A Modified Noosing Pole for Capturing Grouse

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A snare commonly used for the live-capture of tetraonids consists of a telescoping pole with a noose attached to the end (Zwickel and Bendell, 1967). It can be extended to about 6.1 m for capturing animals, and collapsed to 1.4 m for carrying in the field. This type of pole has been used effectively for capturing Spruce Grouse (*Dendragapus canadensis*) in southwestern Alberta from 1965 to 1982. During that period, more than 2000 Spruce Grouse have been captured with approximately 2% lost through accidental deaths. Although effective, this extendable pole can be awkward to carry through thick forest and shrub habitats, especially when other equipment is also carried.

Here I describe a modification for shortening the telescoping noosing pole that allows it to be carried in a pack. I modified a telescoping fiberglass fishing rod (Model TP 20 20′ DCM manufactured by Shakespeare, 6111 Shakespeare Road, Columbia, South Carolina 29204). Others of different manufacture presumably could be modified in a similar manner. The disassembled fishing rod consists of 5 hollow sections. I shortened each by cutting as shown in Figure 1, changing the noosing pole from a 5- to a 10-section pole. Each section should have a solid band of overlap with the sections that come both before and after it in order of size, so that when reassembled it will effectively extend, telescope fashion, into a solid pole. In my modification, sections overlapped 4 to 8 cm. A sliding loop noose was taped to the distal tip of the smallest section. Although nylon monofilament of 50lb test was used for the noose on this pole, various strengths of line can be used that might be more effective with different target animals (Zwickel and Bendell 1967).

My modification reduces the length of the extended pole by 29% (6.1 to 4.3 m) and of the collapsed pole by 62% (1.4 to 0.5 m). The original noosing pole, when fully extended, had an extremely flexible tip. To counter this problem, many researchers removed the distal section, reducing the extended length to 5 m. The noosing pole described herein is therefore not substantially shorter; it is also less flexible and easier to handle when extended. Its effectiveness in snaring Spruce Grouse was not reduced (more than 400 Spruce Grouse were captured with only 2% mortality). Furthermore, despite noosing many birds from trees (43%), this modified pole never broke.

I also captured a limited number of Ruffed Grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), Blue Grouse (*Dendragapus obscurus*), Columbian Ground Squirrels (*Spermophilus columbianus*), and one red squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) with the modified pole. Although the shorter pole may be less effective for capturing species other than Spruce Grouse, its potentially lowered usefulness may be better than the alternative of carrying no noosing pole.

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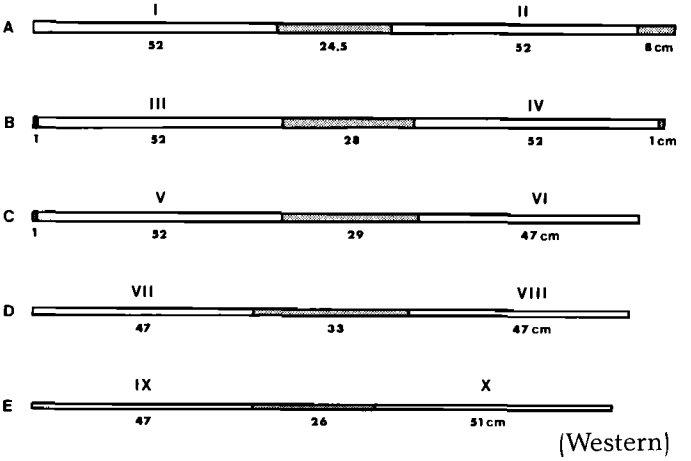
Literature cited

Zwickel, F.C., and J.F. Bendell. 1967. A snare for capturing Blue Grouse. J. Wildl. Manage. 31:202-204.

Figure 1. Procedures for making a noosing pole with 10 sections (I - X) by removing parts (shaded areas) of 5 original sections (A - E with the wider ends on the left) of a fiberglass fishing rod. By placing X inside IX, and IX and X inside VIII, etc., it was possible to reassemble the series into one telescoping pole. By placing a cap over the large end of section I, the series was prevented from becoming disassembled.



(Western)