

This trap, as most any trap, has definite advantages and disadvantages. It has the distinct advantage of being able to take large numbers of birds. Taking up to 20 grosbeaks with one pull of the string is not uncommon. When not in use, it doubles as a feeder. Using the trap as a feeder has the advantage of acclimating the local avian populace to the trap and minimizes trap shyness. Trap shyness is also limited by the wide open nature of the trap. Birds like Evening grosbeaks flock into the trap after the first bird settles on the platform. The would-be captives do not waste time seeking a limited or obscure opening. Also, this trap allows one to trap discriminately should it be necessary to do so. One may take specific individuals without having to take every bird that comes and worry about the interference caused by the occupancy of or removal from the trap.

The disadvantages, as I have experienced them, involve the following. The balance of the doors may sometimes be a little tricky, but time and patience solve this. It pays to lubricate the support frame with oil for fast, faultless response from the trap. Depending on how loosely one chooses to set the trigger, it is sometimes possible for a larger bird, like a jay or grackle, to rock the frame sufficiently on landing or take off to release a door. Since the second door could be similarly released later, while another bird feeds in the trap, resulting in the bird's capture, the doors of the trap are held open by snap clothes pins on the frame when no one is able to tend the trap for periods of more than one-two days. Only two or three times in six years has a bird been so captured in this manner.

Once in a great while, a bird will be pinned by a falling door. Most of the grosbeaks survive this experience, because their necks fit the $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. gap afforded by the door bumpers. To date only one grosbeak fatality, and one broken wing that healed with return of the bird to the wild, have been experienced. The smaller species fare less well than the grosbeaks when hit and four or five Pine siskins, Goldfinches and Purple finches have been crippled or killed by these traps. The mortality is of the order of 0.1% or less.

All things considered, the advantages of this trap far outweigh the drawbacks. Time and a little experience with it teach one how to handle the idiosyncrasies of it, and it becomes a valuable tool to the winter finch bander.

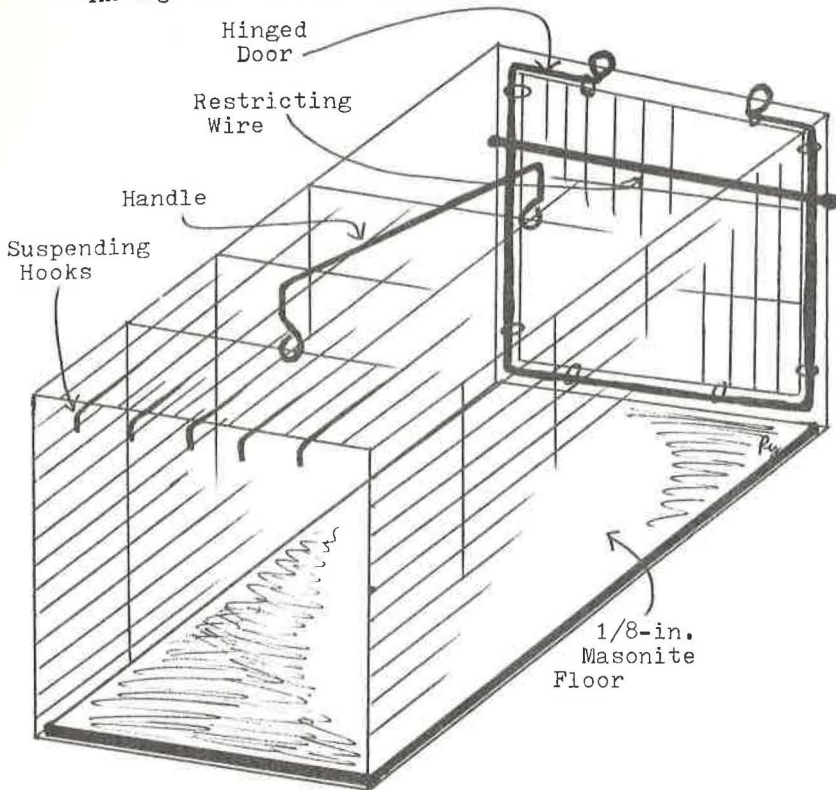
A TRAP TRANSFER CAGE

By Robert P. Yunick

In the course of removing trapped birds from a large trap, it is necessary to have some means of confining the captives into a smaller enclosure where one may manually remove them. The following is a description of a simple, handy transfer cage I use for removing birds from large Mason traps and the above-described platform trap.

The cage measures about 6 x 6 x 12 in., and is constructed of $\frac{1}{2}$ x 1-inch welded wire, though $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch hardware cloth would do. On the open end, several wires of the top edge of the cage are cut to extend about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch beyond the edge of the cage. These are then bent downward at 90 degrees at about their mid-point, thus forming hooks which serve to hold the cage to the top of the trap door frame.

The cage has a 1/8-in. Masonite flooring, so that the birds which



Trap Transfer Cage

are gathered in the cage have firm footing and will not be able to put a foot through the wire, thus avoiding the risk of a pinned or broken leg. Atop the cage is a handle of 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ga. galvanized wire which is handy for carrying and positioning the cage. On the back of the cage is a hinged door framed by 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ga. wire suspended from the top of the frame. Outside the cage, a wire is fastened to restrict door action to only the inward direction. In use, the cage is fastened to the trap door frame. From the opposite side of the trap, the string holding the trap door is released dropping the door. The captives are motioned to that corner of the trap into the cage. The door is closed by tightening and fastening the string. By walking back to the cage and reaching into it, one has easy access to the birds therein.