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Propane Cannon Scares Away Birds, Pest Animals

When Barthell Joseph went looking for a way to solve bird problems in both farming and aviation, he ended up going across the Atlantic Ocean to find a solution.

The Scare-Away Single Bang gas-powered cannon is manufactured in Belgium. Its harmless 130-decibel thunderclap works better than anything else he found.

Joseph says that while agriculture is his biggest customer, the cannons also work well at landfills, fishponds, and golf courses.

"The Scare-Away is the loudest LP gas cannon available, and decibels matter," says Joseph. "A variation of as few as five decibels can easily add five more acres of coverage."

The cannon is powered by a regular propane tank and is purely mechanical. Propane

inflates a diaphragm to be released into a chamber at a timed setting. A flint ignition sparking mechanism lights the gas and creates a loud explosion.

Joseph says the frequency of the blasts can be adjusted from approximately 30 seconds to 15-minute intervals. A single propane tank holds approximately 5,000 shots.

The Scare-Away Gas Cannon Single Bang M3 is available from the Reed-Joseph website or at a handful of dealers throughout the U.S. and sells for \$310 plus S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Barthell Joseph, Reed-Joseph International Company, 505 Mountain Industrial Drive, Brevard, N.C. 28712 (ph 800-647-5554; sales@reedjoseph.com; www.reedjoseph.com).

ProtectaBEE cones deter honey stealing wasps, opossums, skunks and raccoons. Beekeepers report the cones also protect the bees from the rain and wind.



Beehive Add-On Offers Multiple Benefits

ProtectaBEE is saving bees. The multi-cone-shaped device fits over a hive entrance to keep out honey thieves and control bee pests. ProtectaBEE was developed by Best For Bees, an Ontario company that does field work for honeybee researchers.

"We were hired by the University of Guelph to develop a way to use bees to deliver a natural fungicide to protect crops," says Dr. Erica Shelley, Best For Bees. "As I worked on it with Dr. Peter Kevan with the university, we could see it might be used to improve health in the hive as well."

They knew bees will climb out through the wide end of a cone, but not in through the narrow end. ProtectaBEE consists of eight cones, four pointed into the hive entrance and four pointed outward for bee exit. It also has drawers in front of the cones. These can be filled with a powder that the bees pick up on their legs.

As incoming bees travel throughout the hive, they leave the powder behind. Bees leaving the hive pick up the powder and carry it to the flowers of the crops they visit.

Tracheal mites are a devastating pest to honeybees. Controlling them normally requires opening hives and treating the entire hive with a miticide. It's invasive and throws

off egg laying by the queen. It also takes time and labor on the part of the beekeeper and can allow another pest, hive beetles, to enter. Bad weather can also delay treatment. ProtectaBEE eliminates those problems.

"We collaborated with researchers at Washington State University," says Shelley. "They have a fungus that will grow inside the hive, where it is warm and humid, and control mites. If you simply place the dry powder in the hive, the worker bees will remove it."

Shelley and Kevan demonstrated the potential effectiveness of using the bees with fluorescent powder. It was spread evenly throughout the hive. Then they tried a powdered antibiotic and later the fungi.

Shelley says they also found the cones deter honey stealing wasps, opossums, skunks and raccoons. Beekeepers report the cones also protect the bees from the rain and wind.

ProtectaBEE is made from bee-friendly, UV and weather-resistant plastic. Best For Bees has priced the device at \$59 each or an eight pack for \$320.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Best For Bees, 758 Union St., Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2H 6J1 (ph 226-220-2863; info@bestforbees.com; www.bestforbees.com).

Her Birdfeeder Has A Living Roof

You've never seen a birdhouse like this one with a "living roof" made by Sharlene Eash. Covered with sphagnum peat moss, sedums, and hens and chicks plants, her birdfeeder roof has survived a couple of Indiana winters.

To protect the wood roof from rotting, she covered it with rubber roofing material with an extra 1/2 in. on all sides to staple it in place. Then with the help of her young son, she framed the perimeter to create shallow beds on both sides of the roof, about an inch deep.

Eash added water to the moss in the bag she purchased it in to hold it together before spreading it out on the rubber roofing.

"Then attractively plant your sedums, making a hole with your finger and inserting the roots," she says, noting she also tucked in a few hens and chicks plants.

She added screws about every 4 in. on the top and bottom of the roof frame, leaving enough room on the head to wrap wire around it. Twisting about 4 ft. of thin wire around the screw heads and going back and forth from top to bottom, she created a grid to hold everything in place.

"You might not need wire for a roof with less of a pitch," Eash says, noting her roof was steeper than she wanted.

Though she occasionally sprays the roof with water, the moss usually holds enough moisture for sedums, which are hardy through



Though Eash occasionally sprays the roof with water, the moss usually holds enough moisture for sedums, which are hardy through the winter.

Succulent plants would likely work in warm climates, she notes.

"It just looks really nice and there's no water runoff," she says, noting the living roof would also be great on a shed or pergola.

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AirSpades are used to blow dirt from roots of tree making transport lighter and easier.

She Finds New Homes For Mature Trees

Denise Vidosh finds buyers for mature trees and moves them to new homes. Her company Re-Tree is an online market for trees that have outgrown their location.

"I'm the daughter of a pioneer landscaper who believed in repurposing mature plants," says Vidosh. "We now have the tools we need to transplant mature trees."

The Re-Tree website was launched in June of 2021, and by November, 287 very large trees had been listed and sold.

"The largest tree I've moved had a diameter of 14 in. and a price tag of \$18,000," says Vidosh.

The tool that makes relocation possible is the AirSpade. It was originally developed for utility companies but is ideal for clearing dirt from roots (www.airspade.com; ph 800-482-7324).

Vidosh and her crews trench around a tree with an AirSpade and then blow the dirt away from the roots. The process retains 85 percent of the root system and eliminates a third of the weight.

"We can move a mature tree any time of the year with the AirSpade, complete with its foliage," says Vidosh.

Vidosh gets referrals of mature trees with the potential to be moved from her network of landscape and arborist professionals. Trees must be qualified as free of disease and structural issues and accessible without overhead wires or excessive underground utilities. Once it's qualified, she gives the owner an appraisal, and if they sign a listing

agreement, she posts the tree on the Re-Tree website.

"We have several thousand on the site," she says. "We list them free but take a transaction fee of 20 to 30 percent of the value of the tree when it is sold. Contacts who referred the tree also get a fee."

Re-Tree and its website are still in beta form, and Vidosh asks FARM SHOW readers to be patient when accessing it. She suggests they call with questions and emphasizes her market for Re-Tree is limited by how far a tree can be moved.

"The closer we can move a tree from A to B is less time for the roots to dry out," says Vidosh. "We've successfully moved bare root trees within 300 to 400 miles of home."

She recently did a case study for two properties that had about 80 ginkgo trees between 6 and 8 in. in diameter on about 10 acres.

"They're very valuable, but have outgrown their locations," says Vidosh. "I estimated their value at upward of \$225,000. I offered to replace them with appropriately sized trees and put an additional \$100,000 back in their pocket."

Trees on the Re-Tree site list from several hundred dollars to several thousand or more. A Waterfall Japanese Maple was listed at \$6,000.

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