Feral Bird Trap Making – Written Instructions

see also the accompanying video at tamworthbirdwatchers.com (in the Resources section)

The completed trap

Materials Needed

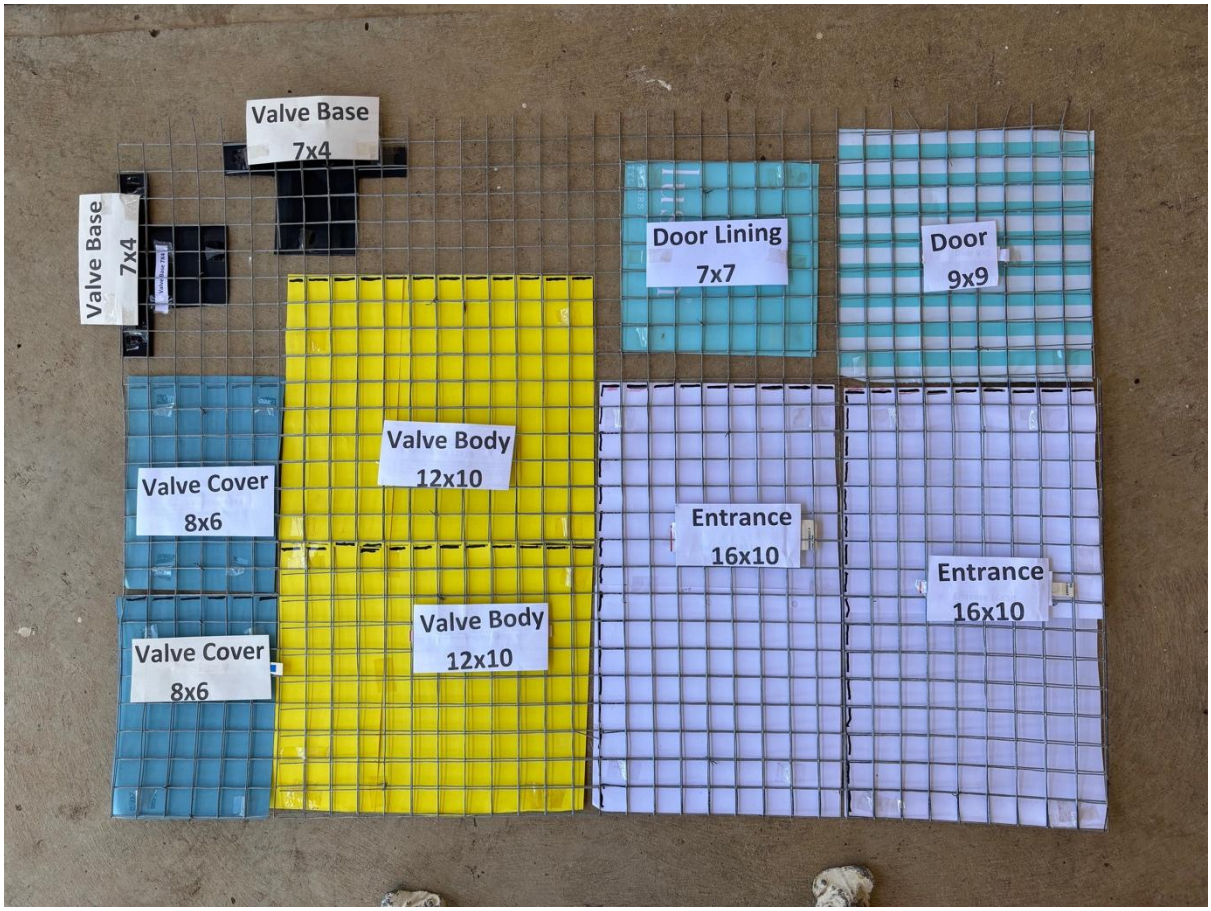
Cage mesh – 90 cm wide (36 squares) x 3.5 m (Probably have to buy 5m)
Squares in mesh should be 25 x 25 mm
Wire thickness = 1.24 mm
Something stiff more than 90 cm long - to bend mesh over
Pointed (long nose) pliers
Side cutter pliers (need to be able to cut close)
Combination pliers
1 small glass drink bottle – approx. 350 ml
1 small fish or chicken tin 85 g
Piece of 2 mm tie wire, or similar to reinforce door opening.
Thin tie wire – about 1.25mm
Perch

Cutting out

The following pieces will be cut out of the mesh as you go along

Trap Body x 1 (36 squares (roll width) x 64 squares + spikes)
Bottom End piece x 1 (36 squares x 17 squares + spikes)
Top End piece x 1 (36 squares x 16 squares + spikes)
Entrances x 2 (16 squares x 10 squares)
Valves x 2 - 3 parts to each valve - Valve body x 2 (12 x 10 squares)
Valve cover x 2 (8 x 6 squares)
Valve base x 2 (7 x 4 squares)
Door x 1 (9x9 squares)
Door liner x 1 (7 x 7 squares)
Bottle holder x 1 (3 x 1 squares)
Bottle stand x 1 (size depends on size of bottle)
Perch

Layout template on next page shows how to cut out small pieces with minimal wastage.
Dotted line shows which side of wire to cut when it is crucial.
If you have to buy 5m of wire, you won't need to put pieces next to each other like this as you will have a lot left over.



Making Trap Body

Start with the 90 cm selvage of mesh facing you.
Count 16 squares
At that wire, bend the mesh over a firm surface, forming a right angled bend.
Repeat this twice more, counting 16 squares each time and bending.
You now have 3 right angled bends in the mesh
Count 16 squares for the fourth time.
This time you cut the mesh off on the far side of the 17th square
This will leave spikes.
They will be used to tie both ends of the body together to form the cage body.

Bring the two 90cm lengths of the cage body together – one has the spikes,
Using the long-nosed pliers, tie the spikes around the corresponding wire
on the selvage without spikes, and tie off.
Repeat right down the whole seam.
Ensure the ends of the spikes lie flat and cannot scratch anything.

In all cases, when twisting spikes, make sure the wire you are twisting spikes around, is outside the wire the spikes are attached to. They are prone to break off if unsupported by that other wire.

Bottom End Piece – (will become the two cage bottoms)

Cut out the Bottom End Piece with the 90cm edge facing you
Count 17 squares
Cut off on the far side of the 18th square, leaving spikes attached to the end piece.
The end piece will now have spikes on only one side. Using the side cutters, cut the outside wires off the other three sides, so that all sides now have spikes.

Sit one end of the end piece on top of the trap body, so that only the spikes are overhanging on three sides.
Tie these spikes to the trap body on all three sides, forming a roof for the trap.
Once again, make sure the spikes are supported before twisting.
Half the end piece will still be attached. (This piece is for the other end).
Cut that piece off, leaving spikes to attach the fourth side of the roof. Once these spikes are tied off, the roof is now complete

Taking the remaining end piece, cut off the side without spikes to create spikes on all four sides.
Turn the body of the cage over and attach the loose piece as before.
You will now have a totally enclosed cage body.

Go down the three corners that you bent earlier and squeeze them a bit more with your hands to square up the corners of the cage.

Count down 12 squares from the top.
Cut half way around the cage in the 13th square, immediately under the 12th square, so that there will be spikes on the bottom piece.
Then cut the remaining half off, but now cutting at the bottom of the 13th square so that the spikes will be attached to the top piece.
You now have two cages with one open side each. There should be spikes on two sides only on each one.

See following photo

Entrances (Make two)

Cut a piece of wire 16 x 10 squares. Cut off outer wire as necessary so that you are left with 14 squares x 8 squares, with spikes on three sides. One of the long sides does not have spikes.

Keeping the side without spikes on the left, count down 6 squares. That will be one side of the entrance.
The seventh and eight squares will form the top

From the right, cut in the sixth square, adjacent to the seventh square
DO NOT CUT THE LAST 2 WIRES
Similarly, cut in the ninth square, adjacent to the eighth square
DO NOT CUT THE LAST 2 WIRES

You now have a separate centre section 2 squares wide with no spikes except at end. It is still attached to the rest by the two left hand wires.
Both side pieces are equal in size and have spikes on three sides

Fold the side pieces down, then bend the top piece down slightly to form a sloping top, still attached to the rest by one square. Use a spike to attach the lower end of the top to the side piece two wires down. Secure the top with another spike, halfway down the slope onto the first wire

Repeat on the other side.

Cut off excess spikes above the lid, leaving enough wire to bend around neatly.

Leave 3 spikes at the bottom of each side – one at each end and one in the middle. Cut off the other bottom ones.

The remaining spikes at the end are bent in slightly so that birds do not go back out the entrance.

<u>Insert 2 Entrances in Small Cage</u>

These entrances go in the bottom of the smaller cage. Attach to the floor of the cage using the 3 bottom spikes. Place it with the opening against the wall of the cage, 3 squares in from the left side. Have the walls of the entrance 3 squares apart.
The second entrance is placed on the opposite side, also 3 squares in from the left side and 3 squares apart
Photo shows placement

Cut a hole in the side of the cage, (as per photo on left) so that birds can go into the entrances. The cut out piece is shown in the photo. Use the resulting spikes to attach the top and middle of the entrance to the cage wall. Make sure there are no sharp bits of wire protruding, especially on the bottom.
The photo on the right shows the finished entrance

Top End Piece (will become the two cage tops)

With the width of the netting facing you (it is 36 squares wide) Count 16 squares
Cut off on the far side of the 17th square, leaving spikes attached to one long side of the end piece. The other three sides will not have spikes.

Attach Top End Piece to Small Cage

Place the Top End Piece on the small cage with two sides without spikes next to the sides of the cage which has spikes. Use spikes to anchor it in place at all 4 corners, then use the rest of the spikes to attach three sides.

The overhanging part will become the top for the large cage. Cut this off, leaving spikes to attach the fourth side to the small cage. All four sides will now be completely closed.

Put rest of end piece aside.

Make 2 Openings

Using a side of the small cage which does not have an entrance, make two openings. They go in the top right and left corners of that side, and measure 5 x 5 squares when finished.

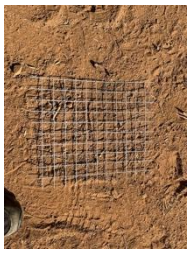
Cut as per picture. The four top wires are cut off.

On either side bend back the one freed row of squares and fold the spikes around to form a strong edge. Do the same with the centre square at the bottom.

The Small Cage is now complete

The finished hole

Make 2 Valves - There are 3 parts to each valve -
The body, the cover and the base



To make the valve body, cut a rectangle of wire that is 12 squares by 10 squares.
Cut the outside wire off the two long sides and one short side, creating spikes, leaving one short side without spikes. The wire will now have 10 x 9 squares.

With the plain side to the bottom, wrap the wall around something round to bend it into a semicircular shape.

For the valve cover, cut a piece of wire 8 squares by 6 squares
This time you cut the wire off only two sides, so that there are spikes on one long and one short side.

The valve base needs wire that is 7 squares by 4 squares, which you cut as per the accompanying photo,
It needs spikes on each outside corner.

To assemble:-
Make sure the wall is nicely rounded and has the end without spikes on the bottom.

Have the small side of the cover without spikes at the bottom.
Attach the bottom 4 squares of the cover to the top 4 squares of the body, using spikes from the body. (1 tie top and bottom should suffice). That should leave an opening 5x5 squares below the cover.

Attach the base to the bottom of the body using the spikes.

Narrow the opening at the top of the body by cutting down 2 squares in the 4th square from each side, then attaching the 3rd square to the 5th on each side.
Bend top spikes outwards.

Bend cover over the completed valve and bend those spikes downwards.

There will still be spikes down the back of the valve. Cut off all but three on each side, leaving one at each end and one in the middle. These will be used to attach the valve to the big cage.

Install the valves

Take the big cage and find the corner which has the seam. With that seam in the far left corner, install the valves on the side closest to you, one in each of the near corners.

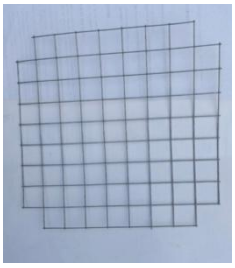
Count up 7 wires from the bottom, not including the base wire. This is where the base of the valve must sit, so that it corresponds to the holes in the small cage. Use the spikes on the back of the valve to attach it to the wall of the big cage.

Cut holes in cage to correspond with openings at the bottom of valves.
The finished holes will measure 5x5 squares
Leaving the bottom wire, cut 4 wires up both sides, leaving enough wire to bend around, leaving a smooth edge.
Cut off top and bottom wires too, leaving two centre spikes to firmly tie valve and cage together.

Install final Top End Piece to Large Cage

Attach the remaining end piece wire to the top of the large cage. This will totally enclose the large cage.

You will need to cut two complete squares off the end piece wire so that it will fit, but position the wire and tie in place before doing so. The sides without spikes adjoin the spikes on the large cage and vice versa. Cutting off the two surplus squares will provide the final spikes.
(The spare wire that is two squares wide will be used later.)

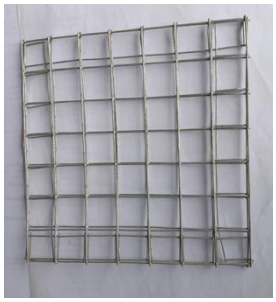


Make door

You will need a piece of wire 9x9 squares without spikes. Remove the four corner squares. (left)

Fold up outside squares to form a box (right)

Cut another piece of wire without spikes, measuring 7x7 squares.
Place this square inside the box as a reinforcement for the door.
Bend the sides of the box over onto the reinforcement and flatten well.



This is your completed door.(on right)

Cut an opening for the door in the large cage on the opposite side to the valves.
Finished size should be 5 x 6 squares.
The hole should be 7 squares from the top of the cage.
Lie the cage on its side with the top to your left, as per photo on left. The opening will now be 7 squares from the left.

Cut wire to make hole, leaving sections as shown in left hand photo. The piece you cut out is shown on the right, and you need to cut down one square more so that you can fold out the sides as per photo.

We use a piece of 2mm tie wire (see left) to reinforce the opening. It is placed around the bent out pieces. They are then bent back over the tie wire and squeezed tight. Tie off the loose spikes.

The right hand photo shows the completed opening for the door. The cage is still lying on its side.

Slide the door diagonally through the opening and use a clip or peg to hold it in position while you make tie wire hinges to attach it to the top (side when upright) of the opening.

Photo on left shows the completed door (now in the upright position), complete with a wire clip to hold it shut.

A perch is put towards the top of the large cage It can just be seen at the top of the photo.

Installing the water bottle

Using the wire 2 squares wide that you put aside earlier, make a stand (3x1 squares) for the bottle to sit on, and a bottle holder as shown on the right. (Size depends on bottle.)

Insert the bottle on its stand in the cage, inverted over a small tin and tie the wire girdle to cage wall. Have the gap in the girdle facing the door. The bottle can then be removed to refill it. You can use just a tin for water, but it will evaporate much quicker.

You will need a clip made of tie wire or similar to hold the cages together. See picture on right.

The trap is now complete