

Mini Pickup Built Out Of A Van

"It comes in handy and wasn't that hard to do," says Bernard Nelson, Rockport, Maine, who converted a 1993 Plymouth Voyager van into a pickup.

Nelson already had the van, which he had tried to sell with no luck. "That's when I decided I could put it to good use as a pickup to use around my property and for making short trips to town," he says.

He cut off the back part of the van, just behind the front seat, and cut the sides down to form a box. He welded the back end of the van to the front section to form a cab.

He fitted plywood to the floor of the box

to raise it up, and he made a tailgate from scrap metal and hinged it to the body. To make the truck a bit more sporty, he purchased chrome safety rails designed for bathrooms and bolted them around the sides of the box. The truck was then finished off with a coat of bright red paint.

"It attracts a lot of attention wherever I go," says Nelson. "The vehicle is registered as a Plymouth Voyager truck."

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Nelson reshaped the back end of a 1993 Plymouth Voyager to turn it into a pickup.

Mesh "Cages" Protect Catfish From Predators

J.B. Esker of Teutopolis, Ill., says river otters got away with some \$2,000 worth of his pond-raised catfish before he even knew it was happening.

To prevent future losses, he moved the fish into a pair of plastic mesh cages that are suspended in water.

Esker's one-acre pond is located near the Little Wabash river. He heard about studies at Purdue University, which showed that round cages work better than square ones. Each cage is 4 ft. deep and wide and accommodates up to 200 catfish, from fingerlings up to 2 lbs. in size.

Each cage is suspended from a square float that he made out of 4-in. dia. pvc pipe. The cages themselves are made of 1/2-in. mesh plastic which allows pond water to flow freely through the cages. Esker added a 1/4-in. mesh screen collar around the top of each

cage to keep any floating feed from drifting away.

Esker owns a local concrete business and likes to put on several fish fries each year for his employees. He is not a commercial producer of fish.

Aeration is also important in the Esker operation. In a small building nearby, he has an air compressor which provides the pressure for making aeration work all year long. He says aeration will assure a spot of open water, even in the coldest weather. Any fish remaining after the season is over are turned free into the entire pond.

He has a few grass carp in the pond to keep it free of unwanted vegetation and to clean up any leftover water lilies.

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To prevent river otters from eating his pond-raised catfish, J.B. Esker moved the fish into a pair of plastic mesh cages that are suspended from pvc floats.

"Air-Through" Windscreen For ATV's

"It provides protection from bugs and flying debris while allowing enough air flow to keep occupants comfortable during warm weather. Best of all, it doesn't suck dust up around the operator like other ATV windshields," says Dan Schneller, St. Lawrence, S. Dak., who recently contacted FARM SHOW to tell us about the new windscreen he has designed for utility vehicles such as the Polaris Ranger and Kawasaki Mule.

The UTV Windscreen is a fiberglass screen with heavy duty vinyl material encasing it. The screen and vinyl are sewn together, along with metal eye clips. The windscreen wraps around the rollbar, and the eye clips are used to clamp the windscreen to it.

"I got the idea because I was disappointed with the full glass windshield on my Polaris Ranger. It created a vacuum effect that pulled dust into the driver area. My dealer told me this dust problem plagues all utility vehicles and there's no way to avoid it.

"A cab enclosure also doesn't allow for airflow, which makes it uncomfortable to use during the summer. My UTV Windscreen eliminates both problems yet still protects against flying debris and branches."

According to Schneller, a utility vehicle properly mounted with the UTV windscreen can be towed in excess of 70 mph without damage or additional wear and tear. "This is important because cab enclosures or lightweight windshields need to be removed before towing," he notes, adding that the windscreen doesn't obscure the driver's vision.

Fits the Polaris Ranger, Yamaha Rhino, Kawasaki Mule, and other models.

Sells for \$149.99 plus S&H.

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Fiberglass windscreen is designed for utility vehicles such as the Polaris Ranger and Kawasaki Mule.



Windscreen wraps around ATV's rollbar. Several eye clips hold it in place.

Bean Shaker Saved His Crop

Joseph Sharp's "bean shaker" saved his soybean crop last year after weeds took over the crop. The weeds slowed drydown of the crop and Sharp knew that potential spoilage in the bin from stems and green pods could also be a problem.

"In a bin, all the pods go to the edge and develop hot spots," explains Sharp.

To get the pods and stems out, Sharp built a low cost shaker using old fanning mill screens, including a couple of soybean screens. He built the frame and hopper box out of angle iron, steel plate and other parts lying around the farm. A gasoline engine powers the shaker mechanism.

"At first, it shook too fast, so I had to gear it down," recalls Sharp.

Using a gear reduction system put together by his late father, Sharp slowed the speed down from 400 rpm's to about 50 rpm's.

Once it was operating at the right speed, Sharp set up his unloading auger to dump into the shaker. Pods and stems shook off to the side, while beans worked their way down through onto a tarp. An auger moved the clean beans from the tarp into the bin.

"It slowed me down some, as it took about 45 minutes to clean 260 bushels," explains Sharp, who hopes to improve and possibly market the unit.

One bonus of the shaker was getting a second crop from his soybeans. "I took all the stems and pods and ran them back through the combine," he says.

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Photos courtesy West Point News

Sharp's "bean shaker" saved his soybean crop last year after weeds took over.



This trash made it through the combine but not Sharp's shaker. Once it's done all that's left are clean beans (below).

