



the CRAYFISH TALE

REPLACEMENT FUNNELS for Trappy and XL

Many years ago I started catching my own crayfish. Before then I had depended on other people to satisfy my crayfish hunger. Not surprisingly, I looked toward Sweden to solve my problem. Fortunately, my brother still resided in Sweden and came to my rescue. He sent over a supply of Jackpots, the typical Swedish crayfish trap.

For years, those traps, he sent ten of them, helped me fill my plates at parties with other crayfish hungry friends.

Then started the lovely period of my life when each summer I motored up the mountains to crayfish populated lakes. I started catching crayfish by the hundreds, then by the thousands. I had a ball.

But the more I looked at these traps I was using, the more I wondered why I did not make my own. Of course, I was no engineer like my father and brother, but apparently I was endowed with enough engineering genes to tackle the problem. At first I used poultry netting from the nearest hardware store. A boxy contraption, big as a dog house, was my first construction. Worked rather well, but it was a nuisance to transport in my tiny VW Beetle.

Then arrived the Internet phase of my life. Here I found that I was not the only person trying to make crayfish traps. I stumbled upon the Bullard web site and there was a trap maker who made traps similar to the Swedish Jackpot.

I bought one and studied it. Yes, I could make such a trap, and before long I was in the business of making crayfish traps.

But there was one part of the trap that caused plenty of trouble and effort; the funnel entrances to the trap. I made these funnels from fish netting, shaped so that they would induce crayfish to walk into the trap in search of the bait inside.

Now I have been making that kind of trap for years. But ever since I started, the idea of making a simpler funnel festered in my mind.

That's when I stumbled upon the Trappy maker of Virserum, Sweden. He had solved the problem by going into plastics. He had solved the funnel problem by letting a plastic molding machine press out the funnels in one fell swoop, together with the rest of the cylindrical trap body. In these fell swoops he had solved the laborious problem of making funnels with netting, the hardest step in trap manufacture.

For years I have praised this improvement in trap making, and thousands of those Trappy and Trappy XL traps have left my inventory on their way to happy crayfish catchers.

Then a brain wave hit me. Could my traps with these cumbersome netting funnels be adapted to accept the plastic funnels? Maybe I could use plastic funnels instead of fish netting funnels that are so laborious to make?

Said and done. I made a hardware cloth cylinder, like the one in the Trapper, and instead of spending lots of time making a netting funnel, I simply fitted a Trappy plastic funnel to the cylinder, and, voila, I had a new type of crayfish trap.

Now, if I could do that with the Trappy funnel, why not the same with the XL plastic funnel? Well, of course I could. A little bit more head scratching, as the XL funnel had to be slightly modified for the job. Now I had a Jumbo crayfish trap also made from a cylinder of hardware cloth and two plastic XL funnels. And this new trap was bigger than any of the other traps I had made. Interestingly, this Jumbo size tends to catch incredible amounts of crayfish in well populated lakes. (Possibly not legal size in a few states, so check to be sure.) So far my record is 80 big crays overnight in one such trap. Soon I ordered a supply of re-

placement Trappy and XL funnels from Virserum. As you can see, if you visit my web site, they are now available for those who either lose funnels or who want to try to make their own crayfish traps.

LEARNING TO USE FACEBOOK

Yes, I fell for the same temptation as millions of other people have; I joined Facebook. At first I simply tried to find old friends on it, and, yes, it worked quite well. I made contacts with friends I had not heard from in years, and I think we all had some fun doing it.

But I also wished to see if I could use Facebook to improve my crayfish trap business. And as Facebook also offers business pages for that purpose, I started a page I call "CRAYFISH TRAPS BY ARNE".

But like the dog who chases a car, what to do with it if you catch it? Very little has happened on my FB (facebook) page since I started. Now I need your help, dear readers, to teach me what I can do to spread the word about crayfish traps and such. If you have some good idea for me, I'll be all ears. Maybe we can all be "friends" on Facebook. Please send me something on the "Wall" to see what happens. Or should I join Twitter? Please let me know.

Trapper Arne