

## No Shovel Needed To Set This Gopher Trap

This new gopher trap lets you get rid of gophers and moles from above ground without ever needing to use a shovel.

The Gopher Hawk gopher trap pushes down into the tunnel, eliminating the need to dig down into the gopher mound.

It consists of 3 components – a 2-part wedge and probe tool (the probe fits inside the wedge handle for storage), and a spring-loaded, cylinder-shaped trap that's designed to be placed in the ground vertically. The "snare" is located inside a black outer sleeve and consists of a stainless steel, triple strap ring with an embedded, swivel-type trigger. The straps that form the ring blend in with the sides of the tunnel and can be approached from either direction.

You start by using the probe to find the tunnel. Probe the area surrounding the mound, but not the mound itself. After locating the tunnel, remove the probe and place the wedge in the small hole left by the probe. Push down on the wedge until it breaks through to the tunnel.

To insert the trap you hold the outer sleeve and push the trap all the way to the bottom of the tunnel. Once the trap is in place, hold the spring steady with one hand and pull upward on the outer sleeve to extend the triple strap ring down into the tunnel. The triple strap ring will then balloon out of the mechanism and hug the walls of the tunnel, allowing the

gopher to be trapped from either direction.

To get rid of the gopher you pull the trap up out of the ground, then hold the spring end of the device in one hand and firmly tap the outer sleeve with the other to release the trigger mechanism.

"It has a lot of advantages," says sales manager David McAtee. "There's no use of poison, no digging up big holes in the ground, no need to set two traps at either end of the tunnel, and you never have to touch the gopher. You always know when the trap has been triggered, because there's a yellow catch indicator on the spring that sets above ground and can be seen from a distance."

"The trigger is very sensitive but has enough leeway that the gopher gets its head completely inside the rings before the trigger is activated. No matter what angle the gopher hits the trigger, it will cause the rings to snap. The gopher is killed immediately."

"One customer with a lot of cherry and almond trees caught more than 1,200 gophers in just 7 weeks. He likes the precision of the trap because he can set it right next to a tree's roots without having to dig up the ground and damaging the tree."

The starter set, which includes the trap, wedge, and probe, sells for \$32.99. Single traps are available at \$24.99 apiece. The Gopher Hawk is available from many hardware stores, multi-chain stores and



Spring-loaded, cylinder-shaped trap comes with a snare located inside a black outer sleeve (above left). A probe and wedge (left) are then used to find the tunnel and make a hole (the thin probe fits inside the wedge tool). Then the trap is inserted so it extends into tunnel (top). You can tell at a glance when trap has been tripped.

nurseries, as well as amazon.com and through the company's website.

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Panel Connectors are available in 2 styles, one for T-posts and the other for wood posts. Inventor Phillip Morrow says they're much faster to use than wire or cable ties.

## Livestock Panel Connectors Make Fence Building Easier

"It's a simple way to connect livestock panels to T-posts and wood posts. They work much faster than wire or cable ties and result in a stronger fence," says Phillip Morrow, One Man Fencing, LLC, about his new Livestock Panel Connectors.

The Connectors are available in 2 different styles, one for T-posts and the other for wood posts.

The T-post model clamps onto the post with a short bolt at one end. The other end has a split bolt that slides over the panel wire. The bolt rotates 360 degrees, allowing it to clamp vertical or horizontal wires. Each connector will hold 2 panels, so that where one panel ends the other begins to either continue down the row or make a corner or even a swinging gate.

To install, tighten the clamp to the post, then place a nut on the split bolt and use a wrench to tighten it against the panel. Then place a rubber screw protector over the end of the bolt.

The wood post connector works the same way except that it screws onto the post.

"They're easy to install and work equally well on hilly or level ground," says Morrow. "Works great to fence in your livestock



T-post model clamps onto post with a short bolt at one end. The other end has a split bolt that slides over the panel wire.

or to stake up garden produce such as beans, tomatoes, and other vines. The panel connectors let you tighten the fence into a rigid structure that will support a lot of weight, whereas wire, twine or cable ties can easily break."

The T-post Panel Connectors sell for \$3 apiece plus S&H; wood post units sell for \$2.50. Bulk pricing is available.

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## Custom-Fit Braces For Injured Dogs

Ben Blecha helps injured dogs get around, without the cost and complications of surgery. If surgery does take place, his HERO braces can aid in recovery. The braces are custom made for every dog.

"I've been making braces for dogs for 11 years," says Blecha. "More dogs than people tear their ACL. It's a pretty common diagnosis."

Braces are Blecha's second venture into helping injured dogs. An amputee himself due to bone cancer as a teen, he is a certified prosthetist-orthotist. Initially he worked with a Denver, Colo. veterinarian developing a prosthesis for dogs.

"The problem with a prosthesis for a dog is getting it to hold onto a dog due to the fur," explains Blecha. "We worked on implanting a rod in the bone and connecting the prosthesis to that."

Unfortunately the veterinarian developed cancer and retired. Blecha took what he had learned and applied it to braces. He formed a partnership with an uncle who is a veterinarian in rural Nebraska.

The two developed a "stifle" brace for an ACL injury. Similar to a knee brace for people, it allows the animal to climb stairs paw over paw, put weight on their leg, walk with less pain and even play. Custom fit to the animal, its design with "under-sleeve" suspension eliminates the need for a harness to hold it in place.

The co-polymer plastic shells and urethane joints are durable and strong, don't stretch or wear out, and they're waterproof. The under-sleeve padding can be hand-washed and replaced if it wears out.

Blecha uses the same technology to make hock or ankle braces as well as carpal or wrist braces. Joints and plastic of a stifle brace are guaranteed for the life of the dog. Ankle and wrist braces are expected to last from 2 to 5 years.

"We only work with animals under a veterinarian's care," explains Blecha. "We



Custom made HERO leg braces help injured dogs get around. Photo above shows plaster cast used to make a brace. Finished brace is shown below.



have the vet take a cast of the leg and send it to us. The cast is filled with plaster to make a model of the leg."

Blecha heats a sheet of plastic over the model and vacuum shapes it to the model to make the shells. "When the plastic cools, it is the shape of the dog's leg," he says. "We smoothen it off and add padding and treads as needed."

Surgery to repair a dog's ACL can cost from \$1,200 to \$3,000 or more, depending on what type of surgery is done. Recovery without reinjury is slow and requires the dog's activity be limited. At \$800, Blecha's braces are a cost effective alternative or an aid in recovery from surgery.

You can see a video of Hero braces at www.farmshow.com.

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