

# Building Your Bluebird Nest Box

Bluebird Nest Box design by: Warren H. Lauder

## Materials

Any Wood can be used, but  $\frac{3}{4}$ " white pine is easy to obtain.

Do not use particle board or plywood.

Wood should not be painted or finished.

For each house:

32" - 1x6 pine, trim to 5"

23" - 1x8 pine, trim to 6  $\frac{1}{2}$ "

12" - 1x12 pine

16 - 7 penny (7d) galvanized box nails

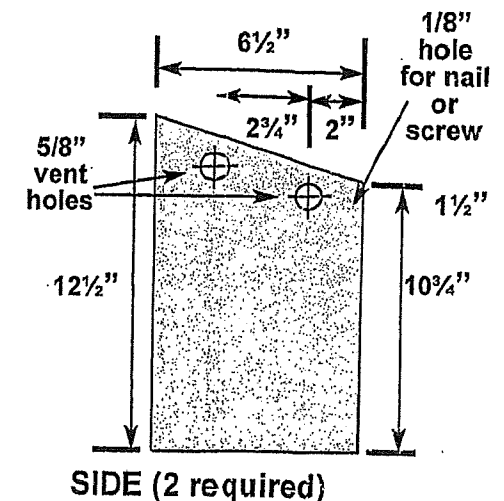
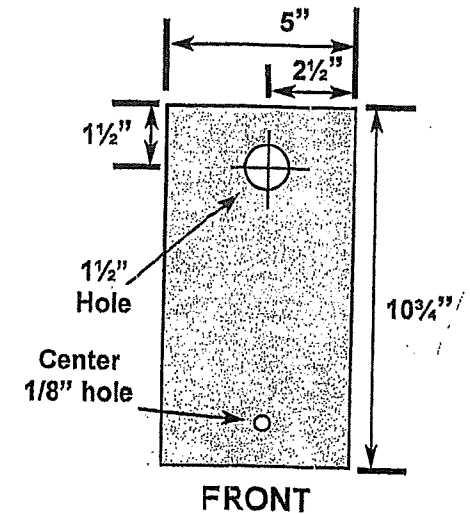
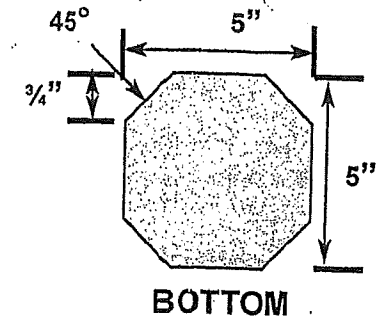
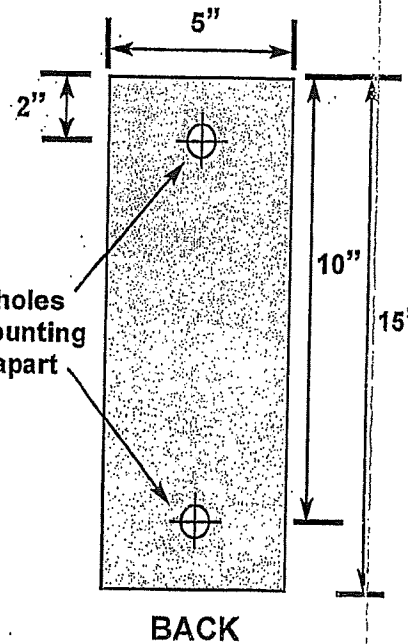
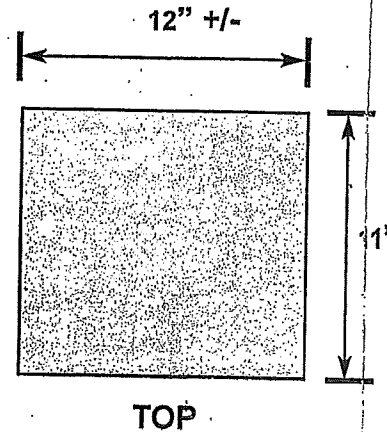
(or 16 - 2" decking screws may be used)

1 - 1  $\frac{1}{4}$ " brass wood screw, or 2" deck screw

1 dark-colored asphalt roof shingle, cut larger than top

## Assembling

1. Nail side pieces to back. Sides should be nailed flush. Top of each side should align with top of back, leaving excess of back panel on bottom. Slope of roofline should be toward front of birdhouse.
2. Nail bottom of birdhouse, recessing it  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from bottom of side pieces.
3. Attach front of birdhouse with two nails  $\frac{1}{2}$ " down from top of sides. (This provides cooling and allows front to swing open for cleaning.) Use brass deck screw in bottom of front to secure. Leave a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " gap at top of front for ventilation.
4. Nail on roof, leaving 2  $\frac{3}{8}$ " overhang on sides, 3  $\frac{3}{4}$ " overhang on front and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " overhang on back.
5. Seal crack at top back of birdhouse with caulking compound to keep out rain.
6. Cover roof with asphalt shingle, using five  $\frac{3}{4}$ " roofing nails. Extend over all sides of roof.
7. Cut deep scratches, in a criss-cross pattern, on the inside of the front panel to allow young birds to climb to entrance hole and emerge.



Drill 2 holes in both sides at the same time

**Bluebird Houses** are best placed on posts in open areas with short grass and a few trees. Keep them away from; farm buildings and houses, where starlings and house sparrows are common; brushy hedges, where house wrens will take over; and pasture fences, where livestock enjoy rubbing against the boxes.

The best bluebird nest sites are houses 100 yards apart on metal posts or pipes, 5 feet tall. Metal posts or stop sign poles offer the best protection against snakes, cats, and other varmints; on wooden posts, nail tin or aluminum sheets around the posts, covering 3 to 4 feet of the post below the nest box.

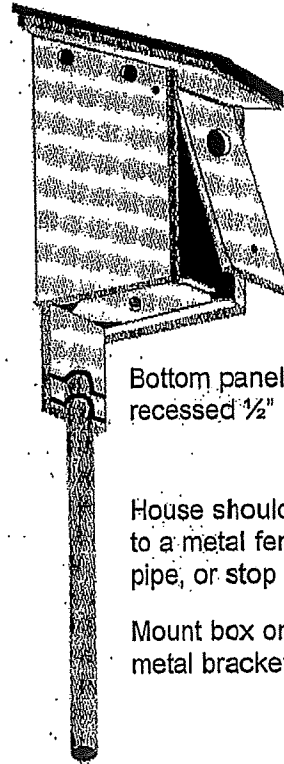
Good habitat is important for bluebird nest boxes. If your house is used by other birds, move the box. If the box is used by tree sparrows, place two boxes 15' apart. Sometimes bluebirds and tree swallows will nest as neighbors. Avoid placing bluebird nest boxes in woods or fastening them to trees where squirrels are likely to chew out the hole and take over the box.

Bluebirds build a new nest for each brood, and they nest two or even three times per season. Cleaning out the old nest before they start the new one will prevent their building on top of the old nest, which raises the eggs so high in the box that they become vulnerable to marauders.

The 1½" entrance hole keeps out starlings (but 3/16" smaller and the bluebirds cannot get in); ventilation holes and the slot above the entrance, plus a black shingle on top prevent overheating; the box depth and roof overhang keep birds safe from predators; the recessed floor and caulked back keep the box dry.

# The Finished Bluebird Nest Box

Roofing shingle protects houses from rain and promotes cooling



Bottom panel recessed ½"

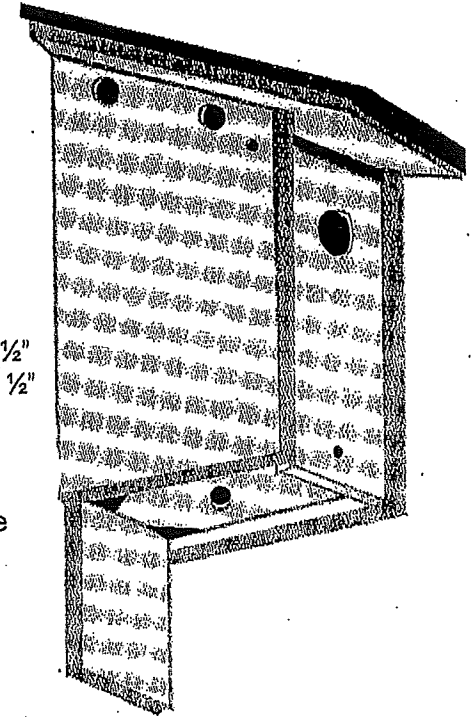
House should be attached to a metal fence post, pipe, or stop sign pole

Mount box on pole with metal brackets or two bolts

Vent holes and front slot keep interior cool

Roof overhang is about 2½" on sides, 4" on front, and ½" on back.

Front panel opens to allow cleaning of house between nestings.



## A Nest Box for Bluebirds

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