

RURAL ANIMAL WELFARE RESOURCES



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You hear the phrase Trap, Neuter & Return (TNR for short) a lot at RAWR. It is the main thing we were set up to do. By controlling the population of feral cats through neutering, the health & welfare of the animals is improved and the humans benefit too, so it is a win win situation.



It usually starts with a message:

*Hello, I've got this cat/s coming into my garden/shed/house – it doesn't belong to me.
It's upsetting/attacking my cat/me. It looks pregnant/it's got kittens/is spraying and pooing everywhere/is stealing my cat's food.. . .*

After establishing the location, number of cats, whether fed and what time (because a cat which is fed at a regular time usually turns up when you expect it and a hungry cat is easier to trap) a date is made for a volunteer to call in person.

The car is loaded up with traps, covers, transfer cages, cat food (sardines are a good choice as the smell is very enticing for cats!). Waterproof lining for the tailgate/boot plus newspaper or similar for soakage are essentials in case of an unhappy cat expressing its opinion. In which case the ability to drive home with all the windows wide open in all weathers is useful.

The volunteer wears appropriate clothing – nothing precious as you may be fighting through brambles, undergrowth, old abandoned buildings and farmyards. Good footwear is important too for the same reason – no high heels please. And Wellingtons can be lifesavers when you don't know if you are walking in mudor if it's something else, ugh!

When you arrive, after scouting around for the best place, traps are set. These are humane and consist of a wire basket with a door flap at one end. When the door flap is opened it lifts an extra section of floor at the far end. Food is placed just beyond this trigger section of the floor and the trapper retires to a place of concealment from where the trap can be monitored. Sometimes this is the front seat of the car and includes hot and cold drinks, snacks, reading material, knitting etc. Mostly though it is less comfortable: outside, behind a shed or convenient bush, in the rain/cold/heat, bitten by midges, scratched by brambles. . . The trap must not be left for any length of time as a trapped cat may panic when it realises it cannot get out and may rush against the sides and injure itself.



If you are having a good day, the cat will approach the trap, walk inside to get the food, stand on the floor trigger and close the door behind itself. Just occasionally, you get more than one cat – yay! The volunteer, on hearing/seeing the door close, approaches quietly with a throw and covers the trap. Once in the dark, the cat feels safer, calms down and can be loaded into the car or transferred to a holding basket so that another can be trapped.



If you are not having a good day, the cat will walk all round the trap, sniff disdainfully at the food, then jump on top of the trap where it will sit down and begin to wash itself. Long hours can be spent in fruitless waiting while the cat inwardly sniggers to itself at the foolishness of humans.



The trapped animals are taken to the vet where they are anaesthetised, examined for any health problems and neutered. Once recovered, usually after a couple of days, the volunteer returns the animal to its home ground where it is released. Not returning the animal would mean leaving a space for un-neutered animals to move in. Returning means a stable population and no more inbreeding, no more fighting, no more yowling for a mate, no more sick and dying kittens. Another small step in the fight for animal welfare achieved.

If you would like to contribute to the cost of our TNR work, go to the RAWR facebook page where you will find a donate button or call into our shop in New Street, Bantry, County Cork. Cheques can be sent by post to RAWR, Rockmount, Drimoleague, County Cork . Thank you.

A FEW GOOD REASONS TO ADOPT A BLACK CAT:

You can always find a black cat in the snow.

Black cats match everything

Black fur won't show on your LBD

Holding a black cat is very slimming

You will save money on their Halloween costumes

Black cats don't show the dirt

And most important: Black cats are the least likely to be adopted.

