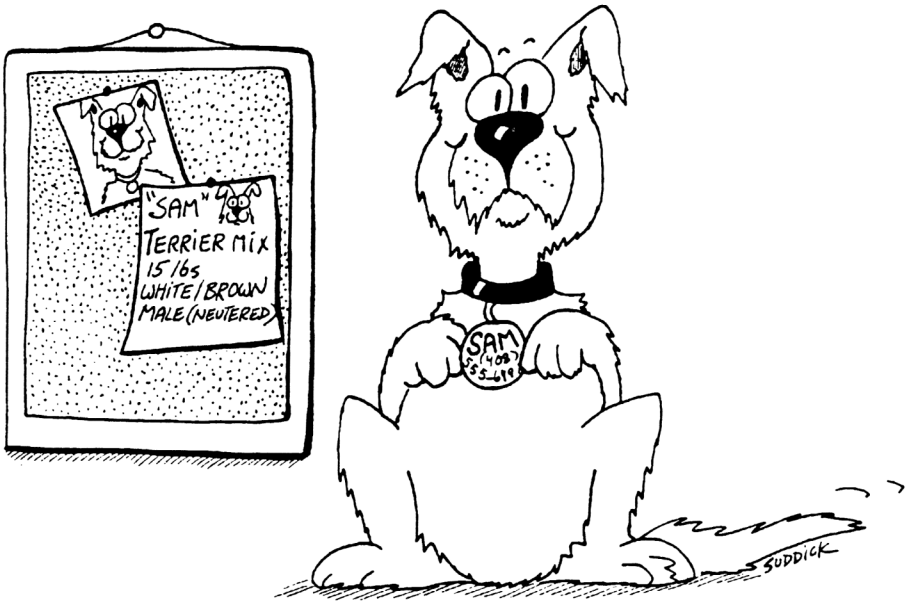
Keeping Track Of Your Pet



Whether lost or stolen, losing a pet is an agonizing experience. Yet most people fail to put any kind of identification on their pets to ensure their safe return home. In fact, only about 16% of lost dogs and 2% of lost cats at shelters are ever reunited with their owners.

An ID tag on your pet's collar is essential, since anyone can use it to get your pet home. The tag should include your name, address, phone number (day and evening is best), and the pet's name. If you are willing to pay a reward, then put the word REWARD on the tag as well. Put the number (day and night) of a friend on another tag if you are traveling.

Tattooing is a permanent ID system that involves marking pertinent information on the skin of the pet. The finder must call a database and use the code tattooed on your pet to get your current address and phone number. This is invaluable ID should your pet be stolen for research, since laboratories will instantly know the animal is not abandoned, but a beloved pet.

Implanting a microchip-a tiny electronic capsule-into the pet enables anyone with a scanner (like many animal care & control agencies, veterinary clinics, and research labs) to quickly identify a code, which when the database is called, will identify you as the owner. Both tattooing and microchipping only work if you keep the information stored at the database current.

In addition to ID methods on your pets, keep clear photos of them handy along with a written description of their appearance. This will aid you and others in searching for your pet if he/she ever becomes lost.