TIKI SHELTERS AND KITS

Inventor: William Golden, Ft. Myers, FL (US)

Correspondence Address:
HAHN LOESER & PARKS, LLP
One GOJO Plaza
Suite 300
AKRON, OH 44311-1076 (US)

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ABSTRACT

Novel artificial tiki shelters and tiki shelter roofs are disclosed and claimed herein. The design of the inventive roofs and shelters allow for ease of assembly and disassembly by the purchaser and once assembled, are durable to withstand winds of up to 150 miles per hour.
TIKI SHELTERS AND KITS

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

[0001] The present invention is directed to novel artificial shelters, in particular artificial tiki shelters that may be marketed in kits for easy assembly by the consumer. The inventive tiki shelter, unlike conventional tiki huts (also known as "chickee huts"), which are made substantially from natural materials (e.g., natural thatch and wood), is very sturdy upon assembly, able to withstand winds of up to 150 miles per hour.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0002] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of one embodiment of the inventive tiki shelter, wherein the artificial roof thatch segments are omitted for ease of illustration.

[0003] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the roof portion illustrated in FIG. 1, showing partial coverage with the artificial thatch segments for ease of illustration.

[0004] FIG. 3 is an enlarged perspective view of one embodiment of the central connector used to secure the longitudinal beams of the roof.

[0005] FIG. 4 is an enlarged perspective view of a second embodiment of the central connector used to secure the longitudinal beams of the roof.

[0006] FIG. 5 is a top view of an exemplary artificial roof thatch segment, as also shown in FIG. 2.

[0007] FIG. 6 is a top view of the roof of the inventive tiki shelter, the roof being covered by artificial thatch segments.

[0008] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the inventive tiki shelter, wherein the artificial roof thatch segments are omitted for ease of illustration.

[0009] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the second embodiment illustrated in FIG. 7.

[0010] FIG. 9 is a perspective view of the inventive tiki shelter kit, wherein the components, except for the artificial roof thatch segments and fasteners, are shown housed within an elongated box for storage or shipping.

[0011] FIG. 10 is a perspective view of the inventive tiki shelter kit, wherein the components of the shelter, including the artificial roof thatch segments, are shown housed within an elongated box for storage or shipping.

[0012] FIGS. 11A and 11B illustrate side and top views, respectively, of a single longitudinal support beam.

[0013] FIG. 12 is a perspective view of a third embodiment of the inventive tiki shelter very similar to the first shown in FIG. 1, wherein the vertical support members are secured to the longitudinal beams instead of the fascia members.

[0014] FIG. 13 is an enlarged, partial view of the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 12, showing the top end of the vertical support member secured to a longitudinal beam.

[0015] FIG. 14 is an enlarged partial view of the embodiment shown in FIG. 7, showing the support rods secured to the longitudinal members and the central vertical support member.

[0016] FIG. 15 is a top view of a fourth embodiment of the inventive tiki shelter.

[0017] FIG. 16 is a side view of the embodiment shown in FIG. 15.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

[0018] The present invention is directed to novel artificial tiki shelters and kits for assembly of the same. In certain aspects of the present invention, the inventive tiki shelter comprises a roof having a central connector as illustrated in FIGS. 1-4. As shown, the central connector preferably has a substantially circular outer periphery comprising a series of mounting brackets extending outward from the periphery. The central connector is designed to secure a plurality of longitudinal support beams that radiate outward from the central connector.

[0019] FIG. 3 illustrates one design of a suitable central connector comprising a series of receptacles, each having an inner compartment configured to engage one of a longitudinal support beam. The number of receptacles may vary, depending upon the diameter or width of the central connector and/or the shape of the roof. Each receptacle includes a top end and a lower end, each of the ends preferably having a hole for registration with the other. Similarly, the first end of the longitudinal beam has a pair of holes in registration with one another and with the pair of holes of the receptacle. Such that when the first end is engaged within the receptacle, as shown in FIG. 3, for example, a fastener, such as a bolt, for example, may be inserted through the respective holes of the receptacle and the beam to securely engage the beam therein. As shown in FIG. 3, the bolt may be secured by a nut or similar device. The bolt and nut assembly is particularly suitable for securing the beams to the central connector, since, if desired, such a fastener assembly allows for easy assembly and disassembly of the roof. However, it will be appreciated by the skilled artisan that other means for fastening the beam within the receptacle may be employed, such means including, but not limited to, wire, clips, clamps, screws, toggle bolts and the like. It will also be recognized by those of ordinary skill in the art that the receptacle may simply employ one hole, for example, through the upper surface or lower surface of the receptacle for engaging the beam therein. In such an embodiment, a threaded screw (not shown), for example, that is engaged within the receptacle holes may be employed. The screw, for example, may be torqued to engage the upper (or lower) surface of the beam. Here, the hole (22 for example) would not necessarily penetrate the entire beam to communicate with an opposite hole (23, for example).

[0020] FIG. 4 illustrates a second embodiment of the central connector, wherein instead of a series of receptacles, the mounting bracket comprises a pair of plates, namely a top plate and a lower plate. In this embodiment, the first end of the longitudinal support beam is positioned within the space between the plates and secured therein by a fastener, such as a bolt and nut assembly for example. The fastener is engaged within one or more holes located through the top plate and lower
plate 14, respectively, each of the holes in registration with one another and with one or more holes 22, 23 within the first end of the longitudinal beam 11 (See FIGS. 11A-11B). As described above for the embodiment shown in FIG. 3, the number of pairs of plates may vary, depending upon the diameter or width of the outer periphery 12 of the central connector as well as the size and/or shape of the roof. Similarly, the connector may be designed such that only the top plate 13 or lower plate 14 may have a hole for engaging a fastener. Suitable fasteners that may be employed are the same as those described for the receptacle embodiment described above and illustrated in FIG. 3.

[0021]  If desired, the connector may be designed such that only one plate (not shown) may be employed for securing a longitudinal support beam 20 to the central connector 11, wherein the plate has one or more holes for engaging a fastener. In this embodiment, the beam 20 is placed flush against the plate, and a fastener, such as a bolt or screw, is inserted through the plate hole and hole(s) within the beam. If a bolt is employed, a nut may be secured to the end of the bolt as it protrudes from the opposite surface of the beam or a toggle bolt may be employed. Alternatively, a clip or other clamping means may be used to secure the beam 11 to the plate, thereby obviating the need for any holes in the plate or beam for receiving a bolt, wire, screw, or similar fastener.

[0022]  It will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that the design of the central connector, as described above and illustrated in the figures, is such that the longitudinal beams may be removably secured to the mounting brackets, if desired, for ease of assembly and disassembly.

[0023]  As shown in FIGS. 11A-11B, the longitudinal support beams 20 of the roof are preferably rectangular in configuration, each having an upper surface 24 and lower surface 25. Other configurations may be employed, however, if desired. As discussed above, the first end 21 of each beam preferably comprises a pair of holes 22, 23 in registration with one another for engaging a fastener, such as a bolt and nut assembly. As shown in FIG. 1, adjacent beams are secured to one another by a fascia member 30. Each of the fascia members may be removable secured to the second ends 26 of the beams 20 as shown, the entire combination of the plurality of fascia members 30 forming the outer periphery of the roof.

[0024]  Finally, the roof of the tiki shelter comprises a plurality of artificial thatch segments 50 as shown in FIGS. 2, 5-6, each of the segments preferably having a bar 51 on one end to which the thatch portion 52 of the segment is secured. The bar 51 must be of sufficient length such that it extends across the upper surfaces of adjacent longitudinal beams 20, as shown in FIGS. 2 and 5, for example. The bar of the thatch segment may be secured to the upper surface 24 of the beams by any number of conventional methods, including, but not limited to, snaps, 53, 54 wherein the female portion 53 of the snap is affixed to the bar, and the complementary male portion 54 is affixed to the upper surface 24 of the longitudinal beam 20 (or vice versa). A line of snaps (i.e. male portion) 54 may be affixed down the upper surface of each longitudinal beam for securing the bars 51 of the artificial thatch segments in this manner (see FIG. 1). Other means for securing the thatch segments to the beams include, but are not limited to, wiring, screws, clips, clamps, bolts, VELCRO, adhesives, and the like. Alternatively, if desired, the bar of the thatch segment 50 may be omitted, such that the thatch portion is secured directly to adjacent beams of the roof. In this latter design, the fasteners, such as snaps, for example, are affixed near the top edge (i.e. where the bar might be secured) of the thatch portion. In addition, it is important that the top edge of the thatch segment be sufficiently long so that it can extend across the upper surfaces of adjacent beams 20 (as described above for the bar). In either embodiment, it is preferable that the fastener employed be such that the thatch segment may be removed from the roof if desired for either replacement or during disassembly of the roof.

[0025]  The artificial thatch portion 50 is preferably fabricated of a durable, weatherproof plastic material. Other materials may be employed, as desired, provided the material is more weather and wind resistant than natural thatch or palm leaves, which are used in conventional tiki hut designs. Moreover, the figures herein illustrate only an exemplary design of the thatch portion. Other designs may be employed to give the appearance of natural thatch, palm leaves, and the like. Consequently, as used herein, the term “thatch” includes designs resembling thatch, palm leaves, and any other natural foliage.

[0026]  The roof of the tiki shelter may be secured to at least one or more vertical support members 60, preferably at least two support members, and more preferably four support members 60, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 12, which serve as legs for the shelter. Alternatively, as illustrated in FIGS. 7-8, and 14, the roof may be attached to a single, central vertical support member 70. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 1, each vertical support member 60 comprises a top end 61 and a bottom end 62. The top end may have secured to it a bracket 63 for engaging a portion of either a fascia member 30 (as shown in FIG. 12) or, more preferably, a portion of one of the longitudinal support beams 20 (FIGS. 1 and 13). It will be recognized by the skilled artisan that FIG. 13 illustrates just one bracket design and point of attachment of the vertical support member 60 to the longitudinal beam 20, and that, if desired, other bracket designs and/or points of attachment along the length of the longitudinal beam 20 may be employed.

[0027]  In one of aspect the invention, the bottom end 62 of the support member may include a base plate 65 that merely rests upon the ground G or may be securely fastened to the ground G. Surrounding at least one vertical member 60 is a jacket 64 formed of a material formed of natural bamboo or materials (synthetic or natural) resembling natural bamboo. The material may also be formed of other natural woods or facsimiles of such woods. It will be appreciated by the skilled artisan that the jacket 64 is primarily for esthetic purposes, and thus may be omitted from shelter.

[0028]  In the embodiment employing a single central vertical member, as shown in FIGS. 7-8, and 14, the vertical member 70 also include a top end 73 and a bottom end 72. The top end of the member is secured to the central connector 11 by any conventional fastening means. Preferably, a portion of the top end is positioned within the central opening 90 of the connector, and then fastened therein by a plurality of bolts or screws, for example (not shown) that penetrate the outer periphery of the connector to engage the outer surface of the vertical member via holes (not shown)
provided therein. The bottom end of the vertical member may also include a base plate (not shown) for resting upon or secured to the underlying ground surface; however, this particular design is conducive to insertion directly into a hole 80 penetrating a deck or dock floor D, wherein the surround deck/dock floor D provides support to the vertical member (see FIG. 8). Alternatively, the central member may be drilled directly into a hole 80 in the ground G, preferably several inches within the ground, for support (see FIG. 7).

[0029] The embodiment illustrated in FIGS. 7-8, and 15 also includes at least one, and preferably three or more, rods 71 to support the roof onto the central vertical member. As shown in FIGS. 7 and 14, one end of the support rod 71 is secured to one of the longitudinal support beams 20, by a clamp 81 or similar fastening means, and the other end is secured to the outer surface of the vertical support member 70 by a bracket or clamp 82, for example. Note that FIG. 7 only shows two support rods 71, the third rod being obscured from view by the central vertical member 70. If desired, a jacket 74 similar to that illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 12 and described above may be secured to the central vertical support member 70 to cover a portion or substantially all of the support member.

[0030] For both tiki shelter embodiments wherein either a single, central vertical support member 70 is employed or where two or more vertical support members 60 secured to either the longitudinal support beams or fascia members are employed, it is preferred that the means for securing the various vertical support members to the roof be of the type to allow the roof to be removed for total disassembly, if desired. The use of brackets 63, for example, as shown in the figures, is one such means.

[0031] Additional accessories may be secured to or arranged about the inventive tiki shelter. For example, as shown in FIG. 8, a table T may be secured to the central vertical member 70 and stools S arranged about the table. The embodiment illustrated in FIG. 1, for example, may also include a table or bar (not shown) secured between adjacent vertical members 60 or arranged within the shelter.

[0032] The present invention also includes artificial tiki shelter roofs 100 and shelters comprising the employment of two central connectors 110 for purposes of constructing larger shelters. As shown in FIGS. 15-16, the central connectors are preferably spaced apart from one another by a central horizontal member 201 which is secured, at each end, to each of the two central connectors 110 as shown. The central horizontal member 201 may be a single piece, as shown, or two or more separate pieces (not shown). The central connectors 110 may be of the same design as described above for the single-connector embodiments and as illustrated in FIGS. 3-4, or a modified design, as shown more clearly in FIG. 15, wherein the mounting brackets 300 do not extend about the entire outer periphery of the connector. Similarly, this embodiment includes a first plurality of longitudinal beams 202 that are secured to the central connectors as described above for the single-connector embodiment. This embodiment further includes a second plurality of longitudinal beams 203 of similar or identical construction, each having one end secured to the central horizontal member 201. The ends of this second set of longitudinal beams may be secured to the central horizontal member by any number of conventional means, including brackets 301 and suitable fasteners, such as bolts and nuts, for example. Similarly, as for the single connector embodiment above, a plurality of thatch portions may be secured to adjacent longitudinal beams 202, 203, as described in detail above.

[0033] The roof of embodiment shown in FIGS. 15-16 may be secured to two or more vertical support members 60 of the same or similar construction as described above for the single-connector embodiment (e.g., FIGS. 1 and 12). FIG. 16 illustrates a set of four vertical support members secured to the longitudinal beams 202, 203; however, as discussed above, while not preferable, the vertical support members could be secured to the fascia members 303, if desired. It will also be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that central vertical members (not shown), such as that illustrated in FIGS. 7 and 17, for example, may be engaged within each of the two central connectors 110 as described above. Similarly, two vertical support members could be secured on opposite ends of the roof structure (not shown). Finally, a combination of central vertical members secured to one or more of the two central connectors 110 as well as vertical support members secured to either the longitudinal beams 202, 203 and/or fascia members 303 of the shelter may be employed (not shown).

[0034] For both the single-connector and dual-connector embodiments, the invention tiki shelter may include a cover 95 secured over the central connector (11, 110), as illustrated, in FIGS. 14 and 16. In addition to preventing air from entering through the central opening 90 of the connectors, the cover 95 also provides a means for releasing in the event of strong, high pressure winds during a tropical storm or hurricane, for example. Preferably, a release cord 96, such as a wire, rope, or chain, for example, is secured at one end to the cover 95 and at an opposite free end 97 to the roof. Exemplary points of attachment of the free end 97 of cord 96 to the roof include, but are not limited to, a longitudinal beam, central horizontal member, or vertical support member. The cord may be secured to the cover and other components of the roof as just described by any conventional means, including, but not limited to, the use of adhesives, tying the cord about the structure, nails, screws, and the like. The release cord 95 is sufficiently long such that in the event of inclement weather producing a strong pressure buildup within the shelter, there is enough slack in the cord to allow the cover 95 to be blown away from the connector as the pressure escapes through the opening 90, thereby preventing the entire roof from blowing away.

[0035] Alternatively, the cover 95 may be movably secured to the roof via a hinge assembly, for example (not shown), whereby as pressure builds up within the shelter the cover moves upward and away from the opening of the connector via the hinge. Here, the hinge may be secured to the top of the connector or about the outer periphery of the connector.

[0036] One aspect of the present invention is that it can be provided in the form of a kit for shipment or sale to the purchaser. The kit comprises the components of the roof contained and transported in a large container, such as a conventional box 400. As shown in FIGS. 9-10, for example, the central connector 11, longitudinal beams 20, and fascia members 30, including all fastening means (e.g.
bolts, and nuts not shown) may be arranged in the box 400. For the embodiment shown in FIGS. 15-16, the central horizontal member 201 may be contained in the kit, as well (not shown). On top of these components may be arranged the various thatch segments 50 of the roof. Individual components of the roof may be color-, letter-, or number-coded for ease of assembly by the consumer. Once the roof is assembled and secured to one or more vertical support members, as described above, an attractive, artificial tiki shelter is constructed that may withstand winds of up to 150 miles per hour and is durable for several years.

[0037] The longitudinal support beams, support rods, fascia members, central connector(s), vertical support members, and central horizontal members of the roof may be fabricated using conventional metals or plastics commonly known by those of ordinary skill for maximum stability and durability. Exemplary materials include, but are not limited to, aluminum, stainless steel, other metals and metal alloys used in building construction, and heavy-duty plastics, now known or later developed.

[0038] The foregoing disclosure and description of the invention are illustrative and explanatory thereof, and various changes in the size, shape, and materials, as well as in the details of the illustrated construction may be made without departing from the spirit of the invention, and therefore fall within the scope of the appended claims even though such variations were not specifically discussed above. For example, the figures herein illustrate the tiki shelter roof having a substantially circular roof; however, other configurations, including more oval or rectangular configurations may be employed for both the single-connector 11 (FIGS. 1, 7, 12) and dual-connector 110 (FIG. 15) embodiments. Similarly, larger roofs may comprise three or more central connectors in order to provide a different roof or shelter configuration or larger roof coverage. Moreover, it will be noted that use herein of the singular forms “a,” “an” and “the” include plural references, as clearly recognized in the law.

1 claim:
1. An artificial tiki shelter comprising:
   a. a roof, said roof further comprising:
      (i) a central connector, said connector having an outer periphery and comprising a series of mounting brackets extending outward from said periphery;
      (ii) a plurality of longitudinal beams, each having upper and lower surfaces, and each of said beams further having a first end secured to one of said mounting brackets and an opposing second end, wherein adjacent longitudinal beams are connected to one another by one of a plurality of fascia members, each of said fascia members secured to said second ends of said adjacent longitudinal beams to form an outer periphery of said roof;
      (iii) one or more fasteners for securing said first end of each of said plurality of longitudinal beams to said mounting bracket; and
      (iv) a plurality of artificial thatch segments secured to said upper surfaces of two adjacent longitudinal beams and arranged upon said longitudinal beams such that a portion of one of said segments partially overlaps a subjacent thatch segment; and
   b. at least one vertical support member secured to said roof.
2. The tiki shelter of claim 1, wherein said outer periphery of said connector is substantially circular.
3. The tiki shelter of claim 1, including at least two of said vertical support members, each of said at least two vertical support members having a top end and a bottom end, said top end secured to either one of said fascia members or one of said longitudinal beams, said bottom end configured to rest upon or engage an underlying ground surface.
4. The tiki shelter of claim 3, wherein said vertical support member includes four vertical support members, each secured to one of said longitudinal beams.
5. The tiki shelter of claim 1, wherein at least one of said vertical support members comprises an outer jacket.
6. The tiki shelter of claim 5, wherein said outer jacket is formed of a material selected from the group of natural bamboo and materials resembling bamboo.
7. The tiki shelter of claim 4, wherein at least one of said vertical support members comprises an outer jacket.
8. The tiki shelter of claim 7, wherein said outer jacket is formed of a material selected from the group of natural bamboo and materials resembling bamboo.
9. The tiki shelter of claim 1, each of said longitudinal beams having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein at least one of said longitudinal beams has a pair of holes penetrating the upper and lower surfaces of said beam, said pair of holes in registration with one another, and wherein each of said mounting brackets comprises a top plate and a lower plate, each of said plates having a hole penetrating therethrough and in registration with one another, such that when said first end of one of said longitudinal beams is engaged within said mounting bracket, said pair of holes of said beam and said mounting bracket are registration with one another for engagement therein of one of said plurality of fasteners.
10. The tiki shelter of claim 9, wherein said fasteners comprise a bolt and nut.
11. The tiki shelter of claim 1, wherein at least one of said mounting brackets is a receptacle having an inner compartment configured to engage therein the first end of one of said longitudinal members.
12. The tiki shelter of claim 11, wherein at least one of said longitudinal beams has a pair of holes penetrating the upper and lower surfaces of said beam, said pair of holes in registration with one another, and wherein each of said receptacles comprises a top end and a lower end, each of said top and lower ends having a hole in registration with one another and configured to engage a fastener, such that when said first end of one of said longitudinal beams is engaged within said receptacle, said pair of holes of said beam and said receptacle are in registration with one another for engagement therein of one of said plurality of fasteners.
13. The tiki shelter of claim 12, wherein said fastener comprises a bolt and nut.
14. The tiki shelter of claim 1, wherein at least one vertical support member has a bottom end and a top end, said top end removably secured to said central connector, and wherein said bottom end is configured to rest upon or engage an underlying ground surface.
15. The tiki shelter of claim 14, each of said longitudinal beams having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein
at least one of said longitudinal beams has a pair of holes penetrating the upper and lower surfaces of said beam, said pair of holes in registration with one another, and wherein each of said mounting brackets comprises a top plate and a lower plate, each of said plates having a hole penetrating therethrough and in registration with one another, such that when said first end of one of said longitudinal beams is engaged within said mounting bracket, said pair of holes of said beam and said mounting bracket are registration with one another for engagement therein of one of said plurality of fasteners.

16. The tiki shelter of claim 15, wherein said fasteners comprise a bolt and nut.

17. The tiki shelter of claim 15, wherein at least one of said mounting brackets is a receptacle having an inner compartment configured to engage therein the first end of one of said longitudinal members.

18. The tiki shelter of claim 17, wherein at least one of said longitudinal beams has a pair of holes penetrating the upper and lower surface of said beam, said pair of holes in registration with one another, and wherein each of said receptacles comprises a top end and a lower end, each of said top and lower ends having a hole in registration with one another and configured to engage a fastener, such that when said first end of one of said longitudinal beams is engaged within said receptacle, said pair of holes of said beam and said receptacle are in registration with one another for engagement of one of said plurality of fasteners therein.

19. The tiki shelter of claim 18, wherein said fasteners comprise a bolt and nut.

20. The tiki shelter of claim 14, further including at least one support rod having one end secured to one of said longitudinal beams and a second end secured to said at least one vertical support member secured to said central connector.

21. The tiki shelter of claim 20, wherein said tiki shelter comprises at least three of said at least one support rod.

22. The tiki shelter of claim 14, wherein at least one vertical support member comprises an outer jacket.

23. The tiki shelter of claim 22, wherein said outer jacket is formed of a material selected from the group of natural bamboo and materials resembling bamboo.

24. The tiki shelter of claim 1, said connector having a central opening formed by said outer periphery walls, said roof further including a cover secured to said roof and movably positioned upon said connector to cover said opening.

25. An artificial tiki shelter roof comprising:
   a. a central connector, said connector having an outer periphery and comprising a series of mounting brackets extending outward from said periphery;
   b. a plurality of longitudinal beams, each having upper and lower surfaces, and each of said beams further having a first end secured to one of said mounting brackets and an opposing second end, wherein adjacent longitudinal beams are connected to one another by one of a plurality of fascia members, each of said fascia members secured to said second ends of said adjacent longitudinal beams to form an outer periphery of said roof;
   c. one or more fasteners for securing said first end of each of said plurality of longitudinal beams to said mounting bracket; and
   d. a plurality of artificial thatch segments secured to said upper surfaces of two adjacent longitudinal beams and arranged upon said longitudinal beams such that a portion of one of said segments partially overlaps a subjacent thatch segment.

26. The roof of claim 25, each of said longitudinal beams having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein at least one of said longitudinal beams has a pair of holes penetrating the upper and lower surfaces of said beam, said pair of holes in registration with one another, and wherein each of said mounting brackets comprises a top plate and a lower plate, each of said plates having a hole penetrating therethrough and in registration with one another, such that when said first end of one of said longitudinal beams is engaged within said mounting bracket, said pair of holes of said beam and said mounting bracket are registration with one another for engagement therein of one of said plurality of fasteners.

27. The roof of claim 26, wherein said fastener comprise a bolt and nut.

28. The roof of claim 25, wherein at least one of said mounting brackets is a receptacle having an inner compartment configured to engage therein the first end of one of said longitudinal members.

29. The roof of claim 28, wherein at least one of said longitudinal beams has a pair of holes penetrating the upper and lower surfaces of said beam, said pair of holes in registration with one another, and wherein each of said receptacles comprises a top end and a lower end, each of said top and lower ends having a hole in registration with one another and configured to engage a fastener, such that when said first end of one of said longitudinal beams is engaged within said receptacle, said pair of holes of said beam and said receptacle are in registration with one another for engagement of one of said plurality of fasteners therein.

30. The roof of claim 29, wherein said fasteners comprise a bolt and nut.

31. The tiki shelter of claim 25, said connector having a central opening formed by said outer periphery walls, said roof further including a cover secured to said roof and movably positioned upon said connector to cover said opening.

32. An artificial tiki shelter roof comprising:
   a. two central connectors, each of said connectors having an outer periphery and comprising a series of mounting brackets extending outward from said periphery;
   b. a center horizontal member secured to and disposed between said two central connectors;
   c. a first plurality of longitudinal beams, each having upper and lower surfaces, and each of said beams further having a first end secured to one of said mounting brackets and an opposing second end, wherein adjacent longitudinal beams are connected to one another by one of a plurality of fascia members;
   d. a second plurality of longitudinal beams, each having upper and lower surfaces and each of said second plurality of longitudinal beams further having a first end secured to said center horizontal member and an opposing second end, wherein adjacent longitudinal beams of said second plurality are connected to one another by one of said plurality of said fascia members;
e. said fascia members secured to said second ends of said adjacent longitudinal beams of said first and second pluralities of longitudinal beams to form an outer periphery of said roof;

f. one or more first fasteners for securing said first end of each of said first plurality of longitudinal beams to said mounting bracket;

g. one or more second fasteners for securing said first end of each of said second plurality of longitudinal beams to said central horizontal member; and

h. a plurality of artificial thatch segments secured to said upper surfaces of two adjacent longitudinal beams of said first and second pluralities of longitudinal beams and arranged upon said longitudinal beams such that a portion of one of said segments partially overlaps a subjacent thatch segment.

33. The roof of claim 32, wherein said outer periphery of at least one of said central connectors is substantially circular.

34. The roof claim 32, each of said longitudinal beams of said first and second pluralities having an upper surface and a lower surface, wherein at least one of said longitudinal beams has a pair of holes penetrating the upper and lower surfaces of said beam, said pair of holes in registration with one another, and wherein each of said mounting brackets comprises a top plate and a lower plate, each of said plates having a hole penetrating therethrough and in registration with one another, such that when said first end of one of said longitudinal beams is engaged within said mounting bracket, said pair of holes of said beam and said mounting bracket are registration with one another for engagement therein of one of said plurality of fasteners.

35. The roof of claim 34, wherein said first and second fasteners comprise a bolt and nut.

36. The roof of claim 32, wherein at least one of said mounting brackets is a receptacle having an inner compartment configured to engage therein the first end of one of said longitudinal members of said pluralities of longitudinal members.

37. The roof of claim 36, wherein at least one of said longitudinal beams of said first and second pluralities has a pair of holes penetrating the upper and lower surfaces of said beam, said pair of holes in registration with one another, and wherein each of said receptacles comprises a top end and a lower end, each of said top and lower ends having a hole in registration with one another and configured to engage a fastener, such that when said first end of one of said longitudinal beams is engaged within said receptacle, said pair of holes of said beam and said receptacle are in registration with one another for engagement therein of one of said plurality of fasteners.

38. The roof of claim 37, wherein said first and second fasteners comprise a bolt and nut.

39. The tiki shelter of claim 32, wherein at least one of said connectors has a central opening formed by said outer periphery walls, said roof further including a cover secured to said roof and movably positioned upon said at least one connector to cover said opening.

40. An artificial tiki shelter comprising:

a. a roof, said roof further comprising:

(i) two central connectors, each of said connectors having an outer periphery and comprising a series of mounting brackets extending outward from said periphery;

(ii) a center horizontal member secured to and disposed between said two central connectors;

(iii) a first plurality of longitudinal beams, each having upper and lower surfaces, and each of said beams further having a first end secured to one of said mounting brackets and an opposing second end, wherein adjacent longitudinal beams are connected to one another by one of a plurality of fascia members;

(iv) a second plurality of longitudinal beams, each having upper and lower surfaces and each of said second plurality of longitudinal beams further having a first end secured to said center horizontal member and an opposing second end, wherein adjacent longitudinal beams of said second plurality are connected to one another by one of said plurality of said fascia members;

(v) said fascia members secured to said second ends of said adjacent longitudinal beams of said first and second pluralities of longitudinal beams to form an outer periphery of said roof;

(vi) one or more first fasteners for securing said first end of each of said first plurality of longitudinal beams to said mounting bracket;

(vii) one or more second fasteners for securing said first end of each of said second plurality of longitudinal beams to said central horizontal member; and

(viii) a plurality of artificial thatch segments secured to said upper surfaces of two adjacent longitudinal beams of said first and second pluralities of longitudinal beams and arranged upon said longitudinal beams such that a portion of one of said segments partially overlaps a subjacent thatch segment; and

b. at least two vertical support members secured to said roof.

41. The tiki shelter of claim 40, wherein said shelter includes at least four vertical support members secured to said roof, each having a top end and a bottom end, said top end secured to either one of said fascia members or one of said longitudinal beams, and said bottom end configured to rest upon or engage an underlying ground surface.

42. The tiki shelter of claim 40, wherein each of said vertical support members has a bottom end and a top end, said top end secured to one of said central connectors, and wherein said bottom end is configured to rest upon or engage an underlying ground surface.

43. The tiki shelter of claim 40, further including at least one support rod secured to at least one of said vertical support members, each of said support rods having one end secured to one of said longitudinal beams and a second end secured to one of said vertical support members.

44. The tiki shelter of claim 40, wherein at least one of said vertical support members comprises an outer jacket.
45. The tiki shelter of claim 44, wherein said outer jacket is formed of a material selected from the group of natural bamboo and materials resembling bamboo.

46. The tiki shelter of claim 40, wherein at least one of said connectors has a central opening formed by said outer periphery walls, said roof further including a cover secured to said roof and movably positioned upon said at least one connector to cover said opening.

47. A kit for easy assembly of an artificial tiki shelter, said kit comprising:

- a series of components, said components comprising the longitudinal beams, the fascia members, the fasteners, the thatch segments, the cover, and the central connector of claim 31; and
- a container for carrying said components.

48. The kit of claim 47, further including bracket assemblies for connecting said fascia members to said longitudinal beams upon assembly.

49. The kit of claim 48, wherein said bracket assemblies further comprises fasteners for securing said brackets to said fascia members to said longitudinal beams upon assembly.

50. A kit for easy assembly of an artificial tiki shelter roof, said kit comprising:

- a series of components, said components comprising the longitudinal beams, the fascia members, the fasteners, the thatch segments, the cover, the central horizontal member, and said at least two central connectors of claim 39; and
- a container for carrying said components.

51. The kit of claim 50, further including bracket assemblies for connecting said fascia members to said longitudinal beams upon assembly.

52. The kit of claim 51, wherein said bracket assemblies further comprises fasteners for securing said brackets to said fascia members to said longitudinal beams upon assembly.