

Trapping Information and Instructions

A. There are only **two** humane solutions for the wild cat:

Euthanasia in a humane fashion (contact your veterinarian or local animal shelter).

OR

Spay/Neuter and Release. If someone is committed to feeding these cats on a daily basis (cat food, not table scraps!!) and the environment in which they are living is relatively safe, they can be easily trapped, neutered and returned to the environment which they know. They will be happier outdoors than cooped up in a house where they will most likely hide all day and prowl at night. If time, finances, and space permit, you may want to set up some outdoor shelter for these animals in the winter. Straw makes an excellent bed. Cats like small, dry spaces into which they can nestle.

B. MATERIALS, there are 5 items required for trapping wild cats:

1. A trap ("TOMAHAWK" or "HAVE-A-HEART"). Tomahawks may be purchased via Tomahawk Live Trap Company, P.O. Box 323, Tomahawk, Wisconsin 54487. Phone: (800) 272-8727 or www.livetrapping.com. They cost about \$68.00. You should order trap #606 (cat transfer trap with sliding door). Have-A-Heart traps are available at Agway and Home Depot.
2. Bait (tuna, sardines or mackerel, the smellier the better);
3. Towel or sheet (to cover the trap after a cat is captured);
4. Flashlight (for night-time trapping);
5. Patience and Fortitude. (Never stop trapping until you are absolutely certain every cat has been trapped). There are always more cats residing in an area than you see.

C. PROCEDURE

1. One week prior to trapping, notify your neighbors of your intentions to trap. Ask them to tag their household cats or keep them indoors.
2. Establish a feeding pattern – feed at the same time, and the same place every day. This will ensure that the cats will be where you want them, when you want them.
3. Contact the veterinarian or animal shelter and explain what you are planning to do. **It is important to make arrangements first.** DO NOT trap a cat and then start looking for someplace to bring it or someone to take it!
4. Do not feed the cats for a day, and then set the trap. If they are extra hungry, you have a greater chance of getting them to go into the trap. Set the trap with tuna, sardines or mackerel – something very smelly. **Having a trap with a sliding back door is especially helpful in releasing an animal that you did not want to trap.**
5. When you have trapped the animal, cover the trap with a towel or sheet to calm the animal. Even tame cats panic when trapped. However, they do quiet down when covered. **DO NOT LEAVE THE TRAP SET OVERNIGHT.** Trapped cats can be left in the trap overnight as long as they are covered and in a safe secure place, i.e. garage, basement, etc., protected from dogs and other wildlife.
6. Cats can be transported to veterinarian or animal shelter in the trap. Put a piece of plastic (a garbage bag works well) under the trap as some cats may urinate out of fear and stress.
7. When spaying/neutering **Make sure to tell the veterinarian to use dissolvable stitches as it will be almost impossible to retrap the cat for stitch removal.** Notching the ear is helpful for identification if trapping more than one cat and they have similar markings.
8. Often males can be released within 12 hours after surgery, ask the veterinarian about this. **Females should be held at least 48 hours after surgery.** Have a cage available for this purpose; cats cannot be left in the trap for any length of time. **Please remember, these cats do not understand what you are trying to do, they just feel trapped and threatened and they may become hostile, so exercise caution at all times.** If using a cage, lining it with newspapers makes it easier to clean. You will need a litter box and dishes for water and food.
9. After the appropriate recovery time, transport the cat back to the release site. Open the door of the carrier, step back, and they will just run out. They probably won't even stop to thank you.