HILLTOP SPECIALTIES, LLC

Manufacturing Attractive Bird Products

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Mix'nMatch Gourd Rack

SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS: Read and understand all of the instructions and cautions prior to the assembly and installation of the gourd system. Assemble and install gourd system only to the following instructions as improper installation could result in damage or serious injury. When installing, be aware that the edges of aluminum may be sharp.

LOCATION Your gourd system should be as far away from trees as possible. An average minimum distance of 40 feet away from trees is required. Martins like wide open flight paths around their housing. Think of your martin housing being an airport and the martin as the airplane. Martins prefer to have two or more runways to land and take off. Also, martin housing should be no closer than 25 feet or no further than 120 feet from human housing. Martins like to be close to people.

STEP 1: Using a post hole digger, dig a hole 36" deep by 9" diameter. Depending on your soil conditions, a large diameter hole may be needed. Remove the 1-1/2" square steel ground stake from the aluminum pole. The painted end with a piece of welded angle along the side is the end which is to be above ground. The welded clip at the opposite end will be at the bottom of hole. The welded clip is for shipping purposes. Stand the ground stake in the center of your hole. Fill the hole with wet premixed cement to ground level. Be sure the ground stake is plumb and leave 21" above the cement. Also fill the inside of the ground stake with cement, to prevent water from accumulating and freezing inside. The pole will slide over the ground stake later, so be sure to wipe clean the ground stake of any excess cement. The dimensions above require 2 bags of dry cement mix available at your local building store.

NOTE: The following steps will refer to a hub. The hub is the 3" square aluminum tube 12" long. See photo in step 2.

STEP 2: Attach the 3" long piece of aluminum angle to the hub. Insert two 1/4 x 3/4" bolts from the inside of the hub so that the bolts extend outward. Secure with 1/4" lock nuts.

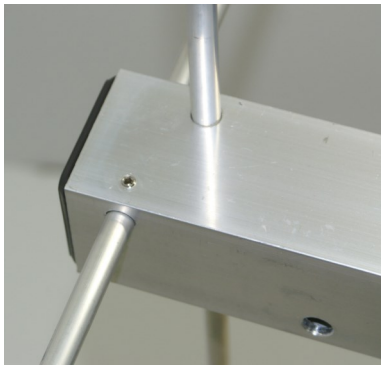
STEP 3: Attach the four long pieces of aluminum angle to the hub as shown. The holes in the hub are threaded. Use eight 1/4 x 1/2 bolts with 1/4" lock washers. The angle is turned with the flat side being turned down so that martins can perch on the angle arms.

STEP 4: Lay the bottom section of pole (section with no holes) onto a 5 gallon pail or similar object. Slide the splice support of the top section (section with holes at one

end) into either end of the bottom section. The two sections are held together by friction and gravity once raised.

STEP 5: Slide both perch rods into the top two holes in the pole. Center both rods and secure with two ¼" set screws and allen wrench included with the hardware.

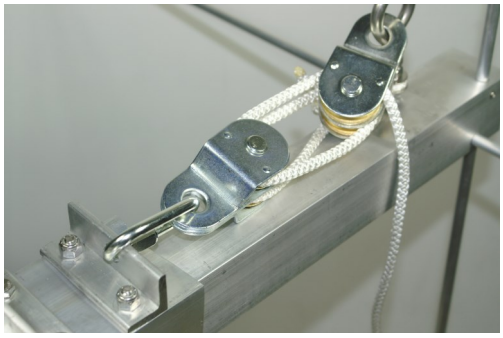
STEP 6: Insert the black cap into the top end of the pole. The cap is held in place by friction. The black cap is important to keep water from filling the inside of the pole.



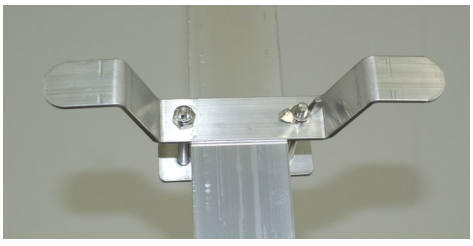
STEP 7: Orient the pole so that the remaining hole, at the top of the pole, is vertical and on the left half side of the pole as shown in the photo. Orient the hub so the quick link hole (the hole located on the 3" angle attached to the hub) is at the top . Insert the bottom end of the pole into the top end of the hub and slide the hub upwards to the top of the pole.

STEP 8: Remove the locknut from the eyebolt and insert the eyebolt into the remaining 3/8" hole at the top of the pole (See photo). The split, in the eye, of the eyebolt should be turned upward so the pulley will hang freely and the eyebolt will not open with the weight of the hub. Reattach the locknut and tighten with wrench.

STEP 9: Open the quick link, which is attached to the double pulley, and insert into the hole located on the 3" angle attached to the hub. The rope should not be twisted between the two pulleys. Retighten the quick link with a 13mm wrench. Remove the rubber bands from the rope.



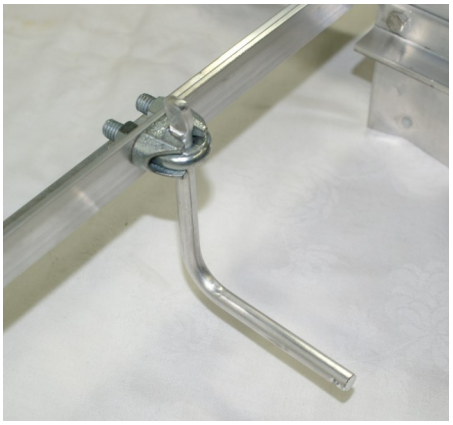
STEP 10: Towards the bottom, attach the rope winder to the pole at your desired height using two 1/4 x 2-3/4" bolts with 1/4 flange nuts. The rope winder needs to be oriented so that when the rope is wound, the rope extends straight down from the eyebolt. The rope can not be twisted around the pole or excessive wear will occur.



STEP 11: Your gourd system is now ready to be raised. The lower you keep the hub on the pole when erecting, the easier it is to balance. Obtain assistance when erecting as working with objects above your head can cause serious injury. Set the gourd system, with pole, vertically over the

ground stake and slide the pole down to ground level

STEP 12: Attach the gourd arms to the long angle pieces using the 3/8” cable clamps as shown in the photo. The gourd arm has a flat end to keep the arm from sliding out of the cable clamp. It is very important to keep the clamp tight so the gourd does not rotate or fall. You may position the gourd in any direction you choose.



STEP 13: Vertical gourd may require their hanging holes to be enlarged to 3/8”. Slide the gourd onto the arm and insert a hitch pin into the small hole, at the end of the arm, to keep the gourd from sliding off.

STEP 14: Raise the gourd system by standing 3 feet from the pole, clear of any gourds that will be above you, and pull down on the rope to slide the hub upward on the pole. Make sure the rope comes down in front directly below the eyebolt. Excessive wear will occur if the rope will rub against the sides or gourd arms. Once the hub is raised, wind the excess rope around the rope winder.

CAUTION: **For your safety, stand far enough away from the gourd system that you are clear of any gourds that are overhead, when raising and lowering the system. Do not let the rope slip in your hands or serious injury may occur. Using non-slip gloves makes raising and lowering both easier and safer.**

CARING FOR YOUR GOURD SYSTEM: Oil the pulleys once a year to keep them working smoothly. It is recommended waxing the aluminum pole once a year with car wax. Remove the nest and clean the gourds at the end of each season. It is highly recommended to store the complete system inside for winter storage. Check all the bolts to make sure they are all tight before putting the system up each spring. Inspect the rope for any signs of wear. If wear should occur, replace immediately with ¼” polyester rope.