

E B B A N E W S

Published Monthly by

THE EASTERN BIRD-BANDING ASSOCIATION

"Let Us Band Together"

\$2.00 per year

Vol. 14

OCTOBER 1951

No. 10

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TRAPS

Some of the information received for the trap symposium is presented in this issue. Your Editor wishes to thank those who supplied material and to urge the rest of you to send in your contributions or comment when you can.

Jeff Gill of Huntington, Long Island, wrote twice on the subject; the first time as follows:

"I believe the days of small traps are past, except for those just beginning or for the bander who wishes to operate some sub-stations with portable traps. By small traps I mean the single cell jobs.

October 1951

EBBA NEWS

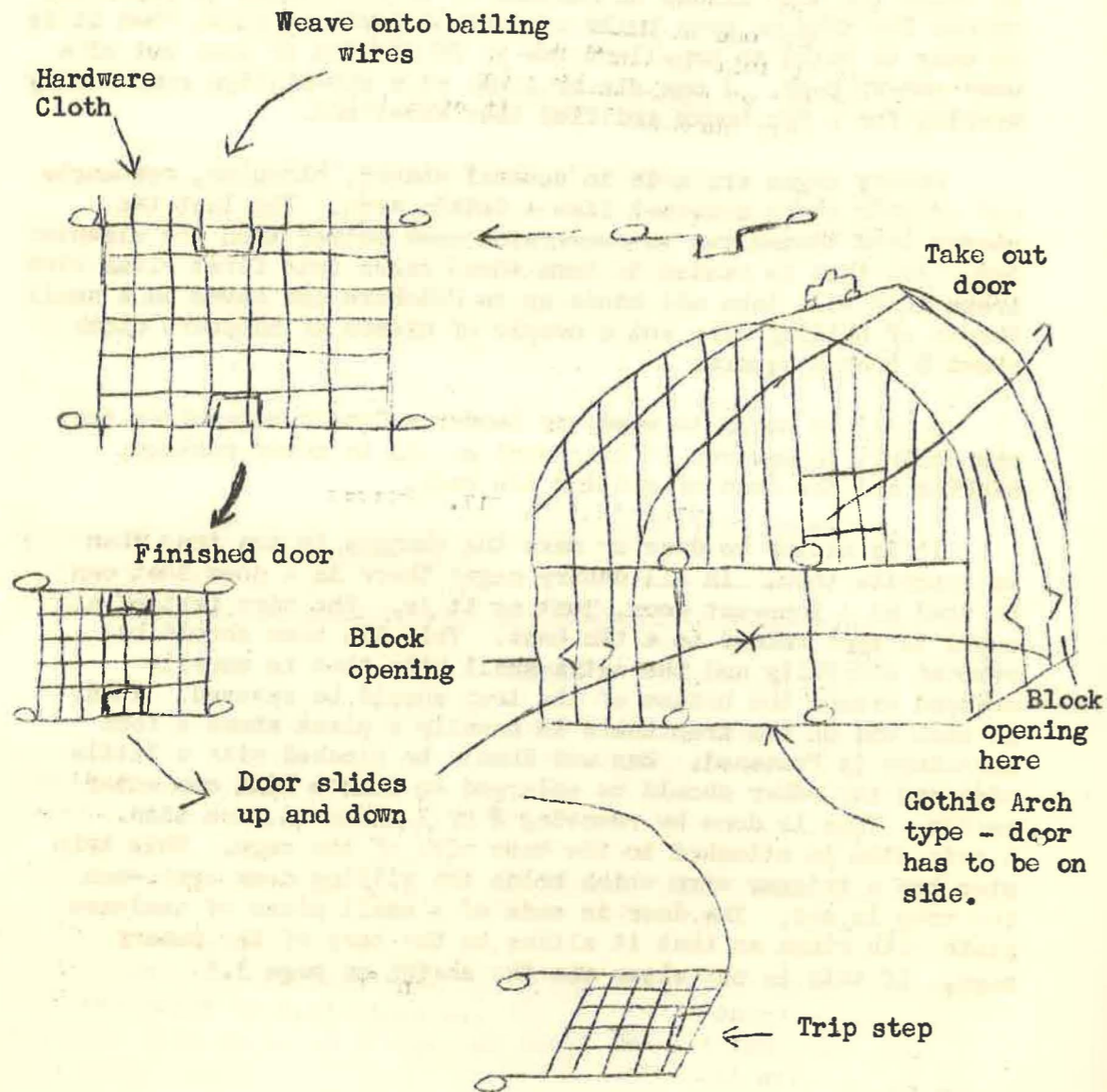
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However, if banders want single cell traps of the Potter type in which the door slides on runners it is ridiculous to pay fancy prices for them or even build one out of hardware cloth when it is so easy to build an excellent one in 20 minutes or less out of a used canary cage. I use six of these at a sub-station each Sunday morning for a few hours and find them excellent.

Canary cages are made in several shapes, circular, rectangle and another shape somewhat like a Gothic arch. The last two shapes lend themselves to conversion much better than the circular job. All that is needed to turn these cages into first class bird traps that will take all birds up to Flickers and Doves is a small length of bailing wire and a couple of pieces of hardware cloth about 6 inches square.

I will be happy to send any bander a Canary cage which they can convert themselves if they send me \$1. to cover postage, packing and the cost of getting the cage.

It is easier to draw or make the changes in the trap than to describe them. In all canary cages there is a door that can be used as a take-out door, just as it is. The wire part of all cages is spot welded to a tin base. This tin base should be removed carefully and the extra small wire that is usually wrapped around the bottom of the trap should be removed. Then, on each end of the trap there is usually a place where a food container is fastened. One end should be blocked with a little wire and the other should be enlarged so that a bird can enter easily. This is done by removing 2 or 3 wires on each side. A trip step is attached to the base wire of the cage. This trip step has a trigger wire which holds the sliding door open when the trap is set. The door is made of a small piece of hardware cloth with rings so that it slides on the bars of the canary cage. If this is not clear see the sketch on page 3."



And again:

"The booklet on bird traps which Brooke Worth, now of India, writes about, the one published by the British Ornithological Trust is very definitely worthwhile. It can be purchased through Bergstrom, Editor of Bird-Banding for about forty cents and many of us have already purchased it. It certainly is a good buy.

The elevator traps that Brooke mentions were illustrated in the banding news of the Western Bird Banding Association about 8 years ago. At least two such traps were so illustrated and described. I will attempt to locate them in my files. I recall that I built one but it only went up fifteen feet. All I ever caught in it was a Song Sparrow and I decided I could catch just as many on the ground so I finally took the trap down. One fault I found with an elevator trap is that it shakes in the wind with the slightest breeze. Birds won't enter a moving trap for some reason or other."

Karl Bartel of Blue Island, Ill. writes:

"GATHERING CAGES --- I make mine out of wood. Using apple boxes, divided into three compartments, with wood top, screen back, with three wood sliding doors in front. It is easy to keep the birds quiet by keeping a cloth over the screen.

I always remove each bird from traps by hand and transfer them to the gathering cage.

On my rounds covering 25 traps or more I carry two of these boxes. In this way I can have six different species separated. Each compartment will hold about ten birds of White-throated Sparrow size. Many a time I have carried 60 birds in two hands.

VER-BAIL TRAP --- It is too bad the Ver-bail trap is patented and not being manufactured. There are many banders that would like to have one, but are not handy with tools to make their own --- as no one else can make one for them.

TYPES OF TRAPS --- I use only three kinds of ground traps. Government, one and two cell Potter traps and a new type of warbler trap (Bartel Warbler Trap). I also use the double funnel sandpiper trap.

I use no top opening traps for warblers save the Bartel Warbler Trap. By using Potter and Government sparrow traps over dripping water pan, the chances are that 75% more birds are banded, because all ground feeding birds can also get in. Birds such as Ovenbirds, Sparrows, Robins, Catbirds and Thrashers could not get into a small top opening trap.

The Bartel Warbler Trap is good where there are lots of warblers and not many other birds. The trap is 18" x 18" x 14" high with a five inch high fence on top forming a letter S. In each end of the letter S is the entrance into the trap.

COLOR OF TRAPS --- Since I have been manufacturing traps for bird banders and others who want to rid their feeding trays of the English Sparrows and Starlings, I have requests for odd colored traps.

75%	traps are painted	black
20%	" " "	green
4%	" " "	brown
1%	" " "	yellow (This was for Sandpiper trapping in Florida)

WIRE BOTTOMS ON TRAPS --- Traps with wire bottoms are no good at my station. I have a small Government Sparrow trap 30" x 17" x 10" high with a wire bottom in second compartment, and to date have never caught a bird in it yet. I would place another Government trap in the same location and always catch birds in it. I have found only one good use for a wire bottom trap -- it is good to catch rats in.

QUESTIONS --- A year after I started banding (1933) I was given an elevator type trap. It was about 20" x 18" x 18" high. A bird

hopped upon a ledge that was on one side, walked into a side opening about 3" x 4" deep and 6" long to get the feed that was placed on the other side of the elevator cage. By stepping into this opening the bird's weight would cause the long arm that was attached to the elevator to go down. When the bird is down there is a trap door that the bird flies through and into the cage proper. Then the elevator and arm would come up and be ready for another bird. Well, this trap has been stolen from me and I have been trying to build one ever since. I want to use it mostly for Chickadees. Does anyone know of any?

WATER CANS --- I use two gallon oil cans, washed out, for my drip traps. I poke a hole about the size of $\frac{1}{4}$ " and into the hole I push a dead wild cherry twig, then I put a hand full of dirt into the can. I then fill the can with water and to make it run just twist the stick until the water runs at the rate you want it to. Then, to stop the dripping (when traps are not in operation or during the night) just give the can a vigorous shaking and the dirt in the can will stop the water from dripping."

From Merrill Wood of State College, Penna. we have the following:

"Experimentation for 3 months on the use of outside perches in front of top-opening traps showed no special value. Test traps with such perches caught 48% of the birds and control traps without such perches caught 52% of the birds. The traps were rotated daily to remove the factor of location.

Experimentation for 2 months on the use of painted water dishes in Chardonneret traps showed that color does not add to the efficiency of trapping, but sky reflection apparently is important. Trapping results: control 30%, black 40%, blue 10%, green 0%, red 10%, and white 10%. The control, a glazed brown earthen-ware dish and the black dish gave the best reflection of the sky, the others gave little or none. The traps were rotated daily to remove the factor of location.

The best traps for a back-yard banding station are: Irl Roger's Modesto Trap, Chardonneret Trap, and Geoffrey Gill's Trip-step Trap."

More about traps in the next issue