

Registration for Lost Pet Rescue Training Course, by James Branson

This course is specifically for someone wanting to do the work I do. It is an explanation of my process, methods, and thinking. My dogs and I have been finding lost dogs and cats since 2012. I received my initial training from Kat Albrecht, the Founder of Missing Pet Partnership and a pioneer of most of the techniques currently used to find lost pets. Currently I have a company, Three Retrievers Lost Pet Rescue, and about 800 people contact me each year for help finding their missing cats and dogs. I am also the Founder and President of Useless Bay Sanctuary, a nonprofit that helps 100 stray dogs each year. I also started a Facebook group, Lost Dogs of King County, which reunites over 300 dogs every month. I have five dogs, three of whom are trained search dogs, and two that are unadoptable but lovable dogs captured by UBS. This training would be of benefit to anyone wanting to train their own search dogs to find lost pets, or for volunteers for rescues or shelters, or Animal Control Officers wanting a better understanding of how to help stray and lost dogs and cats. The topics covered include:

- Lost pet behavior.
- Lost pet owner behavior.
- Lost pet finder behavior.
- Predator behavior, coyotes, bobcats, owls.
- Best strategies for finding lost pets.
- Signs, how to make and use them.
- Trapping equipment and methods.
- Assessing a dog for search dog training.
- The process of training a search dog. (You will NOT have a trained search dog at the end of this course. That is a separate process.)
- Working with a search dog.
- Evidence collection and handling.
- Interview methods and goals.
- Data collection and management. The case log and case files.
- Myths and crazy ideas, and how to counter them.
- How to use a variety of equipment, such as a snappy snare, a catch pole, a plumbers camera, a DSLR, a kennel trap, the big net, etc.
- Logic, inference, deductions, and probabilities.
- Uses for a smartphone before, during, and after a search.
- Calming Signals.
- Ethics.
- Grief, grief avoidance, anticipatory grief, and compassion fatigue.
- Some business considerations.

This course will be online, using Zoom or a similar interface. This is the first time I will be teaching this material in a formal setting, although I've explained all of this stuff to hundreds of people over the years.

Because the first class of students will be guinea pigs, helping find the best way to present the materials, the fee for the course is only \$50 this time. In the future, the fee will probably \$300 or more. It will be live on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 5 to 8, starting August 3rd and running through September 23rd. I hope you will be able to attend most of the classes during those times and ask questions as we go. Along with the material presented during the class, you would get the most from the course if you would read the following books:

- A Voice for the Lost, by James Branson
- Dog Detectives: How to Train Your Dog to Find Lost Pets, by Kat Albrecht
- Canine Olfaction in Science and Law, by Jezierski et al.
- Mu & I, by James Branson, not yet published. A link will be provided.
- Three Retrievers Guide to Finding Your Lost Cat, available free on my web page.
- Three Retrievers Guide to Finding Your Lost Dog, available free on my web page.

Please tell me a bit about yourself and why you want to take the course. The first class will be limited to 30 people. This information will not be shared, other than your name and city and state during the class.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Current occupation _____

The following questions do not have a right or wrong answer.

Do you have a smartphone, and are you skilled at using apps like Facebook, GPS tracking, mapping and navigation, photography, browsers, voice to text, word processors, texting and messaging, language translation, spreadsheets, file folders and cloud storage, etc?

What level of physical involvement would you expect to be capable of in this work?

- Online only, at a computer. (A lot can be done to help pets with just a computer.)
- Some driving and light physical work like putting up signs.
- Able to stand and walk for three to five hours with a cat detection dog.
- Able to walk and run for three to five hours with a scent trailing dog.
- Able to work a search dog in steep and rugged mountains, with a backpack. Do you currently have a dog you are thinking of training to do search work? Briefly, what is your experience in finding lost pets?

The following short quiz will help me know where people are starting from in their learning. If you get zero questions right, that's fine. If you get 10 of 10, you can help me teach the class.

1. Which of the following are good ways to find a lost dog:
 - Drive around shouting his name.
 - If you see him, run after him as fast as you can, shouting his name.
 - Ask your neighbors.
 - Post on Facebook and Craigslist.
 - Put up large, bright posters in a five block radius.
 - Wait for him to come home.
2. Why would you want to photograph and dissect coyote scat?

3. Should you cover a humane trap? _____
4. Should you use a tranquilizer dart to catch a stray dog? _____
5. Do most lost dogs run in a straight line in one direction? _____
6. How far would a lost cat be from the point last seen, on average? _____
7. What is the best distance and angle for a wildlife camera to watch a trap or feeding station? _____
8. How many receptor cells are in the nose of an average dog? _____
9. What is scent made of? _____ What is it that a search dog is smelling? _____
10. Should you take a found dog or cat to the shelter? _____ Why or why not?

Please tell me anything else about yourself you think I might want to know, in terms of presenting the material in the course.

By taking this course, you agree to always act in the best interests of dogs and cats, including your own pets and lost dogs and cats you may be trying to help. If you are planning to train a dog for search work, you agree that his or her health and safety will always be your highest priority, and you will, as much as practical, avoid putting your dog in danger. You will treat other course participants with courtesy and respect, even when they don't always agree with your philosophy or methods.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

You can fill out this form using Adobe Reader, save completed form, then return it to jim@3retrievers.com, or you can print it, complete, take a picture of the completed form, and email the pictures.

The \$50 registration fee can be paid by various methods by going to <http://www.3retrievers.com/services.html>

Sending the payment by Venmo to @three-retrievers is a quick and easy way, for some people.

If, after taking the first few classes, you think this isn't going to be a good fit for you, I will happily refund the tuition fee.