A BOAT-MOUNTED LADDER-STAND FOR INSPECTING DUCK NEST BOXES

Bobby W. Brown
Manager
Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge

ABSTRACT

A boat-mounted ladder-stand was constructed to facilitate inspection of duck nest boxes that were mounted on poles between six and eight feet above water. This device allowed a large number of boxes to be inspected in a short period of time without having to set up and take down a ladder at each box. The ladder-stand was constructed from materials readily available.

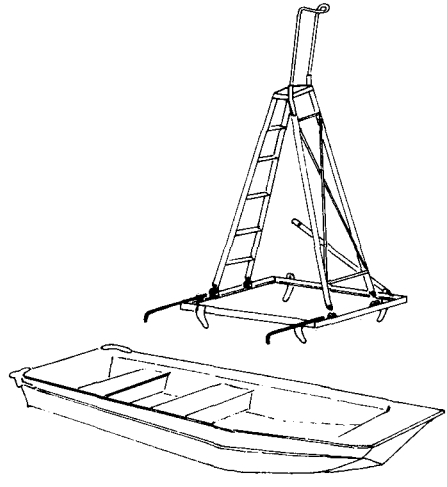
The need to inspect nest boxes, which must be mounted high over water to protect them from floods, often involves a considerable amount of effort. A boat is usually used to transport an extension ladder to each box; the ladder is then set in the water and supported against the tree or pole holding the box. After inspection, the ladder must be extracted from the mud, placed back in the boat, and the procedure repeated at each box.

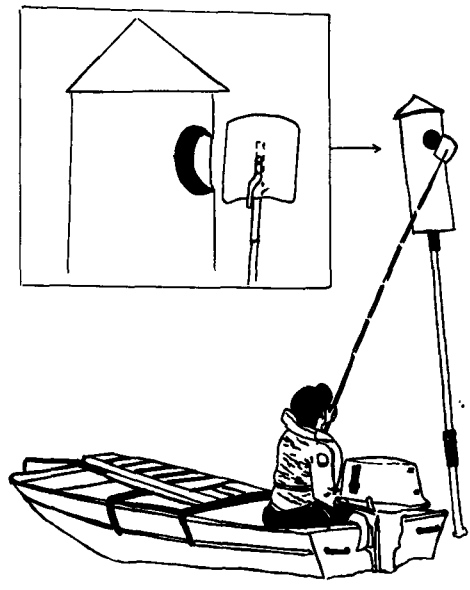
This situation was encountered at the Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge, located near Manila, Arkansas, where all nest boxes erected for Wood Ducks *(Aix sponsa)* are mounted 6 to 8 feet above water.

To facilitate the inspection of these boxes, a stand was constructed of 1½ by ¼ inch angle-iron, which would slip over the gunwales of an aluminum boat. The stand held an eight foot aluminum stepladder at the beam of the boat. The boat had a 56 inch beam and was 16 feet long.

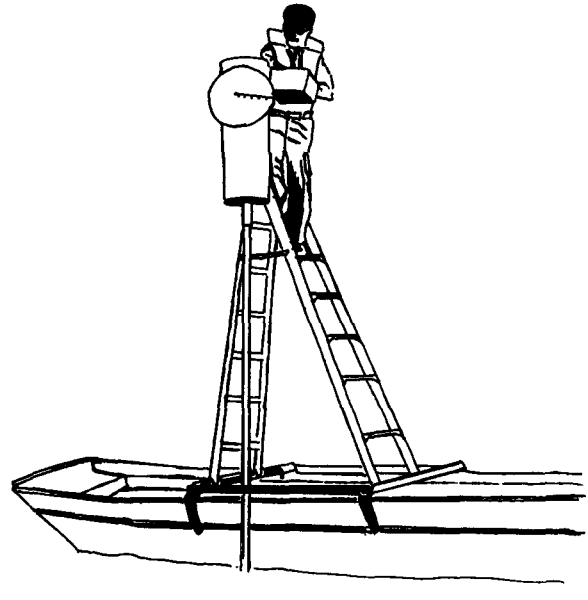
The stand holds itself in place on the boat without bolts or clamps, yet can be slid on or off easily. The ladder can be folded up for travelling by simply pulling a single pin from the front set of legs.

A spring-steel bar, placed on the side of the stand, is used to lock the boat to the box-pole and prevents the boat, or ladder, from tipping while the ladder is being climbed.

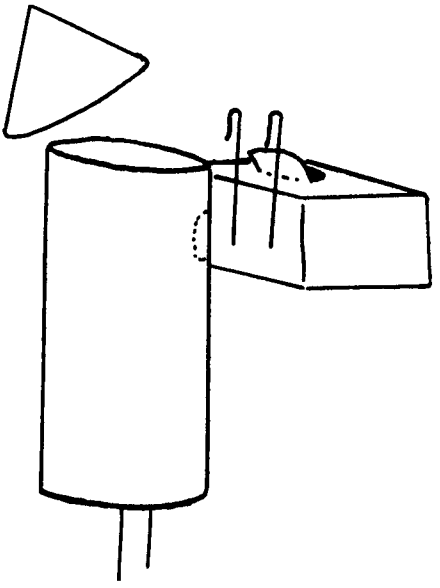




Device used to plug holes of nest boxes when hen is to be captured for banding. Boat-mounted ladder is shown in folded position for transporting.



Ladder-stand being used to inspect duck nest box. Note boat is locked to nest box pole to prevent boat or ladder from tipping over.



Small metal box with flap-lid, hangs on nest box for holding ducklings while they are being tagged. With box it is not necessary to climb back down ladder to tag ducklings.

THE USE OF SWEETGUM AND STORAX AS POSSIBLE ATTRACTANTS FOR BEAVERS[1]

William L. Cooper[2], Robert K. Williams[3], and Dan W. Speaks[4]

INTRODUCTION

An expanding beaver population, coupled with the animal's habit of flooding large areas of land through the building of dams, has created serious problems in many of the southeastern states. In 1967 the Georgia Forestry Commission made a survey of beaver damage in that state. This survey reported that in the period between 1960 and 1967 the loss of commercial wood to beaver damage exceeded 822,000 cords (Moore 1967). The Alabama Forest Products Association made a beaver survey in 1967 and found that an estimated 75,000 to 100,000 forest acres were flooded in Alabama (McMillan 1967). Various studies in Louisiana and Mississippi have shown similar timber losses to beavers in those states. From September 1967 to April 1970, a study was conducted at the Alabama Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit to investigate possible control methods for nuisance beavers. The research was supported by a grant from the Alco Land and Timber Company of Mobile, Alabama. The purpose of this paper is to report one promising bait and/or lure developed during this study.

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[1]A contribution of The Alabama Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit: Auburn University Agricultural Experiment Station, Game and Fish Division of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and the Wildlife Management Institute cooperating. Presented at the 26th Annual Conf. of Southeastern Game and Fish Comm. Knoxville, Tenn. Oct. 22-25, 1972.

[2]Present Address: Georgia Dept. Nat. Resources Game and Fish Division, Route 1, Fitzgerald, Ga.

[3]Present Address: Kinloch Plantation, Georgetown, South Carolina.

[4]Alabama Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama.