



Tom Houska's home-built hydraulic tree shears mounts on a boom he made for his tractor loader.



Shears operate off a 2 1/2-in. hydraulic cylinder that opens up to 8 in.

Tractor Shears Snip Branches, Trim Trees

Tom Houska built a hydraulic tree shears so he can cut dead limbs from the comfort of his tractor instead of standing on top of a shaky ladder. The retired construction worker has plenty of trees to trim on his rural Mahanomen, Minn., property.

"We live on a farmstead and some trees are 100 plus years old. I mounted the trimmer on a boom I made for my tractor loader,"

Houska says. "It also works great for pruning evergreen trees."

He made the shears out of 3/4-in. mild steel and hard-surfaced it with welding rods. It operates off a 2 1/2-in. hydraulic cylinder. The shears open to 8 in. but only cut hardwood branches up to 4 in. and softwood up to 6 in. He can also cut unwanted trees in hedges and underground roots.

"This shears will go as high as 25 ft. It turns 180 degrees to any angle," Houska says, so he can shape evergreens. "It's probably not as fast as a professional trimmer, but we can do it on our own."

He adds that his shears have an unexpected benefit after the branch is cut.

"You don't have to get out and pick it up. I pinch the branch a little, pick it up and drop

it into the trailer," Houska says.

The shears unit at the end of the boom weighs about 200 lbs., and Houska built it from materials he had on the farm. The most expensive parts were the hydraulic hoses to the tractor.

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"Breakaway" electric fence is made from straightened-out metal clothes hangers that are separated by lengths of plastic conduit spacers.

"Breakaway" Electric Creek Fence

Mike Wargo, Williamsport, Ind., used metal clothes hangers and plastic conduit to run a "breakaway" electric fence across a creek that runs through his pasture.

"It's an easy, cheap way to keep livestock from escaping," says Wargo. "The electric fence that surrounds the pasture is about 7 ft. above the creek. I didn't want to install a barbed wire fence under it because every time the creek flooded, logs and other debris would take the fence out and I'd have to fix it again."

To solve the problem, he added a second strand of high tensile wire about 2 ft. below the original fence. He uses a tin snips to cut the hook off each clothes hanger and then straightens them out. Once the clothes hanger is straight, he uses a pliers to bend one end into a small hook. Then he hooks the straightened clothes hangers over the wire. He uses a wire cutters to trim off the bottom end of

the wires to within about 1 ft. of the ground, following the contour of the land.

The plastic conduits have a pre-molded slit in them, allowing them to be snapped over the wire. The conduits serve as spacers to keep the wires apart.

"I've got four of these 'breakaway' fences on my farm and they really work good. I haven't had any problems with them in two years," says Wargo. "The hooks allows the hanger wires to sway back in a flood, allowing water, trash, and other material to flow through without damaging the fence. They also maintain electrical contact while keeping the hangers from coming off the fence wire."

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Cone-shaped Pressure Guard mounts at end of spray wand, deflecting water and debris outward instead of straight back at you.



"Pressure Guard" For Pressure Washers

"It keeps water and debris from splashing back onto you," says Kevin Kuhbacher about his new "Pressure Guard" that attaches to the spray wand on any pressure washer.

The Pressure Guard is a 4-in. dia. cone made from heavy duty, clear plastic that mounts at the end of the spray wand with a couple of screws.

"The cone deflects water and debris outward instead of straight back at you," says Kuhbacher. "It works great for hosing off machinery, inside dairy barns, or anywhere else a pressure washer is used. I came up with the idea when I worked at a nearby coal mine. I spent a lot of time using a pressure washer to clean off equipment and got a lot of grease and dirt on me. Now I stay a lot cleaner."

"Several local businesses are already using my Pressure Guard, and the operators are



The 4-in. dia. cone is made from heavy duty plastic and is held on by a couple of screws.

so impressed they no longer want to use a pressure washer without the guard."

The Pressure Guard sells for \$27 plus S&H. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Safety Products, LLC, 213 Primrose Drive, Gillette, Wyoming 82716 (ph 307 680-8405 or 307 680-8341; safetyproductsllc@yahoo.com).

"Cobweb Catcher" For Riding Mowers

"My wife got tired of having to brush off cobwebs every time she mowed between the trees in our orange grove. I solved the problem by mounting a cobweb catcher on front of our Deere riding mower," says Phillip Fleming, Sarasota, Florida.

The rectangular "cobweb catcher" measures 3 1/2 ft. high and 2 ft. wide and is made from 3/4-in. dia. plastic pipe. It mounts on a frame made from 1 1/4-in. box steel that Fleming welded on front of the mower. A 3/4-in. dia. bolt is welded onto each end of the frame. He heated the bottom ends of the pipes so they would conform to the bolts, then glued the pipes in place.

"It looks a little odd but it works. My wife had been carrying a stick and waving it around in order to break up cobwebs as she mowed," says Fleming. "There are a lot of cob webs in our orange grove. Some of the trees are up to 25 ft. apart, but there are still cob webs between them because the spiders



"Cobweb catcher" is made from 3/4-in. dia. plastic pipe. It mounts on a steel frame welded onto front of mower.

have no trouble jumping that far.

"We use it on our 1993 Deere 240 riding mower, and I also made one for our Deere 318 riding mower. I used cpvc pipe because it flexes and doesn't get brittle from exposure to the sun like regular pvc does."

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