

Project TNR
NJ's Humane Solution for Feral Cats



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Hard to Trap Cats

1. Camouflage the Trap

Disguise the trap so that it blends in with its surroundings. This can be done by draping burlap over the sides of the trap (though not the rear - the cat needs to see all the way through) and on the trap floor. Then cover the burlap with leaves, branches - anything that will add to the camouflage. Sometimes even simpler things work like leaning a large board against a wall and putting the trap behind it so it's hidden. Even draping a sheet over the sides might do the trick.

2. Training the Cat

Cats can be trained to go into traps as follows: With a wire, secure the front door in an open position. Then place the trap in the cat's territory, preferably near the normal feeding spot.

Begin by placing the cat's daily meal on a small plate a few inches in front of the front entrance to the trap. Once you see the cat is eating from this location, then the next meal, move the plate a couple of inches just inside the front of the trap. When the cat is eating from there, move the food again, this time a few inches further into the trap. Continue this process of gradually moving the food inwards until the cat is going far enough in that you can set the trigger and the cat will step on the plate.

If you will not be nearby during this period of training, the rear door of the trap should be removed so that no one can come along in your absence and catch a cat. Loosely tape a clear piece of plastic or even a piece of paper to the rear of the trap instead.

3. Attract the Cat

Try different baits: chicken baby food, sardines, mackerel, tuna, etc. After placing the bait at the rear of the trap, drizzle some of the food or oil from the can in a zig-zag pattern leading out of the trap to lure the cat in. Cats are attracted to Valerian: boil the herb in water to make a broth and douse the trap in it. You can also try sprinkling catnip on the trap.

4. Use a Drop Trap

Do a search on www.youtube.com for drop traps. You will see many in action. Contact Project TNR if you would like to rent one, or for instructions building one.

5. Play!

Use a flashlight or laser pointer to play "laser tag" with her at night. When she's in a frisky mood, draw her closer to the entrance of a set trap with the light beam until she's drawn to the back of the trap.

The goal of Project TNR, a program of New Jersey Animal Rights Alliance, is to introduce Trap-Neuter-Return to communities as the humane, effective and cost-effective method of controlling feral cat populations. Trap-Neuter-Return is a comprehensive program that will result in lower animal control costs, fewer to no births, reduction of nuisance complaints by residents and the alleviation of public health concerns.