

Large or aggressive captives sometimes bite at and fray the original cord, and eventually a replacement will be required. You will probably find, as we have, that nylon cord makes a superior replacement. Checking traps every few hours will largely prevent this condition as a bird generally does not begin to bite the cord until he has been in the trap for 2 or 3 hours. I firmly believe this trap should be either watched constantly or checked at least every 3 hours while in use.

Before using your traps set them and allow to stand for at least three days. Always follow this procedure before use! If you don't, you are almost certain to injure a bird as the springs are extremely powerful unless allowed to "season" in this way before use. A new set of springs will snap a 7/8" stick easily! Much of this tension is relieved by leaving the trap set for several days.

As a cord from the trap to the ground it is best to use nylon (dyed an appropriate color), as it is virtually impervious to rotting and stands up far better to biting or chafing than other cords. Always allow some slack cord at the base of the pole. Remove all irregularities or branches from the post, sapling, etc., so the cord won't become entangled and hang the bird.

It is also safer to choose a spot where there is grass, tall weeds, or other vegetation around the pole to give a captured bird some cover from prospective predators.

The post should be of small enough diameter at its base so that the spring and cord assembly, in the off position, is able to slide down over the pole and all the way to the ground. Occasionally, a captive bird carries the assembly forward and over the pole when the trap is sprung, instead of allowing it to follow its normal path down the cord. A pole larger at its base than the space between the cord and springs will hang a bird at a point part way down the pole.

Attempts on our part to build both a smaller, less powerful and larger, more powerful version of the Verball have been unsuccessful. The trap seems to work best in the size it is manufactured in.

33 Tewksbury St., Ballardvale, Mass.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER RETURN

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I had a return bird on April 29 which was most interesting. A Blue-winged Warbler that I banded on August 10, 1959. It returned in 1962 and again this year, making it at least four years old. Of the records I received for the Who Banded What department, there were only 61 reports of Blue-winged Warblers banded. This is a small number compared with other warblers.