Dear Member

You may recall a previous email highlighting the development of an INTEGRATED BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT TEAM to : Help to protect and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the club facility

We have formulated various action plans including a focus on MICROHABITATS which aims to maintain and enhance the biodiversity through installing Bat boxes, Bug/Bee Houses, Hibernacula and Bird boxes.

We are all experiencing trying times at the moment regards Lockdown looking for ways to occupy ourselves and possibly teenage sons /daughters and younger ones. Are you looking for inspiration to vary the daily diet/routine and enhance family bonding!?

Well we would love you to support us by constructing a bird box which ultimately will be installed on the golf course (majority fixed to trees) later in the year and/or for next year's National Nest Box week in February.
If the opportunity arises for you to find the time, resources and the tools/equipment we would really appreciate your contribution

Hopefully you will see in the resources provided below it is not a complicated process
****In particular swift 'cups' construction appears to be ideal for younger children to participate in**

Please read the following which includes access to specific websites providing guidelines/templates for different bird boxes

If you have any difficulties please contact me (bill evison)- billevison@hotmail.com

If you can and do decide to contribute could you please email me giving your names and indicating which bird box you plan to construct.

Sincere thanks for your attention and hopefully support

Bill Evison and INTEGRATED BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT TEAM

Why build bird boxes

Birds are important because they keep systems in balance: they pollinate plants, disperse seeds, scavenge carcasses and recycle nutrients back into the earth

But potential nesting sites are disappearing due to the renovation of old buildings and the loss of woodland habitat due to Intensive farming and urbanisation as well as Hedgerows being decimated across the UK

Over UK 60 species are known to have used nest boxes but we are focusing on a much smaller number pertinent to our course and surrounding area

There are never enough holes and hideaways for specific birds - help them by making a nestbox

INSTRUCTIONS/GUIDELINES FOR OPEN FRONTED NEST BOXES:

Robin

https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/robin_nest_box_plan.pdf

Note robin nest box has a 100mm high open front panel which is also ideal for **pied wagtails**

With the same design make a 140 mm high open front panel for a wren

With the same design make a 60mm high open front panel for spotted flycatchers

INSTRUCTIONS/GUIDELINES FOR HOLE ENTRANCE NEST BOXES

Blue tit

https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/blue_tit_nest_box_plan.pdf

House Sparrow

https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/house_sparrow_nest_box_plan.pdf

https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/createasparrowstreet/

The design for Blue tit and house sparrow is the same but with a different size of hole

Make sure that the lower edge of the entrance hole is at least 12.5 cm from the floor of the **box** to keep the young chicks safe from predators or falling out.

****This same design can be used for the following but with different diameter openings:**

A hole diameter of **25 mm** will allow **blue tits, coal tits and marsh tits** to enter the box.

Provide **28 mm** hole for **great tits, tree sparrows, pied flycatchers**

Provide 32 mm hole for **house sparrows, and nuthatches**.

Provide 45 mm hole for **starlings**

****If you have it, fix a piece of roofing felt to the roof to prolong the life of the box and render it even more waterproof**.

Choice of wood used for the above

Undoubtedly wood is the best material to use; new or old wood, rough or planed, softwood or hardwood

Use what is readily available BUT:

Do not use CCA pressure-treated timber ie. tanalised wood as the toxic chemicals used to prevent wood rot or insect problems leach out harming chicks

Manufactured board (plywood and chipboard) are not suitable for outdoor use (except for resin-bonded marine quality plywood, which can be expensive)

You can use exterior-quality plywood or hardwoods (such as oak, cedar and beech)

Ideally has a 1.5-1.8cm thickness -The thickness is important to insulate the box from cold and heat and to stop the box warping.

If buying the wood ensure it is approved by the Forest Stewardship Council – look for the FSC logo.

**** soft wood such as pine will deteriorate quickly****

Fixings

Use galvanised nails or stainless steel screws ie. rust resistant

After Construction Completed :

Treat the **outside of the box only and not around the entrance hole** with a non- toxic water-based wood preservative product, such as 'Cuprinol' or 'Sadolin' (**not creosote**), to prolong its life and help repel water.

If you have it, fix a piece of roofing felt to the roof to prolong the life of the box and render it even more waterproof.

Please do not paint nest box

A very brightly coloured bird box can be conspicuous to predators or it might put off birds from using it altogether who may choose to use more natural looking sites nearby.

Also Dark coloured bird boxes will absorb heat and the temperature inside could rise to dangerous levels on warmer days, either suffocating the chicks inside or encouraging the growth of toxic bacteria.

Perches

Not necessary and may even act as a foothold for squirrels or weasels as they reach into the box to grab eggs and chicks

INSTRUCTIONS/GUIDELINES FOR BIRDS OF PREY NEST BOXES

**REQUIRE GOOD CARPENTRY SKILLS

** Please note the specific wood needed for these species

Kestrel (2 or 3 NEEDED)

https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/nestboxes-for-owls-and-kestrels/kestrel-nestboxes/

Tawny owl (ONE NEEDED)

For construction only use FSC-approved WBP exterior or WBP marine grade plywood (12 mm thickness),

****WBP - Weather and Boil Proof, the category of glue used to make the most durable plywood**

Use pressure treated (tanalised) 18mm planks, or 18mm softwood ply (known in the building trade as CDX).

Please avoid using hardwood ply unless it is stamped 'FSC Approved'.

****If pressure treated timber is not available, use a brush-on preservative and ensure that all the edges are treated before assembly.**

The Forest Stewardship Council (**FSC**)

Products with the **FSC** label are identified as products with their roots from well-managed forests

https://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/tawny-owl-nest-box-plan.pdf

https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/nestboxes-for-owls-and-kestrels/tawny-owl-boxes/

https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/barn-owl-nestbox/tawny-owl-nestbox/

Little owls

https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/barn-owl-nestbox/little-owl-nest-box/

https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/nestboxes-for-owls-and-kestrels/nest-boxes-for-other-species/

Barn owl (ONE NEEDED)

Materials to use

The basic owl box should be built using rot-resistant or Tanalith E treated sheet material manufactured using a waterproof adhesive.

Use 9mm exterior grade tanalised softwood ply (or structural exterior grade ply complying with EN314-2 Class 3, CE2+ or C+/C), 25 x 50mm tanalised batten and 30mm rust-resistant screws.

Please avoid using hardwood ply, unless it is stamped "**FSC Approved**".

Wood preservative

Where tanalised plywood is not available, any type of wood preservative may be used provided that the box is dry before erection.

It is essential that the edges and ends of all parts are treated *before* assembly.

https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/barn-owl-nestbox/owl-boxes-for-trees/

OTHERS

Swifts

https://www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/activities-pdfs/createahighhomeforswifts.pdf

https://www.swift-conservation.org/Nestboxes%26Attraction.htm (super varied choice)

https://www.bristolswifts.co.uk/swift-nest-box-design/ (difficult to follow!!)

https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/diy/how-to-make-a-nest-box-for-swifts/ (difficult to follow!!)

House martin Nest Cup (Super for younger children)

https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/how-to-attract-house-martins/

https://www.gardenersworld.com/how-to/diy/how-to-make-a-house-martin-nest/

Swallows nest cup

https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/3626630/Accommodating-swallows-swifts-and-house-martins.pdf

**BTO - British Trust for Ornithology