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JAMAICA PLAIN, WEST ROXBURY

## Cat finds new home six months after leg caught in illegal trap, amputated

Posted by Matt Rocheleau August 17, 2012 05:35 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

A cat that had its leg amputated after it was found caught in an illegal steel-jaw leghold trap in Southbridge nearly six months ago will move to a permanent adoptive home this weekend, according to the MSPCA-Angell Animal Medical Center in Jamaica Plain.



(MSPCA-Angell) Mr. Bates caught in trap.

Earlier this week, a different cat was caught in another local, illegally-set trap, the veterinarian center said.

On Feb. 14, a hiker in Southbridge found a

cat ensnared in a steel-jaw leghold trap that officials believe was purposely set. As a life-saving measure, the cat's left front leg was removed by surgeons at the Boston animal hospital.

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The cat, which veterinarians named “Mr. Bates” after the character on the popular British television show *Downton Abbey*, has been living at Angell Animal Medical Center since the surgery and is scheduled to move to an adoptive home this weekend.

On Tuesday of this week, a three-year-old Maine Coon mix named “Max” got his right front paw caught in a leghold trap that officials believe was purposely set near the cat’s family home in West Roxbury.

The cat’s owners, Victoria and Michael Kickham, saw their cat limp toward the front porch of their home dragging the rusty steel trap. Surprisingly, Max only suffered puncture wounds; no bones were broken, officials said.

“This is a very lucky cat—it’s common for cats and other animals to suffer severe injury to bones and soft tissue when they step on these traps, and too often the injuries result in amputation,” Kiko Bracker, an emergency veterinarian at Angell Animal, said. “Fortunately for Max a thorough cleansing of the wound, coupled with pain medicine and antibiotics, will help him return to his ‘old self’ in short order.”

A majority of Bay State voters chose to [ban](#) leghold and other body-gripping traps in 1996. [Recently](#), some have moved to try to repeal the ban because they say the beaver population in Massachusetts has exploded since and beaver dams are causing flooding and other environmental problems.

Animal rights advocates, including officials at [MSPCA-Angell](#) said leghold traps are dangerous because when stepped on, they snap shut and often crush skin, bones and connective tissue, rendering the animal defenseless against weather and predators.

“The MSPCA is wholly opposed to the use of these traps as they inflict devastating and extremely painful injury on animals, and can endanger the people who set them or try to release animals from them,” the organization said in a statement.

“An overwhelming majority of Massachusetts voters chose to restrict the use of these traps because they are inhumane and indiscriminate, catching any animal who steps into them,” said a statement from Linda Huebner, deputy director of advocacy for animal hospital. “There are much more humane ways

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director of advocacy for animal hospital. There are much more humane ways to resolve conflicts with wildlife.”

Box or net traps that capture an entire animal are legal. Municipalities can also issue permits for body-gripping traps under emergency circumstances.

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