



Chicken Thief trap was usually set near a hen house and covered with dirt or straw. When a thief stepped on the trigger, the jaws grabbed his foot.

Man Trap Caught Chicken Thieves

A Virginia farmer was awarded a patent in 1932 for his Chicken Thief Man Trap. In his description, inventor John T. Helbert wrote: "A jaw trap which may be used to capture chicken thieves, being so constructed that the more the victim struggles the closer together the jaws move."

Today the antique trap's value is about \$1,500, according to Tom Parr, president of the North America Trap Collectors Association, who has his personal collection of traps on display at the association's museum in Galloway, Ohio. The Chicken Thief Man Trap is one of about 4,000 traps - from mouse-traps to bear traps.

The man trap is 17 by 15 in. and the jaws are offset by 2 in., and includes something animal traps don't need.

"A true man trap usually has a lock mechanism built into the jaws to prevent escape," Parr says. "Once something is in it, it locks. It needs a special key or device to unlock it."

The trap was usually set near a hen house and covered with dirt or straw. When someone stepped on the trigger assembly, the springs closed the offset jaws, designed not to overly injure a leg. A heavy chain that se-

cured the trap to a fence post or stake held the thief until the landowner returned.

Apparently, however, Helbert's trap never really caught on. Only about a dozen were ever made.

Parr feels fortunate to have one of them; a friend purchased the trap for him at a Virginia antique store. Parr's museum has two other man traps. One that is 7 ft. long and 70 lbs., appears to be homemade out of old farm parts. Another is from Europe, where traps to catch men were made as early as 1770, when English aristocrats set them on their property to keep hungry peasants from stealing their wild game and fruit. Unlike traps for wild animals, the traps didn't close tight enough to break a leg, but those who were caught likely faced a worse punishment.

Parr invites anyone interested in seeing the Chicken Thief Man Trap and thousands of other traps to come to the museum. Call ahead to set up a time.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tom Parr, North American Trap Collectors Association Museum, Inc., 6106 Bausch Rd., Galloway, Ohio 43119 (ph 614 878-6011; trappersworld@rroho.com).



Outside shower hooks up to a garden hose and uses sunshine to heat the water. A water heater, painted flat black, mounts on top of wood frame adjacent to shower stall.



"Solar Powered" Outside Shower

Tim Mason, Beaverton, Mich., built a "solar powered" outside shower that hooks up to a garden hose and uses sunshine to heat the water.

"I spent only about \$140 to build it," says Mason. "After I shower I refill the tank so that by the next day the water is nice and warm, weather permitting."

He painted an old water heater flat black. It mounts on top of a wood frame adjacent to the shower stall. He installed a vent on top of the tank so he can tell when it's full, and also to prevent airlock. There's a shut-off valve

just before the shower head.

"I bought a shower base at a garage sale for \$5. The walls and door are two pieces of privacy fence that I bought at a lumber yard and cut down to fit. The floor under the base is made from treated lumber.

"To drain the water, I dug a hole about 8 in. deep in the ground and buried a piece of pvc pipe, which is attached to the shower base."

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Holstein-spotted, 60-ft. tall silo is a landmark near Elbridge, N.Y.

Custom Painted Silo Promotes Dairy Farm

A Holstein-spotted silo attracts the attention of drivers passing by the John and Nancy Hourigan farm near Elbridge, N.Y. For the owners of the 850-head dairy, it's a way to promote dairy and to beautify their farm.

"It's become sort of a landmark," Nancy says. More than a decade ago, the couple asked their barn painter to paint Holstein spots on the old concrete silo which they no longer used.

"We're both a little crazy about being neat," she adds, so annually they have painting and maintenance work done on their buildings.

"When Nancy came out to say what she wanted, she said if we had any questions how to do it, just look in the pasture," recalls Tim Fratus, who helped his step-father and brother

paint the silo. After spray-painting two base coats, the painters hand painted the black spots. Fratus has retouched the silo a couple of times in past years.

Fratus says he enjoys the challenge of promotional painting. He's painted checkerboard patterns on the top of a couple silos, and yellow smiley faces on others. A neighbor who is starting a cheese business wants Fratus to paint his Harvestore silo.

"I'll white stencil the business name and, at 60 ft. tall, it'll be very visible," Fratus explains.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tim Fratus, Coatings Plus Painting Co., P.O. Box 521, Waterloo, N.Y. 13165 (ph 315 539-4692; coatingsplus@bluefrog.com).



Headboard serves as back of bench and provides the rear legs, while the footboard provides the front legs.



"Bed Headboard" Bench

Pam Gill, Chimacum, Wash., turned an old bed into a bench.

"Instead of throwing out the bed, I sanded down and repainted the headboard and the footboard, then made a bench seat out of plywood. The headboard serves as the back of

the bench and provides the rear legs, while the footboard provides the front legs. I painted the bench red, white, blue and yellow. It looks really nice on our front porch."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Pam Gill, Chimacum, Wash. (ph 360 732-0946).