

"Cribs" Create Young Tree Habitat for Wildlife

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Don't have the money for 8' high fencing to protect the shrubs you planted for wildlife on your property? Don't have the knowledge of how to even go about constructing an 8' high fence? Wondering what to do with the fence when you no longer need it? About ready to give up on planting shrubs for wildlife?

Do not give up! Go with CRIBS instead. Cribs are cheaper, easy to construct if you can swing a hammer, easy to move, will protect your high-dollar plants, and are ideal for the owner of small parcels of land.

Cribs help create that early successional, shrub, young trees habitat that is disappearing across the eastern United States, particularly in Pennsylvania. Young trees need hugs too, so put up those cribs and protect those young shrubs and trees on your property.

Deer do not like to be in enclosed areas; their survival depends upon their fleetness of foot and ability to put distance between them and a pursuing predator; hence, the beauty of cribs. Cribs are small oval fences about 8' across and 13' long. The area inside the cribs is just small enough to make a deer think about four times and then decide not to jump inside the crib to eat the high-value shrubs you just planted for other wildlife.

We have been using cribs for about ten years on our property with much success on black chokeberry, crabapples, winterberry, high-bush cranberry, nannyberry viburnum, high-bush blueberry, hawthorne, gray dogwoods, silky dogwoods, wild plum, etc.

The Allegheny Chapter and Upland Bird Hunt Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society also use cribs on their woodcock and grouse habitat work to create thickets of shrubs on their landscape restoration projects.

It takes the following to create one crib: 50' of plastic orange safety fencing or woven wire fencing of a four-foot height, 10 five-foot wooden or metal stakes, 50 plastic cable ties of 8" length, and one large-size hammer (I use an axe head).

Lay the stakes out in an oval to cover a circumference of 50'. Install ten stakes to support the fence. Use five cable ties per stake to attach the fencing to the stakes. Voila! One crib.

All of the materials can be purchased at most hardware stores, Tractor Supply, building suppliers, or, if these routes fail, purchase the materials from places like Forestry Suppliers, Inc. or Ben Meadows.

Do not give up on creating thickets for wildlife – go with cribs!

Contact Information

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