



Bird Wars

Part II

Try the bald eagle kite, Bird Gard or live h ummingbirds, readers say.

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In the May 1999 issue, we reported on reader Don Thorn as' experiments with various types of bird deterrents on the Intracoastal Waterway in South Carolina. Here are follow-up letters with additional suggestions.

At my mooring area, small visiting birds are not so much the culprits of signature bombings as are the gulls and crows that like to loiter on the roof of the covered docks adjacent to my mooring. When they take off from the edge of the roof, my boat is right beneath them—an innocent target of their natural discharges.

I purchased from Jackite a very lifelike bald eagle—printed on tough Tyvek, with a wingspan of about 3'—and flew it from a tall pole mounted on the stern. There is a single wire stiffener (coat hanger size) that slips in slots cut in the wings. It has hinged hanging feet and a hinged fish in its talons.

When even the lightest breeze lifts it up to a flying position (up or down-side), you won't see a gull or a crow in the vicinity! Even when hanging by a swivel in the tip of its beak, it evidently looks enough like a big eagle drying its wings that the offending bombers stay away. Though in the category of the false predators, the action of wind on this "kite" elevates it to an active dimension, unlike the owl or the fake snake.

Some of the boats moored here under cover employ what appears to be long swaths of Mylar—about 8" wide and many feet long. They stretch this along the underside of the dock's roofing (along sprinkler pipes and such). This flutters brightly in the breeze. The sound and the sparkle apparently make it an effective bird deterrent.