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TRAPPING SUGGESTIONS

Ideally the person who is feeding the cats will participate in trapping the cats. If not, you should take a couple of weeks to establish your own feeding pattern for the purpose of trapping. Why? Because by establishing a feeding pattern you're training the cats everything that you want them to do: when to eat, where to eat, what to eat, etc. Trapping is really easy if you look at it like this because all that you need to add to the mix is the trap! Now take the trapper pledge: I solemnly swear to only use humane traps for good, never evil. Happy trapping!

- **Minimize the cat's time in the humane trap.** Ideally, the cat is held at the most overnight before surgery. (For example, trap Sunday for a Monday appointment.)
 - **Never leave the trap unattended especially at night!** We want the cat to be safe and to avoid trapping wildlife. Traps are expensive to replace if stolen. Remove the trap when not in use or lock it up with the door closed.
 - **Line the bottom of the trap and the trip plate with newspaper.** Newspaper creates a platform to help the cats' paws not slip through the trap. Tape (we like blue masking tape because it leaves little residue) the newspaper in place if you expect wind-cats don't like things fluttering around.
 - **If rain is expected,** cover and secure the trap with a plastic garbage bag or equivalent. Leave both small ends of the trap uncovered for ventilation and so that as the cat enters it can see all the way through the trap.
 - **WHO: Ideally the person who's been feeding the cats.**
 - **WHAT: Use food that the cats are used to eating as bait, even dry kibble.** It doesn't take much bait and if food spills on the ground, it should be picked up so the remaining cats needing to be trapped don't graze on it instead of going into the traps for food. Place the food at the closed end of the trap on a paper towel or in a small dish that doesn't obstruct the trip plate. All available food should be in the trap, water outside of the trap is fine. You may leave a "bait trail" by skipping a teaspoon of food along the newspaper from the trap entrance to the "motherlode" of food. If necessary for difficult to trap cats, use a variety of bait including smelly stuff (sardines, jack mackerel, original KFC, tuna in oil, etc.).
 - **WHEN: Trap during normal feeding time.** The next best time is at dawn or dusk.
 - **WHERE: Trap in the regular feeding area which should be non-obvious to passersby.** Traps may be placed in an open area if that's how the cats are used to eating; otherwise, place the traps along a wall or under a table or bush. Aim the mouth of the trap toward the direction from which the cats usually come.
 - **HOW:** do all of the same things that you normally do when feeding. For example, if you whistle for the cats, whistle. If you always go through the squeaky screen door, go through the squeaky screen door. If you always go inside and watch after feeding, go inside and watch.
 - **Fasting the cats before trapping.** Often you don't need to fast the cats. But if you've been training the cats to eat out of the trap (by securing the door open for a few days), the day before trapping feed 1/2 of the amount of food they normally eat so they'll be extra hungry. If you can stomach it and there are no young kittens involved, fast the cats for a day prior to trapping.
 - **Make certain that the traps are stable with very little wobble.** Just place the palm of your hand on the top of the trap and try rocking it back and forth as a test. Move the trap to a more even surface or put some sticks or a rock under the wobbly end of the trap.
 - **Completely cover the trap with a towel or a sheet once the cat is trapped!**
- Completely cover the trap with a towel or a sheet once the cat is trapped!** This step cannot be overemphasized. Being trapped is incredibly stressful for the cats; covering the trap completely will have a calming effect for the cat. The trap remains covered until the cat is released.
- If you have any questions or concerns, call!