the same services with an ear tip. No food after midnight. Days vary. Drop off is 8:30AM-9:30AM, you will be called when they are ready to be picked up. Pick-up time can vary greatly depending on the schedule that day.

8736 W Commercial Blvd, Sunrise, FL 33351

<https://savingsagerescue.org/>
savingsagerescue@yahoo.com, 954-530-1508, 954-530-1425

DPC: Offers ear tipped and non-ear tipped options. \$20 when vouchers are available with ear tip. Includes spay/neuter, rabies, flea medication. Cat must arrive in trap. Days vary. No food after 10PM. Drop off is between 8AM-9AM, leave cat in car and go to front desk. They will check you in and tell you to drive around the back of the office to drop off the cat. Pick-up time varies but is usually after 2PM. You will be contacted when they are ready for pick-up.

6991 Stirling Road, Davie, FL 33314

<https://www.dpcvet.com/>

954-516-1654

Recovery:

An indoor area like a guest shower or a/c controlled garage are great recovery areas. We recommend **KEEPING THE CAT IN THE TRAP AT ALL TIMES** to avoid risk of injury to both you and the cat. Place absorbent pads down and place the trap on top. Make sure they always have access to both food and water. These cats have been surviving in the outdoors and will likely be dehydrated and hungry. To safely clean the trap, use bite proof gloves and a thick towel or large book to block their exit from the trap. Use the other hand to switch out food and water bowls or spot clean as needed. You can also try transferring the cat to another trap while you clean but this comes with some risks. **Keep the trap covered with a lightweight cover AT ALL TIMES.** Monitor their incisions (if possible) and pee pads to make sure there is no bleeding / no adverse reactions. You can elevate the trap on two chairs to get a better look or ask a friend to hold up the trap. It may seem uncomfortable for them but being in an enclosed space will make them feel safer. This process is only a few days out of their life and will help them live healthier, safer lives.

How Long to Recover: Male cats are usually fine once the anesthesia wears off 24hrs after surgery. Females have a more invasive surgery and we recommend holding them for at least 2 days after surgery. Some cats, especially feral cats, may recover **SLOWER** indoors due to stress. Keeping them indoors for too long can cause more harm than good.

Releasing:

ONLY RELEASE CATS BACK TO THE SAME EXACT AREA THEY WERE TRAPPED. We recommend releasing them at the same time of day they were trapped . This is usually when they will be awake and alert. If you worked with a feeder, contact them for the best time of release. They will get peace of mind seeing the cat get released and can make sure they get fed if they were too scared to eat while trapped. Make sure they have some sort of local water source as well since many outdoor cats pass from dehydration here in Florida.

Trap Return: Recommended disinfectants include Rescue Cleaner, bleach, or ammonia. These cleaning products work best when applied and left on for 10 minutes before being rinsed off. Coordinate with Happy Whiskers for drop-off dates and times. We will find you!