

This weekend I decided to build a couple of Bream/Bullhead traps and since a lot of guys on here have asked for Bream/Bluegill/Perch trap designs I took pics while building these to give yall some ideas. I had built one of these a couple of years ago but it was stolen and Im just now getting around to building replacements. I have seen these for sale as cheap as 39.95 plus 9.00 freight on e-bay and as high as 69.95 plus freight on other sites . I think the ones sold on line may be slightly heavier gauge of hardware cloth but I built these 2 for less than 25.00 total.

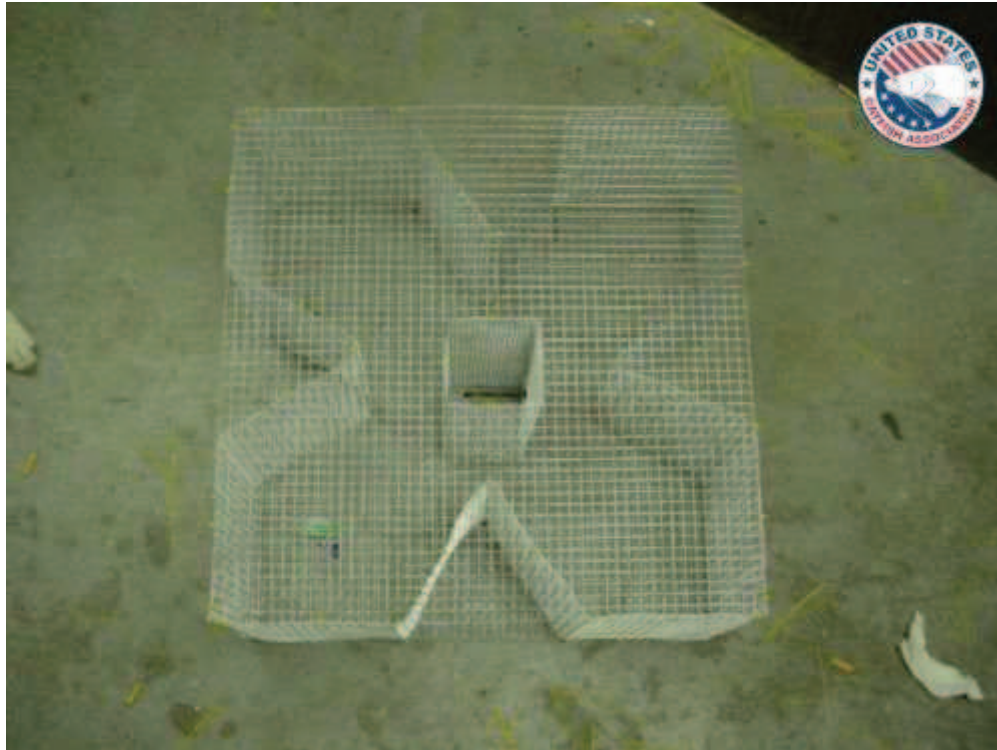
The supplies list is simple and short...this builds 2 traps.



1. 24" wide by 25' long roll of 1/2" Hardware cloth... 16.00 at Home Depot.
2. Tin snips and wire cutters (Dykes) if you have them are handy.
3. Tie-straps (approx. 100 per trap) I bought mine on clearance so I cant remember the cost.
4. Some heavy rubber bands and hooks for securing the bait well door and fish removal doors.

I would actually prefer small steel clips but don't have any and wasnt buying any just for my traps. How you join the hardware cloth panels is up to you and what you have access to.

Here is a pic of the completed trap to start with. I built 2 of them in about 4-5 hours just playing around in the workshop Friday afternoon and later Friday night.



I set the first one of the traps I built out Friday night at a buddies pond where I catch bullheads for bait. Baited it with dry dog food and left it out from about 9:00 pm Friday night until about 12:00 noon Saturday. I was very pleasantly surprised when we pulled it up and it had a big load of Bullheads in it. I caught 73 Bullheads in the one trap first time

out !!!! Here is a pic of when we pulled the trap....it is kinda hard to get good pics looking thru mesh and on the ground but I think you will be able to see all the Bullheads anyway. They average 6-8" long with a few smaller and a few bigger... just right for Flathead baits !!!!



Heres a pic of the Bullheads after we unloaded the trap into the cooler to take home to the bait tank. NICE BAIT !!!!

The second trap I set out at another pond with Bream in. I set it out Sunday morning at about 11:00 and pulled it at about 7:00 pm and had 23 Bluegills in it.

OK... On to how to build one yourself....

Step 1- The tops and bottoms.



Cut 4 pieces of hardware cloth 24" X 24". These squares will be the tops and bottoms of both traps. You will have to trim the edges smooth to get rid of all the sharp wire ends from cutting it.

You can trim it fairly smooth by using tin snips and following the outside wire of the clothes edges. Cut as close and smooth as possible now and it will save you lots of little cuts and scrapes later.

Step 2- The side walls.

Take the remaining 24" X 17' piece and cut off 5' (this 5' is scrap but may be used later for doors if needed).

Step 3- The side walls.

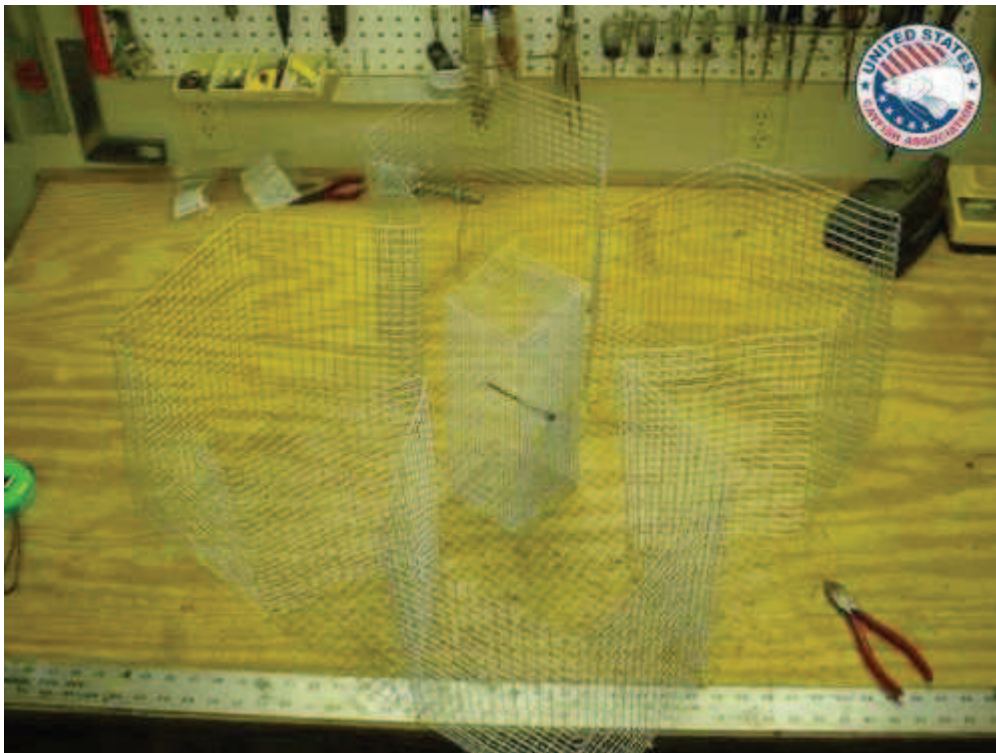
Cut the 24" by 12' piece down the middle length wise and trim edges smooth leaving you with 2 pieces that are approx. 11" wide X 12' long. These will be the sides of each trap. These are actually a little long but will be trimmed to fit later.



Step 4- Attaching the side wall to the bottom

Lay one of the 24" squares down flat on a work surface. Take one of the 11" X 12' side pieces and stand it on edge and align to the corner of the bottom square and tie strap it to the bottom square. Tie strap it again at 8" from the corner. Add one or two tie straps

in between these as needed to secure the pieces firmly together. Fold the hardware cloth side piece in angled towards the center of the trap to make the entrance funnel for that side of the trap and tie strap it to the bottom square. Now fold it back towards the edge again and tie strap it in place at 8" from the other corner of the square. Continue doing this all the way around all 4 sides until you meet back at the starting point then trim off any excess from the side wall and tie strap the starting and ending edges of the side walls together. It takes a little practice and patients to get the bends all in place while working with a 12' long piece of hardware cloth but it will get easier as you figure it out. I used the edge of a small board to help make sharper and more accurate bends. The side wall will seem kinda flimsy while your building it but it will get a lot more sturdy once everything is tie strapped together and secured.



Step5- Building and attaching the bait compartment

Before putting the top square on you will need to make the bait holder compartment and install it. The $\frac{1}{2}$ " hardware cloth openings are a little big for baits like dog food so I used $\frac{1}{8}$ " hardware cloth that I already had on hand. You can use the $\frac{1}{2}$ " and put your bait into a mesh bag to keep it from seeping out and it would work too. Make a square tube 4" X 4" and the same height as the side walls of the trap. I made mine double walled to add even more strength to it and the rest of the trap. Center the bait compartment in the trap with the flat sides facing the inward points of the funnels as shown in the pics and tie strap it to the bottom square of the trap.

I built an additional door half way down the bait compartment so as to keep the bait from floating to the top of the trap making it so the fish have to enter the trap to get to any bait. The second door cutting the bait well in half is up top you and the type of bait used.



Step 6- Attaching the top

Lay the top 24" square on top of the trap and starting at one corner tie strap it place working your way all the way around the trap making sure to keep everything matching the way you attached the bottom piece until you have tie strapped the top in place... this

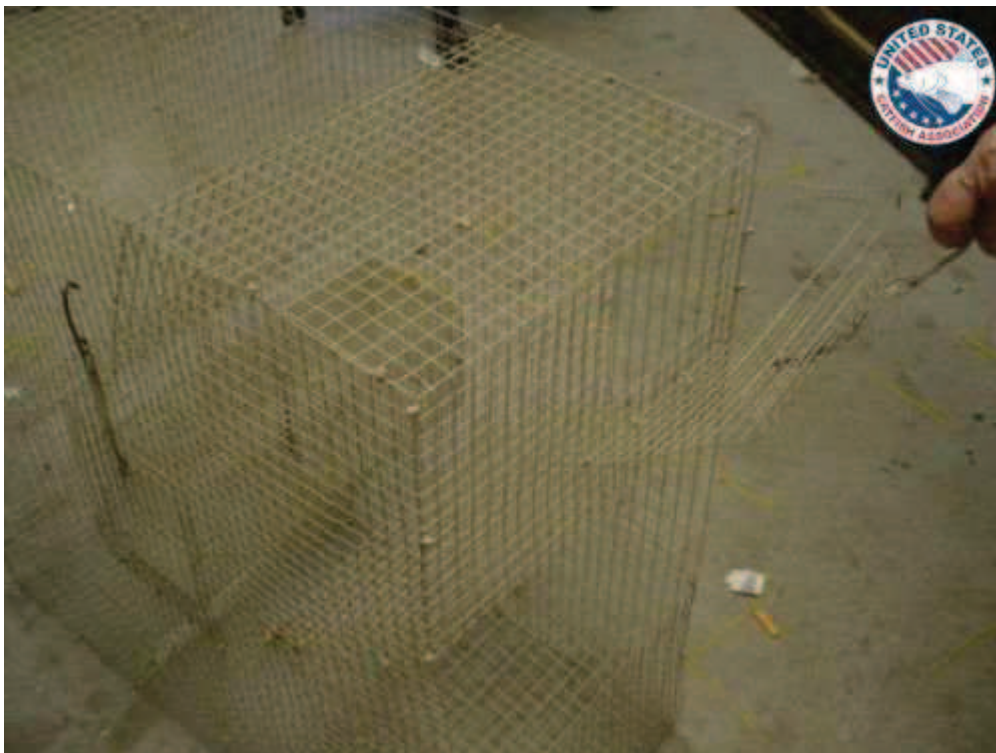
is where you will notice the trap getting a lot more sturdy.

Step7- Bait compartment access door

Using a screwdriver poked they the 1/8" openings align the top of the bait compartment the center of the top in the same position as you have it attached to the bottom square and tie strap it in place. Clip out the 4X4 hole from the top panel of the trap creating the entrance to the bait compartment. The bait is put into the trap from the outside thru this opening. Using a scrap piece of 1/8" hardware cloth cut a door flap for the bait compartment, cut it so it overlaps the opening 1" on all sides. Lay it in place and tie strap one side only.. This serves as hinges for the door. For a latch I used heavy rubber bands made from innertubes and bent a hook out of a piece of 10 gauge solid copper wire.

Step 8- Fish removal door

Cut a door opening for the fish removal. Keep the opening atleast one row of 1/8" squares from the edge of panels for stability and make a door for the opening similar to the one you made for the bait well. I let my door wrap around and overlap the edge of the trap to make it more sturdy as well.



Step 9- Fish entrance slots

Cut the fish entrances. Each of the four funnels will have one entrance. I cut 2 rows of 1/8" hardware cloth and about 4" high. I took my hands and gently spread the 1X4 openings to a more oval curve shape. The size and shape of the opening will depend on the fish you are trying to catch. Start off small... you will be amazed how easily a bream

can fit thru a small slot shaped entrance. It's a lot easier to go back and increase the size of the opening than it is to make them smaller.



Step 10- Using the trap

Tie a rope to it.. Bait it up and throw it out in a likely spot. The trap works GREAT, but only if there are fish in the area you put it. Bait it with dry dog food / cat food, canned dog food / cat food with holes punched in can, cotton seed cake, raw bacon, old stale bread, or what ever works best for you.

Additional info from Sam posted on June 21, 2005

I have had several people ask for more detail on the entrances for the trap so I have taken a couple more pics showing better details. I put a piece of white paper in the trap behind the opening so you can see it better. I tried to edit the post but it wont let me now so if a moderator wants to edit it that would be great.

The entrances to the trap are in the 4 folds pointing to the center of the trap. The folds serve as funnels. As the fish swim around the sides of the trap searching for the food and come up on a funnel they automatically swim right towards the openings and into the trap. The bait compartment sits with in a few inches of the opening and with the flat sides facing the openings for two important reasons. First is as soon as the fish enters the trap it has to turn right or left as it enters which disorients the fish from the opening it just came thru. Second reason is once the fish is in the trap you want them to STAY in the trap.. when a fish in the trap swims past the opening it would have to make a 90 degree sharp turn to exit thru the opening.. which is much less likely than if it could

swim straight at the hole. Hope that makes sense...lol

A trap builder in Florida gave me that tip a couple of years ago and it DOES make a difference in keeping fish in the trap once they enter. Also.. keep lots of bait in the trap.. as soon as the food is gone the fish start looking to get out. Dont put the trap back in the water with fish still in it either.. until the trap is disturbed the fish stay calm.. but once its disturbed they panic and look for ways out. OK... The pics...

