



Robert Payne trains hawks and falcons to keep hungry birds from destroying high-value crops.

## Birds Of Prey Protect High-Value Crops

Birds of prey chasing nuisance birds to prevent them from destroying crops is about as natural as you can get when it comes to pest control, says Robert Payne, part owner of Advanced Avian Abatement. He and his business partner, Justin Robertson, have figured out how to make their passion for falconry pay by contracting with large fruit producers to protect ripening fruit from swarms of hungry birds.

Payne travels from Kansas to Washington State in the summer with up to five birds that include Aplomado falcons, peregrines and Harris hawks. He stays with the birds from sunup to sunset, releasing one bird at a time to patrol and chase birds away from ripening cherry and blueberry crops. Contracts with producers usually last about two months, beginning before the fruit ripens through harvest.

While nuisance birds get used to propane cannons, noisemakers and scarecrows, they stay away from birds that can eat them, Payne says.

Because he works with protected birds of prey and is dealing with songbirds, the business is highly regulated. The Fish and Wildlife Service created regulations to allow abatement using raptors to control pest birds less than a decade ago.

“The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service protects the birds we are hazing and the raptors. Everyone has to follow the letter of the law, of which there are many,” he explains.

Using birds to control birds is a developing market; there are others doing similar work in other states. Payne says the biggest challenge is locating customers who can benefit from the service.

For him, it’s an ideal job to work outside with his beloved birds.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Advanced Avian Abatement, 8350 W. 191 St., Stilwell, Kansas 66085 (ph 816 507-9275; info@advancedavianabatement.com; www.advancedavianabatement.com).

## Have You Tried PLASTEX?

It has been around for 16 years but most people still haven’t heard about PLASTEX, an amazing moldable plastic repair kit that’s used for everything from filling holes in wood, plastic, or glass to restoring damaged threads.

“It becomes part of whatever you’re fixing,” says inventor Jim Lewis of G.T. Motorsports.

Customers appreciate how easy it is to use. Though it comes in 2 parts, a powder and a liquid, there isn’t a specific ratio and it sets up completely in an hour.

Videos on the PLASTEX website show different ways to use it – putting the powder on the piece being repaired, then adding the liquid to blend in, or mixing the liquid into the powder before applying it.

To fabricate a new part, such as a broken tab on a plastic part, warm the kit’s reusable molding bar to 120° F until it’s like putty, and wrap it around another tab. Then let it harden before removing it.

“It’ll mold in such detail that if paint has a superficial scratch, it replicates that,” Lewis says. “And the mold is reusable. We sell larger sheets for bigger projects.”

To repair a stripped thread, coat a lubricated screw with PLASTEX and screw it in. Once it dries, remove the screw.

“PLASTEX doesn’t shrink or expand so you get the same exact size,” Lewis says.

Originally marketed to the motorcycle and automotive markets, the repair kits are now used in hundreds of industries. PLASTEX



PLASTEX can be used for everything from making new tabs on plastic housings to restoring damaged threads.

can be used as fill to bridge gaps and repair pvc and irrigation pipe. It even cures in cold temperatures to make repairs on snowmobiles.

PLASTEX is available on the company’s website as well as through distributors, Lewis says. It comes in black, white and clear and starts at \$13.95 for a small kit to make a tab or repair a 3-in. crack. Several size kits and refills are available. Check out the website for details and how-to videos.

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Reader Inquiry No. 89

## Song Lures Sparrows To Trap

With a few chirps and a piece of bread, a new sparrow trap from Bird Barrier captures sparrows inside or outside buildings, says Cameron Riddell, co-developer of the trap and president of Bird Barrier.

The trap is usually set up high, with bread held in place by 2 wires as bait. “The main thing that makes it work is the audio component, a sparrow call. Sparrows land on top of the trap out of curiosity,” Riddell says.

That releases a lever and the bird falls into a box.

The trap is humane and hygienic, Riddell notes. Currently the trap only works for one bird at a time, but Bird Barrier expects to offer a multiple catch model soon.

The Sparrow Trap Door sells for about \$150 through Bird Barrier. The audio traps are powered by three AA batteries that last up to a week, or by an optional power cord.



Picture on right shows the Trap Door with a piece of bread in position and trap closes when the bird jumps on the little perch, and the bird falls into box.

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Reader Inquiry No. 90