

A SKY NET RIG
By Roy Dietert

At our banding station, which is situated on a medium sized northern New Jersey suburban back yard, trapping has been moderately successful. Many seed eating birds are attracted to the maze traps, particularly in winter, and low flying birds can be caught in low nets, which are effective up to about 7 feet. Watching the bird traffic in the yard, especially migrating warblers, vireos, etc. it was soon concluded that elevated nets should greatly improve the taking of these high flying species, thus widening the scope of our banding operations.

The "Sky Net" rig which was designed is, in its present form, effective from approximately 8 feet up to 20 feet; is simple to construct, and can be operated easily by one person. A bonus not originally anticipated is that, since the nets are raised, less obstruction is created in the yard and nets are less apt to be torn by wandering creatures.

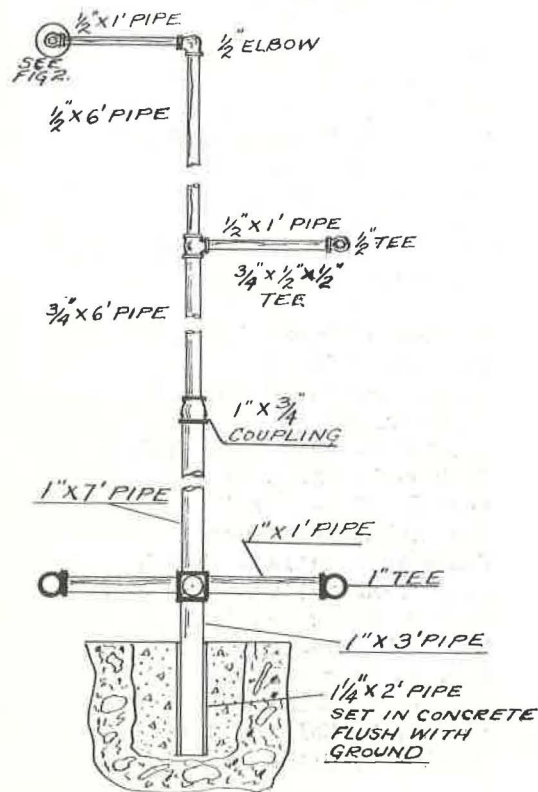


FIG.1 POLE CONSTRUCTION

Observation of the bird movement through the yard is essential in order to estimate the optimum position and, of course, it is necessary to have proper clearance for raising and lowering the nets.

The rigging consists of two poles which are made of standard iron pipe sections, assembled and mounted in two pipe sleeves set in concrete in the ground. The poles are light enough so that they can be lifted into and out of their emplacement and laid on the ground, if necessary, for adjustment and repairs. The nets are raised and lowered by a rope and pulley system which permits a lone operator to handle the hoisting from one position, the nets remaining level at all times. Poles are set far

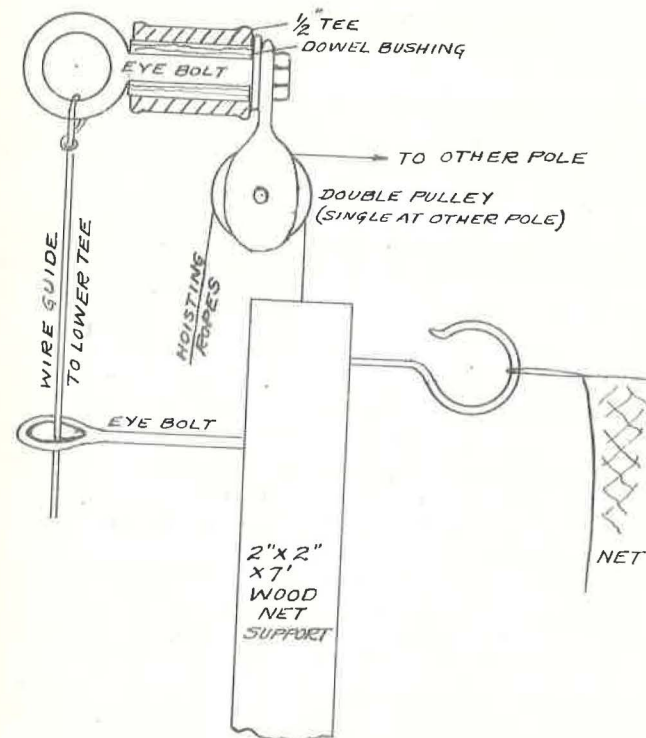


FIG2 NET RIGGING

enough apart to accommodate the length of the net with some allowance for adjusting tension on the net lines.

Figure 1 shows the pipe assembly for the poles. It is necessary, with this configuration, to guy the 1/2" elbow at the top of the pole to a tree or other firm anchorage. Figure 2 illustrates the rigging at the net support. Otherwise the rigging is similar. Two nets are rigged, one from each 1/2" pipe side arm.

The rigging could also be adapted to wooden poles or two tall trees with clear trunks, properly spaced, by which means even greater height could be reached, if desired.

Our catch of warblers, vireos, etc. has been augmented, and to our surprise, a Pileated Woodpecker was netted.

Allendale, N.J.

(With these clear and beautiful drawings, Roy Dietert wins the PICTURE CONTEST PRIZE for this issue. 2 nets will be sent him)