



## Bird-boxes Technical Guidance

### Size

Species	Conservation Status	Height of box from ground	Box with Hole	Open Fronted Box	Platform	Internal Dimensions (DxWxH)	Hole Size
Blackbird	• Green List	1 – 4m		X	X	130 x 130 x 300 mm	N/A
Blue Tit	• Green List	2 – 4m	X			100 x 100 x 150 mm	28mm
Great Tit	• Green List	2 – 4 m	X			100 x 100 x 150 mm	30mm
<b>House Sparrow</b>	• <b>Red List</b> • <b>London BAP Priority</b>	<b>2- 8m</b>	<b>X</b>			<b>100 x 100 x 150 mm</b>	<b>35mm</b>
Spotted Flycatcher	• Red List • London BAP Priority	1 – 3m		X	X	100 x 100 x 150	N/A
<b>Starling</b>	• <b>Red List</b> • <b>London BAP Priority</b>	<b>3 – 10m</b>	<b>X</b>			<b>130 x 130 x 300mm</b>	<b>52mm</b>
Swifts	• Amber List	5 - Xm	X			200 x 500 x 170 mm	65 x 35mm (WxH)
Robin	• Green List			X		100 x 100 x 150 mm	N/A
Wren	• Green List	0.5 – 8m		X		80 x 80 x 80 mm	N/A

### Materials

Nest boxes are traditionally made from wood, though designers are welcome to make proposals using other materials.

If using wood, hardwood, softwood, marine/external plywood are all acceptable, but chipboard should be avoided due to it's tendency to absorb rainwater. Wood should be at least 15mm thick.

If using another material, consideration should be given to the following:

- the temperature inside the nest -it should neither overheat, nor lose too much heat
- ventilation/breathability of material – condensation can build up and wet nests/chicks
- watertightness/drainage



- material finish - too smooth a finish internally may cause problems for birds trying to get in and out
- wood stain or other chemical preservatives should be used sparingly or not at all

## **Aspect**

Aspect is key when siting nest-boxes. In open situations they should be able to face north or east to protect from sun and driving rain. Given the variety of potential locations, it is important that the nest-boxes can be installed in a variety of directions and still have an appropriate aspect.

## **Waste**

Designs should bear in mind that some bird species (especially starlings) have a tendency to leave lots of droppings around the entrance to their nests, so consideration should be given to how to deal with this.

## **Repetition/Modularity**

Designers should consider that some birds, such as the House Sparrow, tend to be colonial and would benefit from a modular/repeating structure whereas some, such as the Blue Tit, are highly territorial.

## **Cleaning/Access**

Access for cleaning should be provided.

## **Predators**

Perches should not be included, as these can enable predators (e.g. squirrels and cats) to gain access

## **Suggested Reading**

### Holden, Peter

The RSPB Handbook of British Birds  
A&C Black, London, 2010

The RSPB Handbook of Garden Wildlife  
A&C Black, 2008)