

# Effectiveness of Continuous-catch Doors for Trapping Wild Pigs

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*Abstract:* Lethal removal by trapping is the most cost- and time-effective means for managing wild pigs (*Sus scrofa*); however, there is much debate regarding the effectiveness of continuous-catch doors (trap doors that allow the entry of additional pigs into the trap after the door initially closes). Our objective was to determine entry rates by wild pigs of root, saloon, and trainer continuous-catch doors. We constructed 26 corral traps on four study areas in east-central and southwest Alabama during the summer 2011. We pre-baited each trap for  $\geq 1$  week to condition wild pigs to freely enter and leave traps, and we used game cameras to verify conditioning and to identify individuals and sounders. We then randomly assigned a trap door to each trap, set the trap to capture only part of each sounder, and used game cameras to record the behavior of non-captured individuals. During capture events after the door closed, sounder members remaining outside the trap made 2.9 visits/trap night (SE = 0.45) averaging 57.8 min/visit (SE = 14.55) to closed traps. Of 222 pig-opportunities (pigs outside of the trap once the door had closed with pigs inside the trap; root  $n = 55$ , saloon  $n = 115$ , trainer  $n = 52$ ) we observed entry rates of 16.4% ( $n = 9$  entries), 0.9% ( $n = 1$  entry), and 1.9% ( $n = 1$  entry) for root, saloon, and trainer doors, respectively. Continuous-catch doors were ineffective in capturing substantial numbers of additional pigs after the door closes. Wildlife managers should weigh the relative cost and benefits of these doors when developing wild pig removal programs.

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