

TRAPS AND TRAPPING - NOTES

Adapted from the Workshop Manual, Vol. II, 1963

Flexibility is the key-note for successful trapping. Often slight modifications can make the traps you already have doubly useful. . . A Potter trap with a floor can be used on top of snow. Also, no stooping; you can pick it up to remove the bird. . . .

For smaller funnel-type traps hang a partition near the collecting-door end and tie or hook it against the top. Drive birds past and let it drop -- saves chasing birds to far corners. . . A narrow wooden brace like an inverted U across the middle of a funnel trap provides a spot to lean on while reaching, and adds strength to the wire. . . .

A battery of small pull-traps outside your window catches the new chickadees without bedeviling banded freeloaders. . . Sometimes a cluster of traps in a given spot pays off; the first bird caught acts as a decoy. . . . A trap can be adapted to catch woodpeckers by fitting it to a log placed on its side and baited with suet. . . . Dripping water, or a pan of water in any trap big enough to accomodate it is added bait. . . .

For building small traps, galvanized welded wire mesh, #16 gauge, 1/2 x 1", is recommended. Birds do not skin their noses on it as on hardware cloth and it makes a stiff cage not easily bent by squirrels. Hardware cloth (1/2" mesh for small traps, 3/4" mesh for larger) is cheaper and easier to buy, and also easier to cut and bend. . . .

Some trap sections may be put together with Squeeze Klips. (Unless you provide yourself with a good pair of nail cutters, these are hard to remove; for temporary assemblies use instead short lengths of electric bell wire or wire of similar weight.) For any soldered parts use a solid solder (not resin-core) after brushing parts to be soldered with a tinner's acid (not paste -- paste is messy and ineffective). . . .

For wire parts -- door guides, triggers, trip-step pivots, etc., use #12 galvanized wire for stiffer parts and #14 wire for lighter ones. . . .

Placement of traps deserves as much study and ingenuity as their construction. Some suggestions: Around a brush pile (an attractive shelter for winter birds). . . . under or near hedges, shrubs and bushes. . . . hung or placed on posts or tree-trunk shelves near large bushes. . . . Prop up your Christmas tree ordig it in near exposed traps. . . . Make use of the attraction of berry bushes -- elderberries, tartarian honeysuckle, dogwood, Russian olive, etc. Planting such bushes may be worthwhile.

