

TRAPPING INSTRUCTIONS

BY ALLYSON CARLISLE



This step-by-step tutorial demonstrates how to help you safely and efficiently trap community cats in the Trap-Neuter-Return Program. The Trap-Neuter-Return Program is beneficial in preventing homeless litters and controlling the ever-growing community cat population. Community cats are trapped and brought to neuter facilities, then after recovery, released back to their original area. This tutorial will cover the following: (1) how to prepare for trapping (2) how to set the trap (3) holding procedures (4) what to expect and plan for at the vet (5) how to return the cat if not eligible for adoption.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Trap-Neuter-Return Program: A program that involves trapping community cats and having them altered, vaccinated, micro-chipped, and returned to their outdoor home if they are not socialized enough to be adopted. It is used to stop the breeding cycle and prevent reproduction.

Community Cat: A cat that resides outdoors

Feral: An unsocialized cat

Stray: A cat that was once socialized with humans but lost their domestic home

REQUIRED TOOLS/ EQUIPMENT

- Light Duty Animal Trap 30LTD (TruCatch)*
- Blanket in cold weather/ sheet in warm weather
- Heavy Duty Gloves
- Flashlight
- Stick
- Rock
- Smelly wet food (tuna, mackerel, sardines)

*Traps can be borrowed from most vet offices or from Thundering Paws with a \$50 refundable deposit when the trap is returned.

PREPARING FOR TRAPPING

1. Inform neighbors and/or businesses that you are planning to trap.
2. Feed the cat(s) at the same time and place.
Note: Make sure to feed the cat something stinky like sardines, tuna, or mackerel. Place the food next to the trap so that the cat gets used the trap.
3. Do NOT Feed the cat(s) the day before trapping to encourage them to eat the day of trapping
4. Make an appointment at Austin Humane Society (AHS) or Hill Country Animal League (HCAL).
Note: Appointments are good, but not always necessary, once you have established yourself as a trapper.
5. Prepare a holding space for the trapped animal to stay before and after surgery. *See "Holding Procedure"



FIGURE 1, TruCatch Trap Rings.

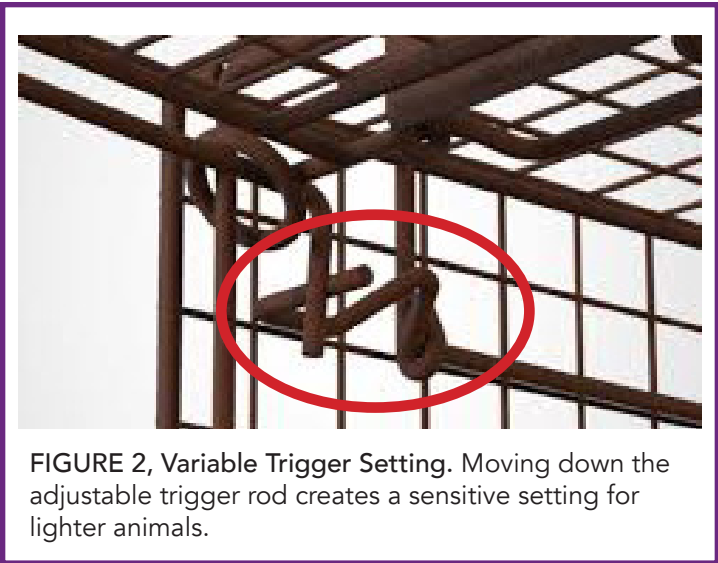


FIGURE 2, Variable Trigger Setting. Moving down the adjustable trigger rod creates a sensitive setting for lighter animals.

SETTING THE TRAP

1. Place a small amount of wet food on the ground, place the back of the trap on the food to aid in the trip plate being activated.
2. Line the front and middle of the trap with cardboard to provide support for the cat.
3. Cover the trap with a blanket or sheet for privacy and protection from the elements.
4. Using your index fingers, raise both rings to the top of the door (Figure 1).
5. Use your middle finger to flip open and raise the door.
6. With your dominate hand, set the door on the Variable Trigger Setting (Figure 2).

HOLDING PROCEDURE

1. After the cat is trapped, keep it in the trap in a safe, weather-appropriate place such as a garage until the vet appointment. **DO NOT OPEN THE TRAP!** Keep the blanket or sheet over the trap.
Caution: Do not touch the cat. Use proper barriers including the heavy-duty gloves and the trap handle bar with the blanket still intact to carry the trap.
2. Once the cat has been altered, he/she **MUST** stay in the trap or carrier, if you supplied one to the vet clinic, for twelve hours. The cat has had anesthesia which needs to wear off before he/she is released. Otherwise the cat is vulnerable to being severely injured or killed by predators, falling from heights, etc.



THE VET VISIT

1. Transport cat in trap and take a SECURE carrier to the vet.
2. Once alteration is done, usually by 5 p.m. depending on vet clinic, pick-up the cat (now in a carrier) and take to a secure, weather-appropriate holding location.

RELEASING THE CAT

1. After recovery time of at least 12 hours, prepare to release the cat.
2. With heavy-duty gloves on, transport carrier to vehicle. Drive to the location where you trapped the cat.
3. Wearing the heavy-duty gloves, open the carrier door. The cat should run out immediately. If not, walk away and wait for the cat to leave the carrier.
4. Return trap and carrier to Thundering Paws.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact
Thundering Paws staff
at 512-402-9725 with
any questions.

Thank you for contributing
to the Trap-Neuter-Return
initiative and helping
your community!