



Timothy Russell

BRDs

Bycatch Reduction Devices

Terrapin Lifesavers!



Diane Tulipani

Diamondback terrapins (*Malaclemys terrapin*) live in brackish saltwater marshes, coastal bays and lagoons from Cape Cod, MA, to Corpus Christi, TX. They are named from the concentric markings and grooves on their shells.



Matthew Wolak

Today, because of habitat loss, boat strikes, and other human-induced stresses, terrapin populations within the Chesapeake Bay are under even greater pressure to survive.

The greatest threat to diamondback terrapins is drowning in crab pots. Male and young female terrapins enter and drown in commercial-style crab pots, as they are air-breathing animals. Terrapins are attracted to the same bait used to attract blue crabs. Terrapins may also enter out of curiosity or because they are looking for a safe resting place.



Timothy Russell

Recreational crab pots are typically set in the same places males and juvenile female terrapins live - shallow, near-shore waters along creeks and marshes.

The blue crab fishery, *Callinectes sapidus*, is one of the largest on-going commercial shellfish harvests in the Chesapeake Bay, and crabbing is a favorite pastime for many Virginia residents as well.



Rochelle Seitz

In Virginia, it is illegal to collect diamondback terrapins for commercial or personal use

(see Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries Nongame regulations at <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/regulations/nongame.asp>).

A bycatch reduction device (BRD) is a simple and low-cost way to prevent terrapins and other marine organisms, such as blue catfish which eat blue crabs, from getting into your crab pots. Attaching a BRD to each funnel opening will prevent most terrapins and other unwanted organisms from entering the pot.

Studies have shown that while effective at preventing other animals from entering, BRDs have little impact on the size and number of blue crabs found in crab pots.



Diane Tulipani

Please help prevent unnecessary deaths of diamondback terrapins and other animals in your crab pots. By simply attaching BRDs to your crab pots, you can help preserve the diversity of animals within Chesapeake Bay for a healthier system, while still enjoying your blue crab catch.



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To learn more about diamondback terrapins and their conservation visit the following websites:

VIMS Website
www.vims.edu/terrapiin

Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/information/?s=030067>

http://www.vafwis.org/fwis/booklet.html?Menu=_.Life+History&bova=030067

<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/fishing/regulations/nongame.asp>

Diamondback Terrapin Working Group
www.dtwg.org

The Wetlands Institute
www.terrapiinconservation.org

MATES Project Terrapin
www.projectterrapiin.org

Help prevent unnecessary deaths of diamondback terrapins and other animals in your crab pots. Simply attach BRDs to all of your crab pots. Your participation can help preserve the diversity of animals within Chesapeake Bay for a healthier system, while still enjoying your blue crab catch.

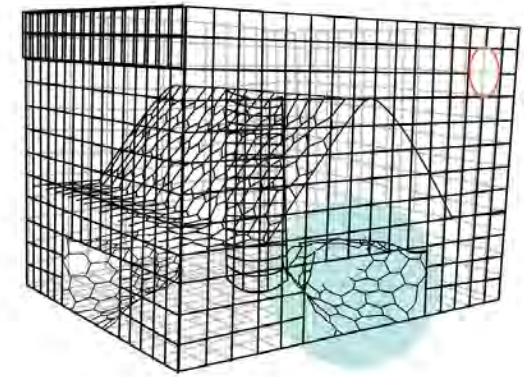
To make your own set of 4 BRDs (1 3/4" x 4 3/4"), you will need for each crab pot:

- 11-gauge galvanized wire - 4 pieces x 14 3/4" length
- 24 hog rings [(2 to form each BRD + 4 to attach BRD to pot) x4]
- Marker
- Needle nose pliers
- Wire cutters (optional)



1. Take a single length of wire and, measuring from one end, make a mark with the marker at lengths 1 3/4", 6 1/2", 8 1/4", and 13" from the end.
2. Using the pliers, bend the wire to a 90° angle upward at each mark. The first and last lengths of 1 3/4" will overlap forming a rectangle of 1 3/4" x 4 3/4".
3. Securely close the overlapping side with 2 hog rings.
4. Repeat for remaining 3 lengths of wire.

Plastic BRDs are available for purchase. For more information, go to: www.vims.edu/terrapiin



To install on the crab pot, position a BRD within each funnel opening and securely fasten to funnel with 4 cable ties per BRD; place 1 cable tie at each corner of the BRD.



*Illustrations:
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