

Finding Lost and Stolen Pets

I have been searching for my stolen Dalmatian, [Dulcie](#), since March 31 of 1997. I have come up with ideas of my own, as well as having done a lot of research into what steps to take to try to locate a stolen or lost dog. I have tried to help many other people who have gone through this most devastating experience, and some dogs have been recovered with these ideas. I do hope some of this information will help.

You can read Dulcie's story, of course, which explains how she was stolen, how I know she was stolen and did not simply run off, and how I began my search for her. There may be ideas there that you can use. Do not give up on your search. You CAN find your lost dog, but it is important to start to work as soon as you discover he or she is gone. Also you might check the [Last Chance for Animals](#) Stolen Pets website. This site also explains what [bunchers and Class B Dealers](#) are and their role in the disappearance of many pets in the US each year.

Please do email [Last Chance for Animals](#), as they are a group in Los Angeles who has been fighting pet theft for nearly 20 years. They may be able to help, and it helps them to know that if many dogs are missing from a certain area, that is an indicator of a pet theft ring in operation.

Click [HERE](#) for sites to post and view [lost and found pets](#) (including birds and horses).

Steps to take:

Call the police or sheriff right away if you know your pet was stolen. They MUST take a report..do not let them refuse to take a stolen pet report.

Call your local shelters and animal control, and be sure to call any shelter or pound within a 50 mile radius. It is best to visit the shelters yourself, as many shelters are too busy to look for your dog and may miss him or her.

Make flyers, using good, clear photos. Note any distinguishing markings or behaviors. Offer a reward, if you can, but DO NOT post how much the reward is. Be sure to note on the flyer if your dog is on any medications or needs regular veterinary care.

Get at least 200 flyers to start with, and post them where ever people will gather and have the chance to see them.

Post them at:

- **Animal shelters**
- **Veterinary offices**
- **Pet shops**
- **Feed stores**
- **Sheriff and Police departments**
- **Fire Departments**
- **Grooming shops**
- **Tack stores**
- **Libraries**
- **Grocery stores**
- **Gas and service stations**
- **Laundromats**
- **Day care centers**
- **Rest stops**
- **Video stores**
- **Restaurants**
- **Bars and Taverns**

Give flyers to:

- **Trainers...both dog and horse trainers may be willing to help.**
- **Farriers...if your dog is out in the country with someone, farriers can help to keep open eyes on farms and ranches that may have dogs not visible from the road.**
- **Schools...ask the principal of any area schools if you can give a flyer to each teacher to show the class. Kids are great at spotting dogs.**
- **Delivery people and agencies**
- **Gas and Oil Delivery**
- **Postal employees (post one in post office lobbies too, and ask if one can be posted at the time clocks of the employees)**
- **Florists**
- **UPS offices and delivery employees**
- **Road crews and construction workers**
- **Garbage collectors**

You may want to put on your flyer a small notation that you will be picking up the flyers when your dog is found, and DO SO! This helps keep public relations on a positive note for the next person who may want to post a flyer, and may mean that your flyer stays up a bit longer. Keep rechecking where you have posted them and post again if necessary.

Keep a supply of flyers in your car, and give one to other dog lovers you happen to run across. Give them to anyone with a dog in their car, especially if that person has the same breed as yours. Dog lovers are happy to help keep an eye out for a lost or stolen dog.

Advertise in every newspaper and penny saver type paper you can. Some papers will place ads for free in papers for lost dogs.

Write letters to the editors of your local paper, and let the public know that pet theft happened in your area, and warn people to please watch their pets carefully and to report any suspicious vehicles or people to the local law enforcement agency.

Call breeders in your area and ask for their help--they can pass along the information to any local or state wide breed clubs. Send a flyer to them. If you can, find others on the web with your breed of dog, and ask a few to help spread the word. Whoever has your dog may try to breed it, and may contact someone with a bitch or stud of that breed. Watch for the puppy ads of your breed if your dog is not found and is not spayed or neutered.

Some breeds have a page for lost dogs of that particular breed. You can also send out lost/stolen dog notices to various breed email lists, and ask that it be forwarded. (Having your dog's picture uploaded on the web can help... build a page if you can, and make a printable flyer for your dog.) You can also hand out flyers at any nearby dog shows, and get a catalog. You might send flyers to the handlers and owners listed there.

Call radio stations and tv news stations. Give a good description of your dog, and be aware that not everyone will know what breed your dog is. You must be very clear in describing your dog. Give its age, markings, sex and if your dog is spayed or neutered. (Hopefully your dog IS spayed or neutered!) Describe your dog's personality as well.

Contact road crews. Tell them that if they find your dog on the road, dead or injured, that you need to know about it. Not knowing is the worst part of a dog who may be dead. It is better to know, in my opinion, that your dog is dead than to wonder for the rest of your life what may have happened.

You might want to get a notebook in which you can write down all the people, numbers, shelters, etc. that you have called and sent flyers to. Your vet may have the AMVA directory from last year, and if he or she will let you have the outdated directory, you may want to send flyers to as many vets in your area and state as you can. Check off the name of each vet as you address your envelopes. You might make a short cover letter to send along, and ask if they can share this flyer with others in their area. They may even be able to give them to their pharmaceutical delivery people to help distribute.

Be aware of scams!! DO NOT pay anyone for any reason your reward money until you have your dog in your hands!!

Some scammers will call you and tell you they have your dog in some other state, and they will send you the dog after you send them some money. Do not fall for this. You will never see your dog nor your money, if you do.

These ideas may help you find your dog, if he or she was stolen or picked up by someone who found a wandering dog.

Then, there are Bunchers.

A Buncher is a person, licensed by the USDA, who can gather dogs and pets from "random sources". This includes answering "free to good home" ads in the papers, and on community bulletin boards. They can take dogs and cats from shelters, and they have been known to gather from the streets and even from yards.

Bunchers have been known to steal dogs from vehicles, parked outside the corner grocery store, while the owner shops for a loaf of bread. It can happen within minutes!

Bunchers can then sell your dog to Class B dealers, who then can sell your beloved dog to research facilities, other dealers, pet shops, at auctions, and to other breeders, including puppy mills. They often will not try to use dogs that are tattooed, but may not discover your dog is tattooed right away. It is illegal for research facilities to use dogs that are tattooed, so you MUST contact any and all research facilities in your state, and even surrounding states.

You can find out more about [Bunchers and Class B Dealers](#) on the [Last Chance for Animals Stolen Pets](#) site. There is also information on the [Pet Theft Report to Congress](#) and [how you can help](#) get the Pet Safety and Protection Act passed. This bill before will eliminate the Class B dealers. (Bunchers and Class B Dealers are people who are sanctioned by the USDA to steal and sell stolen pets for profit, and this needs to stop.)

Finding a stolen pet is hard work. It is endless and heartbreaking. There is not much support for those with stolen pets, unfortunately. Friends and family will want you to give up, adopt another dog, get on with your life. There are few people who truly understand the endless questions and worries and fears that you will have. Is your dog safe? is it alive? is it being abused? is it warm and being fed properly? is it being used for research? The questions and the worry haunt you endlessly.

LCA has information on [preventing pet theft](#) on their site as well. Never turn your back on your dog..even a fenced yard and locked gate are no guarantees that your dog will not be stolen. Microchipping and tattooing your dog are no guarantees against theft, but they do increase your chances of recovering your missing pet. The only guarantee against pet theft is that you watch them as carefully as you would a human baby.

Duke's Tale and a SCAM ALERT I hope this page will help some people in their search for missing pets, and I hope that by reading this, it will help prevent pet theft from ever happening to many more.

This page has been a difficult one to put together. It is made with a lot of love, and the many tears I have shed for my own stolen Dalmatian, Dulcie, who still has not come home to me. I will not rest until I find her.

Dulcie's Page....Look for her Heart!

If this page helps you recover your pet, please do let me know. If you are still searching for a lost pet and feel you may need support, please click on the onelist button below to join my list, Pet Theft Support. There is no other place that I have been able to find on the internet for those of us who have experienced pet loss through theft or for lost pets. I am hoping this page, in conjunction with the email list, will help to fill that void. If you have links you would like added to this page, please let me know.