

A seine and a bag seine.

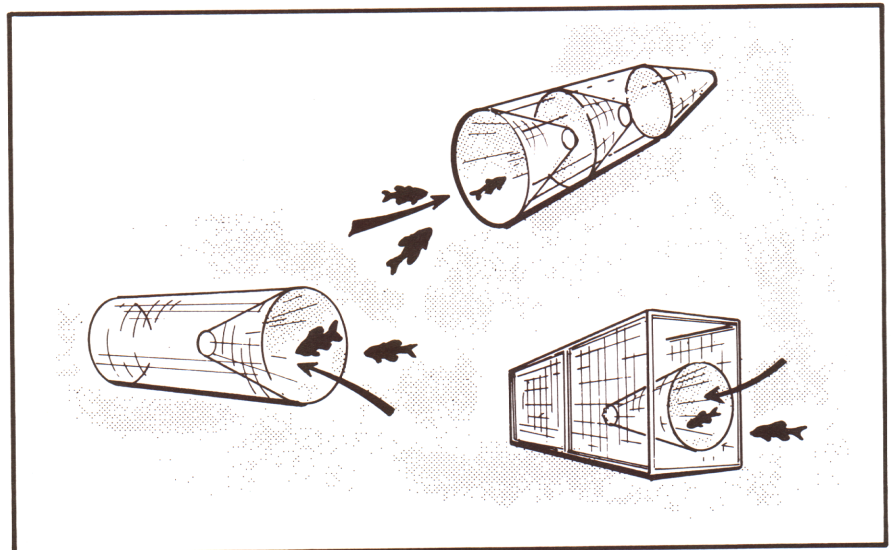
shallow water or onto shore. Such shoreline seining, even when repeated all around the pond, usually achieves a far less complete catch than with a seine that spans the pond and is of proper depth.

Draw the seine so that the bottom edge stays ahead of the upper edge. Many fish escape if a seine rolls up at the bottom as it is pulled along.

To salvage bass, large panfish, or minnows and return them to the pond uninjured, pocket the seine in shallow water at the end of the haul, rather than dragging it ashore. Rolling or sandwiching the net can greatly harm fish by bruising them and by removing their slimy covering and scales, thus increasing susceptibility to infection and disease. Minnows are very prone to such injury—especially in hot weather.

To “thin out” populations of bluegills or other sunfishes, seine frequently in the warm season when there is almost continual hatching of sunfish. Remove panfish that are less than 6 inches (15 cm) long, and return the over-6-inchers plus any bass or channel catfish (not bullheads!). This amounts to selective breeding for the trait of fast growth—while making room for that growth to occur.

Keep seining until about 80 per-



Various kinds of fish traps.

cent of the pond’s estimated summer poundage of panfish has been removed. Estimating the total weight of panfish in a pond is difficult, and it is best to consult a professional biologist in your local area on this.

Seining is hard work but can be fun. It can provide useful information about the fish population but can also give misleading impressions. Bass and carp, especially the older ones, are adept at avoiding nets. When you seine up only small bass or carp, don’t conclude that big ones aren’t there.

Live-Trapping

Fish traps may be useful for reducing populations in ponds that have obstacles to seining. An effective trap can be made of ½-inch (1-cm) hardware cloth on wooden framing.

Use traps with or without “wings,” which are like fences extending outward from the mouth of the trap. They guide fish toward the opening. Wings can be any length that is convenient.

Place traps in water which is just deep enough to cover them, parallel