

LOST DOGS OR CATS

1. Do a complete tour of the neighbourhood, asking if anyone has seen the dog. Take a recent photo with you if you have one
2. If they have some identification, a tattoo or Microchip, notify I-CAD – see www.i-cad.fr and check that all your contact details are up to date.
3. Check on the website www.chien-perdu.org to see if anyone has found the dog. You can also place the missing dog's details on this site.
4. Contact the local SPAs and send them photos, description and contact details. Check their website for a lost/found section. Go and have a look to be sure!
5. Inform all the local neighbours, vets, Mairie, postman/woman and gendarmes.
6. Put up posters in your local area and in cafés, bars, vets, shops etc.
7. If the dog is injured it may be hiding out, so check all possible hiding places. Keep calling and keep checking the neighbour-hood, rattling biscuit boxes or using any other means that the dog is used to, to get his attention.
8. Do an internet search for online groups and forums local to you and post adverts for your lost pet including the date and location your pet went missing, photos, reward offered (if any) and as much detail as you can.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A STRAY DOG

Not every dog walking on its own, is lost or a 'stray'. However, if you find a dog that you believe is either lost, distressed or at risk then this is the correct course of action to take:

STEP 1 – INFORM THE MAIRIE (CLOSEST to where the DOG was FOUND)

- a) Report: that you have found or seen a stray dog, the time, date, location and any details on collar (check inside), ID tag, or tattoo. If there is an incident or threat to livestock, domestic pets, people or property, report this too.
- b) Take the dog with you if possible, however you are not obliged to. A photograph of the dog/incident will be useful though.
- c) If you can retrieve the dog, but it appears to be sick, injured or severely malnourished, take it to a vet first, but ensure you (or the vet) notify the Mairie.
- d) If the Mairie is closed, go to a veterinary clinic and ask them to check the dog for a microchip and return to the Mairie to report the information as soon as possible.
- e) If it is impractical to take the stray dog into the Mairie, you could take the dog to a vet or directly to the nearest fourrière (dog pound). The vet/gendarmerie/La Poste can advise the location of the appropriate fourrière for the commune. Make it clear that you are bringing in a stray and not your own dog.

- The Mairie has a statutory obligation to recover any stray dog in the commune and to instruct the fourrière to take the dog into care. It is the fourrières duty to trace the owner.

- At the Mairie/fourrières discretion the dog may remain in the custody of the finder, or with a recognized animal welfare association. It is the fourrières duty to register the dog's details and follow the due process.

Please note - Before taking an animal to **Bergerac or Marsac SPA**, it is advisable to first check with the Mairie where you found the dog, or the Mairie that is affiliated with that particular SPA as they only take animals from communes who are. If they are not, then the Mairie is obliged to have other means of dealing with found animals.

The Mairie, if affiliated with Bergerac or Marsac, will issue you with an Attestation. You then need to phone the SPA to make an appointment to take the animal to the Refuge and confirm that you have obtained the Attestation which you take to the SPA with the animal. This also applies should you wish to borrow a trap to catch an animal.

STEP 2 – TO HELP AN OWNER TO FIND THEIR LOST DOG

- Enquire among neighbours and householders around the area in which you found the dog.
- Notify local vets, gendarmeries, shops and local businesses, the postman, farmers, local horse-riding, dog-walking, cycling and walking/hiking groups and contact nearby animal refuges.
- Take a photograph of the dog and make some posters to include a contact number, the date and location the dog was found. Display the posters in the Mairie, La Poste, veterinary clinics, shops, campsites, supermarkets and on notice boards in other prominent places.
- Do an internet search for online groups and forums local to you and post adverts. Here are some links to get you started:

What happens next?

While the Mairie have a statutory obligation to recover all stray dogs in the Commune, they have no obligation to trace the owner of a lost animal and rarely will they have a microchip reader. However, in reality the Mairie staff are likely to know the owner of a stray dog in their Commune and can contact them directly.

If you have reported a stray dog to the Mairie, the clock starts ticking from the moment the dog is registered with the fourrière, which holds animals for the statutory period of eight working days during which time, if the animal is identified by a microchip/tattoo, they will try to contact the registered owner, invite them to reclaim their dog, or to surrender ownership.

If the dog is unidentified (no microchip/tattoo) the fourrière will publicise it, usually on their website or Facebook page, in the hope that their owners will recognize and reclaim the dog.

After the statutory period, unclaimed dogs (whether identified or unidentified) are considered 'abandoned' and those deemed fit for re-homing may pass into the care of the SPA/Refuge, and may become available for adoption.

Further information

If the animal is not causing any danger to itself, to people, to other domestic pets or to livestock, it may just be going about its normal daily routine.

If a stray dog appears to be aggressive, or too timid to approach, you could just leave food and water nearby and report the sighting to the local Mairie giving them a description of the dog, details of time, date, location and any incident you witnessed. A photograph is always useful.

If you see or find a dog wandering on a road and likely to cause itself, or others, danger or injury, or you see a dog worrying livestock or attacking other domestic pets, it is your civic duty to report the incident to the Mairie, but do not place yourself in danger by intervening.

Every Mairie has a statutory duty, under the Articles of the Code Rural et de la Pêche Maritime (CRPM), to deal with stray dogs within their commune, to alert the Emergency Services if required to retrieve the dog, and to provide an adequate fourrière or to have a contract to use the fourrière facility in another commune.

The Mairies policy must be published and displayed in a public area at the Mairie.

Vets have no statutory obligation to trace or notify the owners of stray animals, however, they will frequently do this, using the I-CAD register to identify an owner, or they may already know a local dog and its owner.

It is the statutory duty of the fourrière to contact owners of stray animals – they are equipped to read a microchip/tattoo number and access the I-CAD register to trace the last registered owner. Officially notify them of the dog's current location. Before a dog is returned to the owner, all expenses, fees and fines must be paid to the fourrière – which may deter owners from reclaiming their dogs.

