

the people at Laurel who promote Operation Recovery have the responsibility of helping us in this matter.

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A PORTABLE "POND"

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(Reprinted from The Ringers' Bulletin Vol. 2, No. 10, Dec. 1966: bulletin of the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology.)

It is well known that moving water is one of the best baits for most small birds and two excellent methods of arranging a water-drip are described in "Trapping Methods for Bird Ringers" but the choice of a receptacle into which the water drips is left to the trapper.

For small traps - Chardonneret or Potter types - a small photographer's developing tray is probably as good as anything, but for a large wire trap, a Heligoland, or for use with mist nets something very much larger is obviously desirable. If it is readily transportable, so much the better.

We found that the answer is an eight-foot length of grit-coated roofing felt. This can be carried to the site as a roll and may be laid in one of two ways. For a permanent site, it is worthwhile excavating a shallow cavity four inches shorter than the length of the felt and four inches shorter than its width (i.e. 32 inches), but for a temporary site all that is necessary is to unroll the felt, grit-side uppermost as it gives a better foothold, and to raise the outside edges with stones, grass roots or earth. The weight of the water will be sufficient to form a basin about two inches deep, 32 inches wide and as long as you like. Again, for a permanent site, a few rocks and a little clean sand will provide bathing places for the smaller fry and make the pool look a little more natural - ours even has a patch of marsh grass in one corner - but these are not really essentials for a "portable" pond.

The drip device is erected about two feet above the water level and the resulting ripples are visible for at least fifty yards. In a large wire trap it would, of course, be necessary to place the water either near to the entrance or - perhaps preferably - well inside with a funnel entrance leading to it.