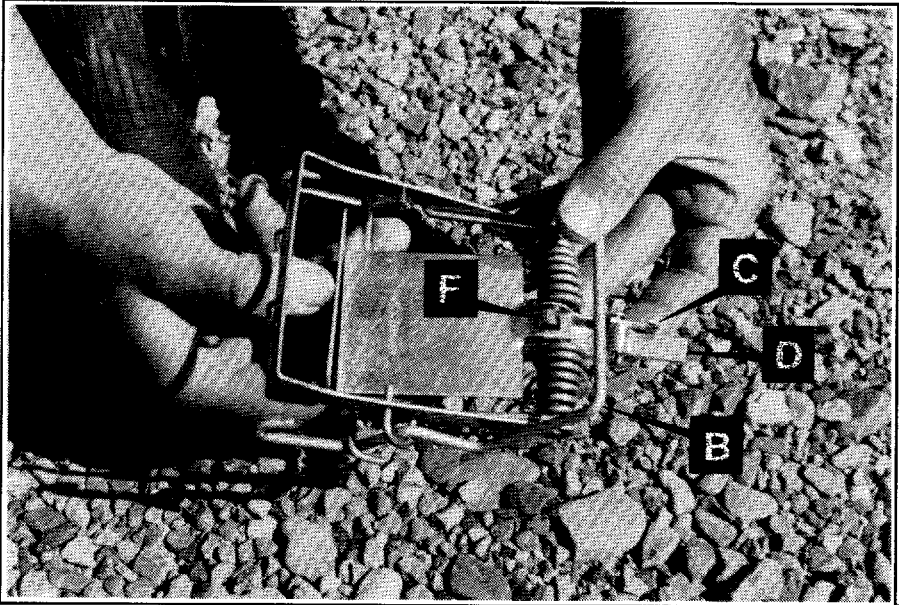


Fig. 10 (above) and 11 (below) Setting a Fenn trap (see text for details). (C. O'Donnell)



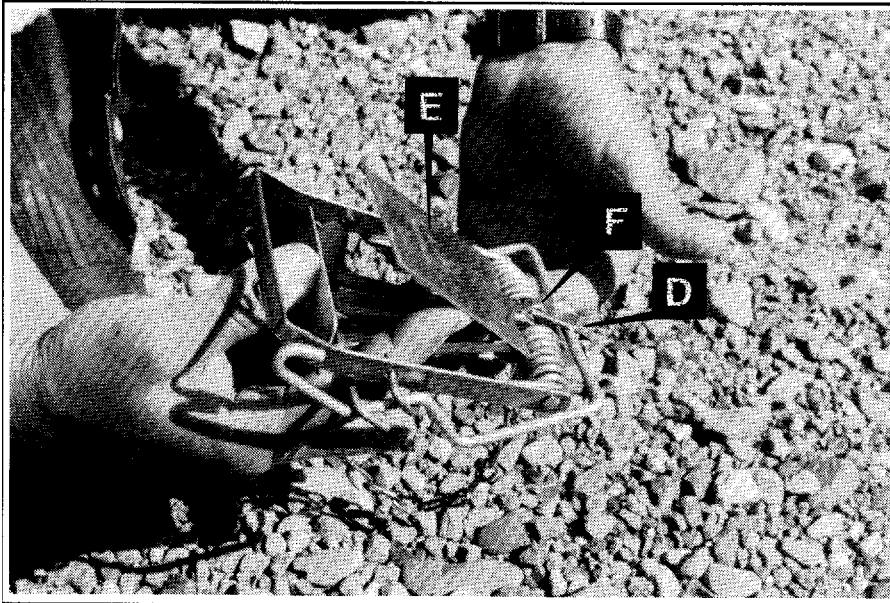


Fig. 12 Setting a Fenn trap (see text for details). (C. O'Donnell)

remember to slip the safety catch off. By using this method to set the trap your fingers are never between the jaws of the trap (nice for the fingers).

Traditional gamekeepers always set the trap in a depression in the ground and cover the treadle with leaves or soil, and this placement is recommended by the manufacturer. But trials show that uncamouflaged traps capture just as many stoats as camouflaged ones. Camouflaged traps take longer to set (>5 minutes) and have a higher failure rate, because litter sometimes clogs the trigger mechanism.

Before setting out a new batch of traps for the first time, you should try to get the artificial smell off them. A good method that also helps to retard rust is to soak them in a fish-based oil such as "Fishoilene". This treatment should be repeated at intervals. Other trappers advocate boiling them, or leaving them out to "weather". If you are using ordinary (unfloored) tunnels, it is best to return the traps to base during the off season; brush off any rust, oil and completely release the spring, and hang up by the chain in a dry place. Traps in floored tunnels are better protected and can be left out, but should still be brushed clean and painted or sprayed with oil occasionally.