

Deer Traps

I was asked by a member of the NATCA to write an article about deer traps. My knowledge of deer traps was limited, but I am always interested in researching a new topic. I limited my research to manufactured, North American style traps and excluded hand forged or trap styles from other countries. I found three companies had traps advertised as deer traps: Oneida Community, Triumph and Herter's. Even though Herter's were made in Japan, I included them as their base of operations was in the US.

The deer trap that I found the most information on was the Newhouse #4 and #14. The 1865 Newhouse Trapper's Guide discusses a #4 as a beaver trap. An extra set of jaws with teeth

was constructed expressly for taking deer. The jaws could be purchased separately and inserted in place of the ordinary jaws.

In the 1887 Trapper's Guide, a #4 deer trap is noted. The trap is identical to the #4 beaver trap except the jaws have an offset to prevent

breaking the deer's leg. The jaws had teeth sufficiently close together to prevent the deer from pulling its hoof out of the trap.

A 1908 Sears catalog shows a #14 deer trap. The trap had heavier and stiffer springs with offset jaws which allow the springs to rise higher when the animal's leg is in the trap. The jaws had teeth. The 1914 Trapper's Guide also shows the #14 trap.

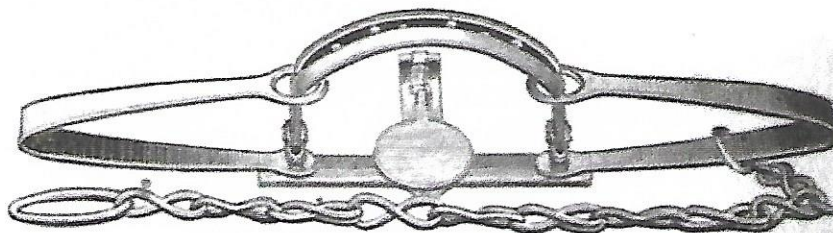
The following excerpt was taken from the 1865 Trapper's Guide. "For taking deer, the trap must be a strong one and the jaws should be spiked and shaped with an offset, so that when sprung, the jaws will remain open about half an inch to prevent breaking the bone. The trap should be placed in the path of the

deer where it crosses a stream or enters a lake. The trap should be set under water and concealed by some covering. If it is as heavy as it ought to be (say of three or four pounds weight), it should not be fastened at all, or even clogged, as the animal is very active and violent when taken and will be sure to break loose by tearing off a limb or smash the trap, if its motions are much impeded. If the trap is left loose, the deer, when caught, will make a few desperate plunges and then lie down and will seldom be more than ten or fifteen rods from where it was taken. When the hunter approaches, the deer will make a few more plunges, but can easily be dispatched."

Triumph advertised a #315 High Grip as their deer trap in their 1924 and 1925 Trapping Tricks booklets. This trap does not have an offset nor teeth which is completely different from what Newhouse recommended in a deer trap.

Herter's made a #87 Custom Deer Trap. The advertisement describes the trap as a remake of an old Hudson Bay trap and not a trap for actual use on deer. The advertisement also states that the trap could be used to hold fireplace tools, scrape off the bottom of shoes, or remove boots and overshoes. There was a disclaimer saying that it was illegal to trap deer. The Herter's #121 was advertised as a deer trap in 1977.

NO. 4 "DEER" TRAP.



Identical with No. 4 Beaver, except that the jaws have an "offset" to prevent their breaking the deer's leg, and are furnished with teeth sufficiently close together to prevent the animal from drawing its hoofs out.

Of the three companies that produced a deer trap, only Oneida Community appeared to be seriously researching, developing and marketing the trap. The trap that Triumph marketed for a short time conflicted with everything that the Oneida Community recommended a deer trap have. The Herter's deer traps were more for collecting and display than actual usage on deer.

References

The Trapper's Guide. S. Newhouse. First Edition. 1865.

The Trapper's Guide.

S. Newhouse. Eighth Edition. 1887.

The Trapper's Guide. S. Newhouse. Twelfth Edition. 1914.

Trapping Tricks. Triumph Trap Co. 1924.

Herter's Ancient Hudson Bay Custom Deer Trap. Herter's Catalog.

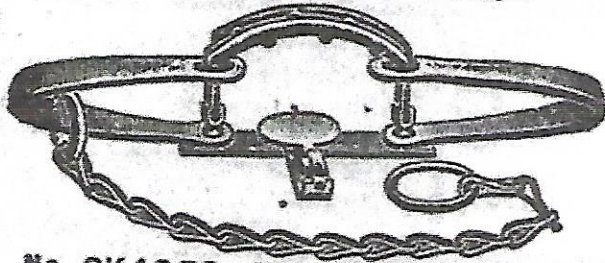
If anyone has information contrary to what is written in this article, I encourage them to respond via mail, email, phone or in the magazine.

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1887 Trappers Guide ↑

A quote from a Mr. Gunter, a Canadian trapper, is included in the Trapper's Guide. He gave the directions below for trapping deer in winter. "Fell a maple or basswood tree near where deer haunt. These trees furnish their favorite browse. Make a small hole in the snow, close to the top of the tree. Set your trap, lower it into the hole and shove it to one side, eighteen or twenty inches, through the snow. Finally take some deer scent, obtained from the glands on the hind legs of a deer, and which has a very strong odor, and rub it on your trap. This done, when the deer come to feed on the twigs of the fallen tree, you will be pretty sure to take one."

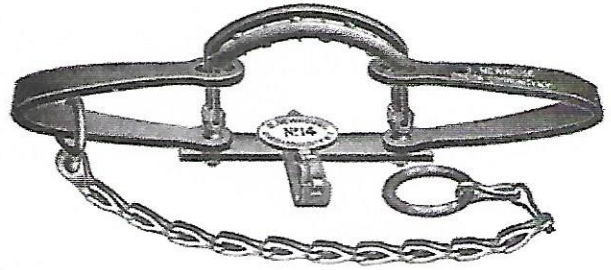
Newhouse Deer Trap.



No. 6K4052 Newhouse Deer Trap No. 14, with chain. This trap is the same in size as the No. 6K4041, but has heavier and stiffer springs, and offset jaws, which allow the springs to rise higher when the animal's leg is in the trap, and is furnished with teeth sufficiently close to prevent the animal from drawing its foot out. Spread of jaws, 6½ inches. Weight, 3 pounds 2 ounces.
 Price, 6 for \$4.99; each.....34c
 If by mail, postage extra, each, 64 cents.

↑ 1908 Sears catalog

NO. 14 NEWHOUSE TRAP

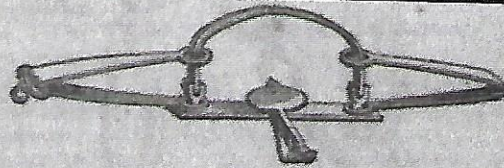


Spread of Jaws, 6½ inches

This trap is the same in size as the No. 4 Beaver, but has heavier and stiffer springs and offset jaws which allow the springs to raise higher when the animal's leg is in the trap and is furnished with teeth sufficiently close to prevent the animal from pulling its foot out.

↑ No. 14 Newhouse

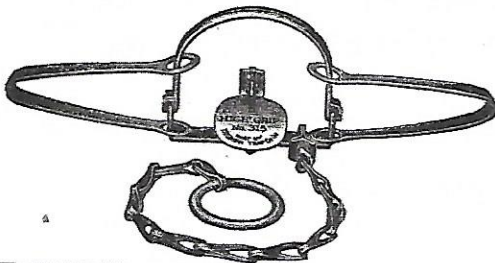
No. 4.



1865 Trappers Guide→

No. 4 is called the BEAVER TRAP. The jaws spread six inches and a half. It is adapted to the wolf or the lynx.— Extra sets of jaws with teeth constructed expressly for taking deer, are made to fit this trap, and can be had separately, or may be inserted in the place of the ordinary jaws.

No. 315 Deer Trap

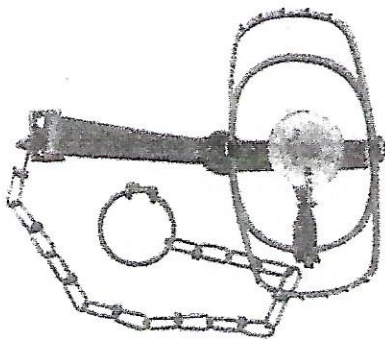


No. 315 "HIGH GRIP" with plain jaws, not offset is used by Trappers seeking a large spread, greater than a No. 4. No. 315 has stiff springs, pivot locks, the high quality flat link "Everhold" steel Chain, size B.

For Wolf, Coyote, Lynx, Cougar, Mountain Lion, etc.

Jaw Spread 8". Dozen weigh 32 lbs.

↑ 1924 Triumph Trapping Tricks



← Herter's 87 Deer Trap

Herter's No. 87 pan →

