

# Chapter 11

## Important Terms

You should know the following terms:

- Powering device
- Multi-strand steel cable
- Non-lethal trapping device
- Lock
- Snare swivel
- Ferrules
- Deer stop
- Immovable object
- Snare extension
- Entanglement situation
- Jump pole
- Leaning pole
- Cable cutters

## Learning Objectives

You should be able to:

- Understand that modern cable snares do not use a powering device, and powering devices are illegal on snares used in Ohio
- Understand a snare can be used as a non-lethal trapping device
- Recognize the parts of a snare: cable, lock, end fastener, ferrules, and deer stops
- Understand that multi-strand steel cable is used for modern snares and is the only material legal for Ohio snares
- Understand that Ohio regulations prohibit powering devices on snare locks
- Understand how a snare works
- Understand that Ohio regulations require that a snare be fastened to an immovable object or stake
- Learn different options for anchoring a snare: stakes, trees, or other large objects
- Understand that wire should never be used to extend a snare
- Learn to use wire to support and stabilize a snare loop
- Understand that a snare can be lethal if an animal gets tangled up at a set and cannot get its feet back on the ground
- Understand that conditions at a set which would allow an animal to get

tangled up is called an entanglement situation

- Identify three entanglement situations: a fence, brush, or a small sapling
- Learn to avoid entanglement by: fastening snares to large trees, staking snares in open areas, checking the set area for entanglement, using shorter snares
- Understand the need to avoid entanglement situations in Ohio because of the risk to domestic animals
- Learn how to set a snare
- Understand that some animals like canines are snared by the neck and other animals like raccoons are snared by the body
- Understand that a snare loop must be adjusted to fit the type of animal you are trying to catch
- Understand that the size of the snare loop and the height at which the snare loop is placed above the ground is determined by the size, shape, and height of the animal.
- Learn how to position snares to take different animals
- Understand that snares could be a problem around deer and livestock
- Learn to avoid deer and livestock by not setting snares in livestock pastures or on deer trails, and using jump poles or leaning poles where deer might be encountered
- Recognize that jump poles or leaning poles can create an undesirable entanglement situation if they are fastened down tightly
- Identify cable cutters as a helpful piece of equipment for snaring
- Understand that snares work best in blind sets and the use of bait or lures close to snares is undesirable

## Chapter 11

# Trapping with Snares

### Snares Past and Present

When you mention snares or snaring to most people, they think of a bent-over pole with a noose fastened to the end of it. This is how snaring was practiced in days-gone-by. Although this outdated misconception of snaring still exists, modern snares and modern snaring methods are significantly different than those of the past.

With the modern cable snare you can hold animals alive and unharmed, and there is no need to use a bent pole or other powering device on a snare. Ohio regulations prohibit the use of any powering device on a snare.

Modern snares are made of stranded steel cable. This cable is extremely strong and resistant to abuse, yet it is flexible enough to form easily into a loop. An animal can't easily break this cable or bite it in two. The modern cable snare also has a locking device and a stop to keep the loop from opening back up once it starts to close. The modern cable snare can be used as a non-lethal trapping device.

This section has been prepared to help familiarize you with the modern cable snare. It is designed to give you the basic knowledge you need to use snares safely and efficiently.

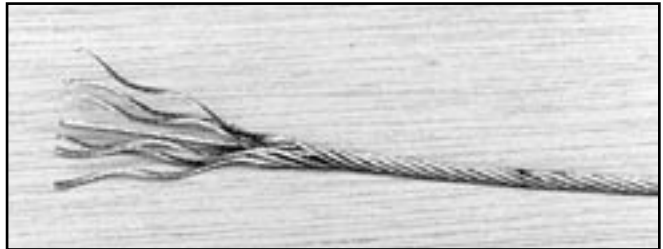
### The Modern Cable Snare

The modern cable snare is made of multi-strand steel cable. Strands of small diameter wire are wound together to make a larger strand. Ohio regulations specify that multi-strand steel cable is the only material that can be used for snares. This cable comes in several different sizes. Cable measuring 3/32 of an inch in diameter is the most popular size for snaring.

Another important part of the modern cable snare is a sliding lock. As the snare loop is pulled closed, the lock slides down the cable. However, the lock will not slide in the opposite direction. This is what keeps the animal from backing out of the snare or shaking the snare off. There are a number of different types of locks. Locks that use springs or other powering devices to hold them closed are not legal for use in Ohio.

Modern cable snares also have some device on the end of the snare for fastening it in place. Most snares have a swivel as a fastening device. Swivels are highly recommended. Snare swivels allow the animal some freedom of movement while it is restrained in the snare. They also help keep the cable from getting badly kinked and twisted. This could possibly cause the cable to break.

Ferrules are used to hold the lock and fastener in place on the snare. These ferrules are hammered or crimped into place on the snare cable.



Modern snares are made of multi-strand steel cable. It is sometimes called aircraft cable. This cable is very strong. This piece of cable has been unraveled to show the individual strands.

The sliding lock is another important part of the modern cable snare. It keeps the loop from opening up after the animal is captured. On this snare you can also see a deer stop crimped to the snare cable.



This snare has a swivel for fastening it in place. You can also see a ferrule crimped on the cable which holds the snare together.



Another component that may be found on a snare is a stop crimped on the cable that prevents the snare loop from closing past a minimum diameter. These are commonly known as deer stops. They allow a deer to shake the snare off, if it gets its foot in one.

## How a Snare Works

A snare does not need a powering device because the animal itself provides the power to close the snare. The snare loop is suspended above a trail or path the animal is expected to take. The animal, walking along, enters the snare loop and continues its forward progress pulling the snare down on itself.

This may sound odd, but if you take into consideration how an animal travels through its environment and the conditions it meets there, this becomes more understandable.

As an animal travels along, it regularly encounters weeds, vines, and small pieces of brush in its path. An animal does not make a detour every time it encounters one of these objects. Instead, it simply pushes its way through the obstruction. If the animal cannot muscle its way through, it will then back up and make a detour.

An animal does not recognize a snare as a danger. On encountering a snare, the animal behaves as if the snare were just another vine or weed and tries to push its way on through. When it finds it cannot break free of the “vine” the animal will try to back out. However at this point, the snare is cinched down on the animal, and the lock keeps the snare from opening up.

## Fastening & Stabilizing Snares

Like any other trapping device, a snare must be fastened in place to hold the animal while it is detained in the snare. Ohio regulations require that a snare be fastened to a solid, immovable object or that it be staked.

One easy way to fasten a snare is to stake it in place as you would a foothold trap. Make sure the stake is long enough and strong enough to hold any animal that might get in the snare. Wood stakes can be used for snares, but many trappers prefer to use steel stakes because they are more durable.

Another way to fasten a snare is to anchor it to an immovable object. This could be a tree or a large log that the animal cannot move. If the path of the target animal comes close to a tree or a log, this would be a good place to construct a set. To fasten a snare to a tree or log use a piece of heavy gauge wire to go completely around the trunk. Pass the wire through the snare swivel and twist it closed.

Sometimes a snare is not quite long enough to reach the object that you want to fasten it to.

In this case, you should use an extension made of snare cable to lengthen the snare. NEVER use wire to extend a snare. A wire snare extension could easily kink and break as the animal struggles in the snare.

A snare must be supported so that the loop hangs vertically and will be in the proper position to intercept the animal. This is called stabilizing a snare. The best way to stabilize a snare is with a piece of wire. One end of the wire is fastened to the snare cable and the other end of the wire is anchored solidly. By bending the wire you can position the snare.

One way to attach the wire to the snare is to bend a small hook in the wire and crimp this onto the snare cable. However, crimping the wire to the snare may interfere with the action of the swivel. Another way to attach the wire to the snare is to bend the end of the wire into the shape of an “N” and thread the snare cable into it.

To solidly anchor the end of the support wire, you can wrap it around a stake or wrap it around a tree or log. You can also anchor the end of the support wire by spearing it into the ground.

Wire in size 11 or 12 gauge, or larger, is best for fastening down and stabilizing snares. You should not, however, use wire to extend the length of a snare.

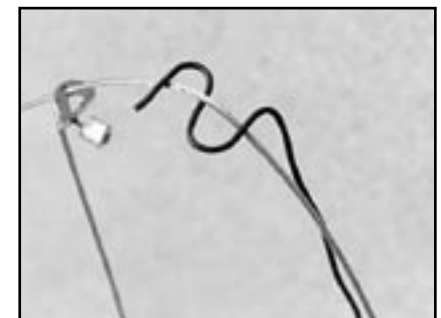
You can fasten a snare by wiring it to a tree. The tree should be large enough so the animal cannot chew it off or break it off.



Snares can also be staked in place. Make sure the stake is long enough to hold the animal.



Use a heavy piece of wire to stabilize the snare and support it.



## Non-lethal Snaring

If an animal detained in a snare is given some freedom of movement, it is very unlikely that the animal can or will pull hard enough on the snare to choke itself. Here, the animal behaves much in the same manner as a pet dog that is leashed with a choker chain. However, under certain conditions and in certain situations, a snare can become a lethal device.

If an animal captured in a snare gets in a position where its feet cannot touch the ground, it could choke. This can happen if an animal gets tangled up in something at a set and cannot get its feet back on the ground. This situation is known as entanglement. By avoiding entanglement situations, you can be relatively certain that your snares will function in a non-lethal manner.

A snare set under a fence would be a good example of an entanglement situation. An animal captured in this snare could climb through or jump over the fence and become entangled. Another example of an entanglement situation would be a snare in a patch of brush. An animal could get the snare tangled up in the brush, be suspended, and choke.

A less obvious entanglement situation can occur if there is a very small sapling tree in the vicinity of the snare. An animal could get tangled around the sapling, and the snare could ride up on the sapling bending it over. The sapling would then act like a spring, constantly pulling upward on the snare and could choke the animal.

A large tree, on the other hand, does not create an entanglement situation. An animal cannot bend over a large tree, and in most instances the animal will not get tangled up on the tree because it cannot circle the tree with the snare any more than once or twice.

One of the best ways to avoid entanglement is to stake your snares in open areas where there is no brush or small trees. An animal captured here will just circle around the stake and has very little chance of being harmed.

When you get ready to place a snare, examine the area for entanglement. It is a good idea to extend the snare in its closed position and circle it around from its fastening point to make sure an animal cannot reach anything on which it can get tangled up. Using shorter snares will help you avoid entanglement. This gives the animal less opportunity to get tangled up.

### Avoiding Entanglement Situations

- Do not set snares in fences.
- Do not set snares in brush patches.
- Do not set snares near small sapling trees.

In Ohio, we have a fairly dense human population. This means the chance of encountering a domestic animal is always present. For this reason, you should avoid entanglement with your snares.

## Setting Snares

To set a snare, the looped end of the snare is suspended over a trail or path that the animal is expected to use. The animal enters the snare, sticking its head through the loop, and draws the snare down on itself.

Not all animals are snared around the neck. You will be more successful snaring some animals like raccoon and beaver if the snare cinches up on their body somewhere behind one or both of their front legs. If these animals are snared around the neck, they can often slip the snare off over their head using their front paws.

Other animals, like canines, have a long tapered head that is very wide just behind their ears. When a snare closes on their neck it is very unlikely they will be able to slip out of it or remove it. It is better to snare these animals by the neck.

To be successful with a snare, you must set it with a specific type of animal in mind. The loop has to be adjusted to fit the specific type of animal you are trying to catch. A snare set for one type of animal is not likely to catch another type of animal unless that animal is of similar size, shape, and height. A snare set for a raccoon might catch an opossum, but it probably would not catch a fox.

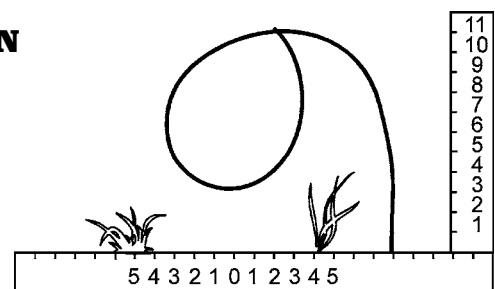
The size of the loop and the distance from the bottom of the loop to the ground must be adjusted to fit the animal you are targeting. You must consider the size of the animal and the height of the animal's head above the ground. Then you must decide whether it is best to catch the animal by the neck or by the body.

For an animal you want to snare by the neck, the snare loop should be just large enough to admit the animal's head. The snare should be positioned so that the bottom of the loop bumps the animal's chest after its head goes through the loop.

## Loop Sizes and Heights for Furbearers

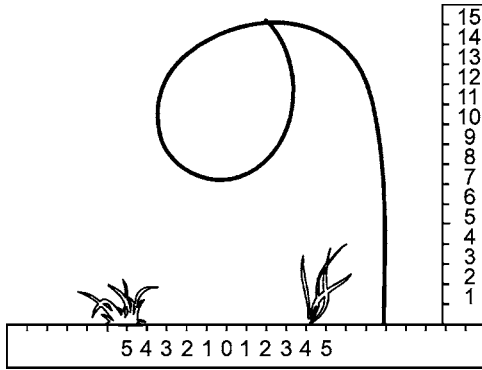
### RACCOON

Loop  
6" to 8"  
Height  
3" to 4"



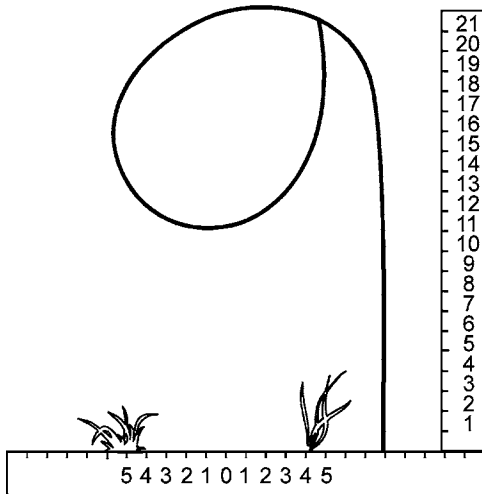
### FOX

Loop  
6" to 8"  
Height  
6" to 8"



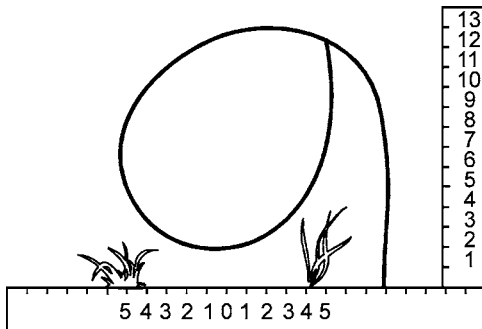
### COYOTE

Loop  
10" to 12"  
Height  
10" to 12"



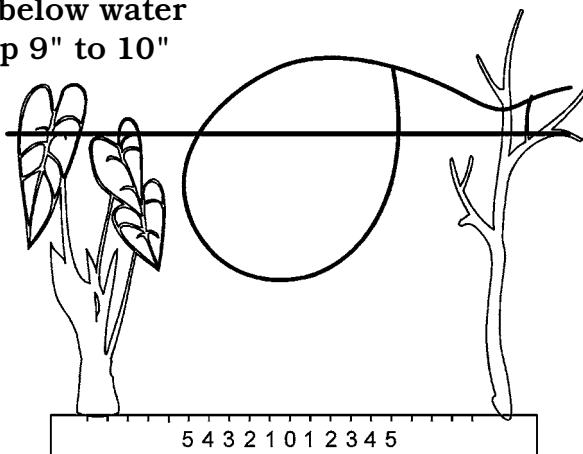
### BEAVER

Loop  
9" to 10"  
Height  
2" to 3"



### BEAVER (Swimming)

Height 1/3 above water  
2/3 below water  
Loop 9" to 10"



To snare an animal by the body, you need a loop big enough to admit the front portion of the animal's body. The loop must be low enough to the ground so that the animal can step through it, but high enough to strike the animal's chest after the animal steps through the snare.

### Avoiding Deer and Livestock

Your snares will be set to take furbearing animals, but there is a possibility that larger animals like deer or livestock could get tangled up in your snares. This is not a significant problem with other traps, like foothold traps, because the traps are not big enough to grip a large animal's foot. However, with a snare, the animal could get its foot through the snare loop.

Some of the Ohio regulations are designed to deal with this problem. Snares, or any other trapping devices, cannot be set in paths commonly used by humans or domestic animals. This means snares cannot be set in livestock trails.

The best way to avoid deer and livestock is to avoid setting your snares where these animals are likely to be encountered. You should not set snares within the confines of a pasture where livestock are present. Deer are free roaming wild animals, and you should take measures to avoid catching them in your snares. Do not set snares in trails that might be used by deer.

There are other instances when you may want to set a snare on a trail that is not used by deer, but still the possibility exists that a deer might take that trail. In this case, you can construct the set to make the deer avoid your snare.

You can do this by placing a pole over your snare. This is sometimes called a "jump pole." The pole should be about the size of your wrist or larger. You can place the pole horizontally over your snare and support it on each end. This looks like the goal posts on a football field. With the pole just above the snare, the deer will jump or step over the pole, while the target animal will go under the pole and into the snare.

A leaning pole is another way to steer the deer away from your snare. This can be done where a trail passes close to a tree. You can lean a pole against the tree at an angle with the snare between the pole and the tree. A deer will walk around the

### Avoiding Deer and Livestock

- Do not set snares on trails used by deer.
- Do not set snares in pastures where livestock are present.
- Use a pole over your snare when and where deer might be encountered.

## Sets with Snares



A pole placed horizontally over your snare will make deer jump over the snare. This is called a jump pole.

Leaning a pole against a tree like this will make deer walk around the outside of your snare. Make sure there is room for the deer to get around the pole.



outside of the pole and avoid the snare. Make sure there is room on the outside of the pole for the deer to detour around it.

If you use a pole, prop it up so that it will not fall down easily. Do not, however, wire or permanently fasten the pole in place. This could create an entanglement situation. An animal should be able to knock the pole over if it gets the snare around it.

### Sets with Snares

Snaring requires a minimum amount of equipment for constructing sets. One special tool you may need for snaring is a set of cable cutters. These cutters are specially designed to cut steel cable. It is nearly impossible to cut this cable with any type of regular pliers.

Snares work best in trail or blind sets where animals will be walking along. The animal's forward progress is what closes the snare loop. You should not use lure or bait close to your snares. That could make an animal stop or hesitate as it approaches the snare. Snares do not work well at lured or baited sets.

Here is a set for coyote. There is a fence in the background. The snare has been set away from the fence so any animal caught in it will not be able to reach the fence.



Here is a set for fox made in the woods on a trail. A pole has been leaned over the snare in case a deer comes down the trail. There is nothing within reach of the snare for the animal to tangle up on.



This snare is set for coon in a trail through tall grass. There is no entanglement here and no danger of an animal being harmed by the snare.



Here is a snare set for beaver where the animals are climbing up over a creek bank. This is a clear area with no entanglement.



The following are examples of sets that can be made with snares. For these depictions, the snares have been painted white to make them easier for you to see. In actual practice, you would not use a white snare unless you were trapping in snow. To remove the shine from new snares and make them less visible, boil the snares for about a half-hour in a baking soda solution.



## Chapter 11 Study Guide

### Review Questions

1. The five main parts of a snare are:
  - A. \_\_\_\_\_, B. \_\_\_\_\_,
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_, D. \_\_\_\_\_,
  - E. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Snares are made of \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 and can only be used \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_.
3. A snare is best stabilized with the aid of a \_\_\_\_\_ and must be fastened to an \_\_\_\_\_ object or \_\_\_\_\_.
4. To catch a specific animal in a snare, the snare must be set at the proper \_\_\_\_\_ and have the proper \_\_\_\_\_ diameter.
5. Snares should be positioned to keep the animal from being \_\_\_\_\_ and injuring itself.
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 pliers are needed to cut snare cable.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ devices cannot be used with snares in Ohio.