A fence stay construction (10) for maintaining the vertical spacing of strands of fence wire (101) suspended between fence posts (100); wherein, the stay construction (10) includes an elongated bifurcated shaft member (20) fabricated from plastic material (21) and forming two support legs (22) (23) having abutting surfaces provided with a plurality of vertically spaced opposed recesses (24) for captively engaging and maintaining the strands of wire (101) at a desired vertical spacing relative to one another.
FENCE STAY CONSTRUCTION

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] Not applicable.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not applicable.

REFERENCE TO MICROFORM APPENDIX

[0003] Not applicable.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] 1. Field of the Invention

[0005] The present invention relates to the field of fencing arrangements in general and in particular to a fence stay that maintains a desired spacing between the wire fence strands.

[0006] 2. Description of Related Art

[0007] As can be seen by reference to the following U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,050,549; 4,982,932; 3,874,640; and 5,350,155, the prior art is replete with myriad and diverse fencing related patents.

[0008] While all of the aforementioned prior art constructions are more than adequate for the basic purpose and function for which they have been specifically designed, they are uniformly deficient with respect to their failure to provide a simple, efficient, and practical arrangement for maintaining a desired spacing between the fencing strands intermediate the fence support posts or T-bars.

[0009] At the present time, the only known solution to the problem of maintaining the desired spacing between the fence strands is to employ a twisted wire stay that connects all of the strands to one another and this is a costly and time consuming task that is very labor intensive.

[0010] As a consequence of the foregoing situation, there has existed a longstanding need among ranchers and cattlemen for a new and improved fence stay construction that can quickly and easily be installed over the fencing strands to maintain the strands at a desired spacing relative to one another; and, the provision of such a construction is the stated objective of the present invention.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0011] Briefly stated, the stay construction that forms the basis of the present invention comprises in general an elongated bifurcated shaft member forming two interlocking support legs provided with a plurality of opposed recesses which are dimensioned to captively receive the strands of a fence.

[0012] In addition, the lower end of the support legs is provided with a latching mechanism to maintain the support legs in an abutting relationship relative to one another and the bifurcated juncture of the support legs is enlarged to provide both flexibility to the support legs as well as a reduction of the stress factors associated with sharp transition zones.

[0013] In use, the support legs are disengaged relative to one another so that the wire strands of the fence can slip between the support legs and be captively received in selected opposed recesses in the support legs when the support legs are interlocked with one another thereby maintaining the strands of wire a desired distance from one another in keeping with the teachings of this invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] These and other attributes of the invention will become more clear upon a thorough study of the following description of the best mode for carrying out the invention, particularly when reviewed in conjunction with the drawings, wherein:

[0015] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the fence stay construction in use;

[0016] FIG. 2 is an isolated perspective view of the fence stay construction;

[0017] FIG. 3 is an enlarged detail view of the upper portion of the fence stay construction;

[0018] FIG. 4 is an enlarged detail view of the lower portion of the fence stay construction;

[0019] FIG. 5 is an enlarged detail view of the intermediate portion of the support legs disengaged with one another; and,

[0020] FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view taken through line 6-6 of FIG. 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0021] As can be seen by reference to the drawings, and in particularly to FIGS. 1 and 2, the fence stay construction that forms the basis of the present invention is designated generally by the reference number 10. The construction 10 comprises in general an elongated bifurcated shaft member 20 preferably fabricated from plastic material 21 and forming a pair of elongated support legs 223 having interior surfaces provided with a plurality of semi-circular opposed recesses 24 that are dimensioned to receive and captively engage the opposite sides of vertically spaced strands of wire 101 that are suspended from fence posts 100 in a well recognized fashion.

[0022] Turning now to FIGS. 3 and 4, it can be seen that the upper portion of the split shaft member 20 is provided with a rounded and elongated aperture 25 at the juncture of the bifurcated support legs 223, and the lower portion of the support legs 223 is tapered and further provided with a latch 26 and groove 27 arrangement for connecting the lower portion of the support legs 223 in an abutting relationship relative to one another.

[0023] In addition, as shown in FIGS. 2 and 5, the intermediate portion of the support legs 223 is further provided with multiple tongue 28 and groove 29 arrangements for maintaining the intermediate portions of the support legs 223 in an abutting relationship with one another.

[0024] By now it should be appreciated that the fence stay construction 10 is employed by separating the support legs
2223 from one another and dropping the split shaft member 20 downwardly over the vertically spaced fence strands 101 wherein each of the strands is captively engaged within selected pairs of opposed recesses 24 in the support legs 2223 when the support legs 2223 are attached to one another in an abutting relationship via the tongue 28 and groove 29 and/or the latch 26 and groove 27 arrangements.

[0025] Although only an exemplary embodiment of the invention has been described in detail above, those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that many modifications are possible without materially departing from the novel teachings and advantages of this invention. Accordingly, all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of this invention as defined in the following claims.

1. A fence stay construction for maintaining the strands of a wire fence at a preferred vertical spacing relative to one another wherein the construction comprises:
   a pair of support legs adapted to be secured to one another in an abutting fashion wherein at least one of the abutting surfaces of the support legs is provided with a plurality of vertically spaced recesses dimensioned to selectively receive a portion of the strands of wire.

2. The construction as in claim 1 wherein both of the abutting surfaces of the support legs are provided with a plurality of opposed vertically spaced recesses that are dimensioned to selectively receive the strands of wire.

3. The construction as in claim 1 wherein said support legs are formed integrally with one another.

4. The construction as in claim 2 wherein said support legs are formed integrally with one another.

5. The construction as in claim 3 wherein the support legs are fabricated from plastic material.

6. The construction as in claim 4 wherein the support legs are fabricated from plastic material.

7. The construction as in claim 2 wherein the support legs have upper portions which are joined together to form an elongated bifurcated shaft member.

8. The construction as in claim 1 wherein the abutting surfaces of the support legs include at least one tongue and groove arrangement.

9. The construction as in claim 3 wherein the support legs have an upper captive end and a lower free end wherein the lower free ends of the support leg members are provided with a latch and groove arrangement.

10. The construction as in claim 3 wherein the abutting surfaces of the support legs include at least one tongue and groove arrangement.

11. The construction as in claim 10 wherein the support legs have an upper captive end and a lower free end wherein the lower free ends of the support leg members are provided with a latch and groove arrangement.

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