



Spotted Turtle-dove Trapping

Construction, Placement, Baiting and Disposal

Materials:

- Chicken wire or weld mesh (arc mesh)
- 4 or 5cm weld mesh is recommended to allow small native birds to fly in and out without getting trapped. When using large gauge it may be worth wrapping a strip of shade cloth or small mesh around the sides without entrances to prevent Turtle-doves from trying to poke through the bigger gauge. Using wire, which is transparent, will encourage the birds to enter.
- Gutter guard
- Shade cloth
- Tent pegs to hold the cage down and prevent cats from getting access to trapped animals

Tools:

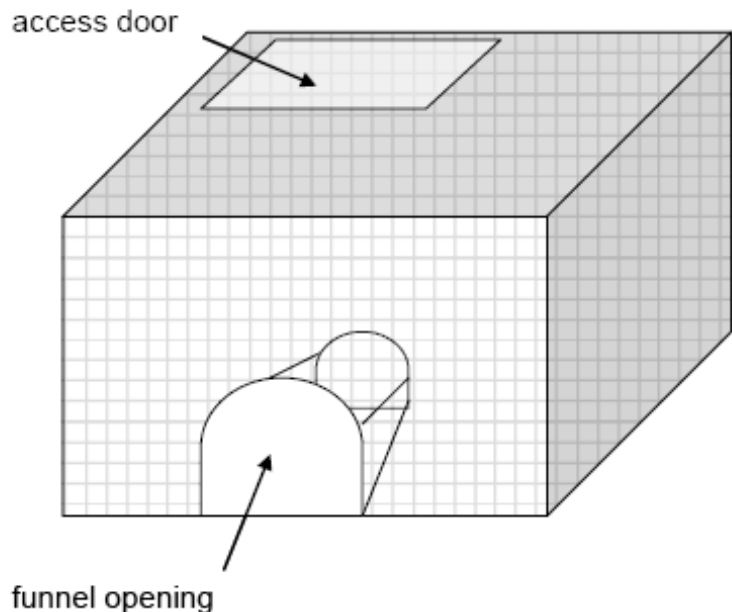
- **Wire/ bolt-cutters:** For cutting wire to size (be careful of sharp edges).
- **Maspro clips:** (ring clips, C-rings or hog-clips – a squarer variety). Maspro clips are used to attach wire pieces together
- **Clamping pliers:** Used to close the rings of Maspro clips
- **Polypipe:** Can be used to pad handles of clamping pliers to avoid you getting blisters.

Bait:

- **Commercial seed,** purchased from supermarkets or pet shops, can be used as bait. Larger seeds are preferred over smaller seed, as the small seed will attract too many native birds. Avoid sunflower seed as you may be overrun by galahs (it is a favourite with parrots and very fattening for them)!
- If Spotted Turtle-doves are coming into your yard to eat your **pet or chook food**, use that as bait

Building a Funnel Trap:

The Parks and Wildlife Services NT Fact Sheet has details on how to make these traps. Funnel traps could be made with chicken wire in a circle or with weld-mesh clipped together in a square. No framework is required for either, and they do not need floors built in. By making a trap without a floor, it is easier to quickly lift the cage and allow a stress-free release of native birds that get caught, instead of having to hand grab them out of the trap.



Step 1: Making a Funnel Cage

- Cut four pieces of wire into 50cm x 60cm pieces for walls and a piece for the roof
 - If your trap is high you will need to consider putting in a perch (e.g. thread a stick through large gauge wire)
 - If your trap is large, you may need to make 2-3 entrance holes
- Cut an entrance hole at ground level in one wall (about the diameter of a tin can). This is where the funnel will attach
- Cut an opening in the top so you can get the birds out
 - Cover the hole with heavy shade cloth and use maspro clips to attach it to the cage
 - Cut a small slit in the shade cloth so you can reach into the trap and catch the bird
 - Place a square of wire over the shade cloth hole using solid wire or maspro clips to hinge it in the unlikely event a Turtle-dove will try to escape through the slit

Step 2: Making the Funnel

- Cut a piece of softer "gutter guard" 20-25 cm x 20 cm
- Roll the gutter guard into a funnel shape, no taller than 8cm at the tall end. Leave an opening at the small end about the same size as a tin can
- Attach the gutter guard funnel to the entrance of the cage with maspro clips. Ensure that the funnel is running along the ground. Funnels need to lead into the centre of the trap where the bait should be placed
- If your trap is large you should space 2-3 funnels around the trap

Step 3: Trap Placement

- Place traps up high e.g. on a table or roof
- Place traps out of full sun. Shade cloth should be attached over the roof of the trap to give trapped animals protection from the sun
- Ensure the trap cannot be interfered with by dogs or cats
- Use tent pegs to hold the trap down
- Consider building up vegetation/mulch around the sides, leaving the entrance unobstructed. This will guide birds to the trap entrance, as the entrance is a more obvious open area, and will deter feral dogs and cats from trying to dig under the trap.
- Place traps in areas that are frequented by the target species (Spotted Turtle-dove) to reduce the impact on non-target species. Free-feeding before trapping can assist in identifying the likelihood of capturing non target species, as well as 'training' feral Turtle-doves to feed and feel comfortable around the trap site.
- If you are continually catching native bird species, such as Crested Pigeons or Honeyeaters, try moving the trap to a different spot or discouraging the birds from feeding from the trap site

Step 4: Baiting

- Bait your trap with bird seed, or pet/chicken food
- You can try the 'free feed/free baiting' technique, where traps are left open with food in them for a few days which allows Turtle-doves to become comfortable with the feeding spot and gives them a false sense of security.
- Provide clean water

Step 5: Checking the Trap

- Check the trap regularly
- Be sure to free any native birds or other animals immediately, and avoid handling or approaching the trap too frequently

Step 6: Disposal of Birds

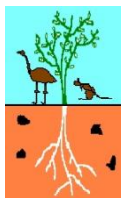
Take them to Desert Park: We strongly recommend that all feral Turtle-doves are taken to the Alice Springs Desert Park feral bird control enclosure for disposal. Deliver birds between the hours of 8.00am and 4.00pm. Turn off Larapinta Drive onto Desert Park's main entry road then turn onto the Service Road and look for the holding aviary for feral doves. You will see a sign that says 'Workshop' with an arrow to the left. Follow that service road along until you come to the aviary on your left. Unlock the door and place Turtle-doves inside. Be sure not to let any other captives out.

Turtle-doves delivered to the Desert Park are euthanized humanely and fed to captive animals. This is a form of behavioural enrichment, especially for birds of prey, as Turtle-doves are a realistic prey size with feathers and bones to work around, keeping captive animal teeth, beaks, and claws sharp and exercised. The Desert Park will not accept dead birds for animal feed as it is a quarantine risk.

Call Land for Wildlife or Low Ecological Services and we may be able to deliver them to Desert Park for you. **Call the Alice Springs Reptile Centre** to determine their capacity to euthanize and utilise Spotted Turtle-doves (as they can take up to half a dozen a week).

Step 7: Make the Most Out of Your Trap

- Share your trap with friends or neighbours!
- If your trap begins to slow on catch numbers you can try moving the trap to a different place in your garden.



**Land for Wildlife & Garden for Wildlife
Central Australia**

Hosted by Low Ecological Services P/L

ABN 55 064 311 502

PO Box 3130, Alice Springs, NT 0871, Australia

Phone: (08) 89 555 222 Fax: (08) 89 555 722

Email: lfw@lowecol.com.au

Web: www.wildlife.lowecol.com.au



Proudly sponsored by
**Northern Territory
Government**