Barn Owl Box Plans

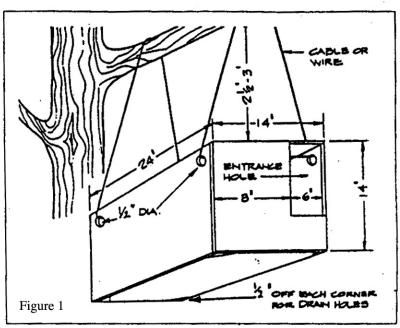


Sustainable Agriculture

Owl Nest Box Construction

There are many different methods of constructing barn owl nest boxes. Almost any closed box with a suitable hole in the front will suffice. Boxes can be installed in trees or on tall poles; they can even be placed inside barn walls, with a hole in the wall serving as the entrance.

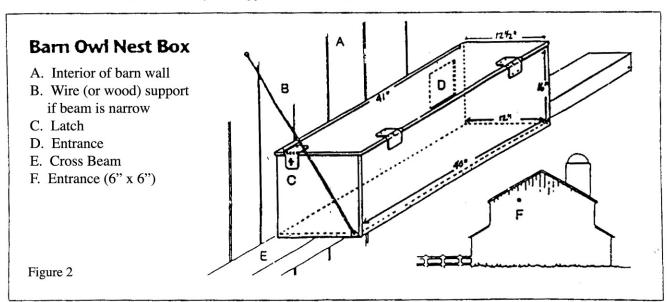
In Trees. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) has produced plans and instructions for building barn owl nest boxes in trees (Figure 1). Ideal tree species include oak and sycamore. Boxes should be hung or mounted 15 to 30 feet above ground, using six boxes per square mile. The building material can be 3/8-inch or 1/2 inch plywood, assembled with marine-grade plastic resin or exterior wood glue. The top is hinged to aid cleaning. The entrance is 12 inches tall. Boxes should be painted with drab green, black and brown to reduce human disturbance. A two-inch layer of sawdust or wood chips is placed in the bottom of the box; the shavings are replaced each year.

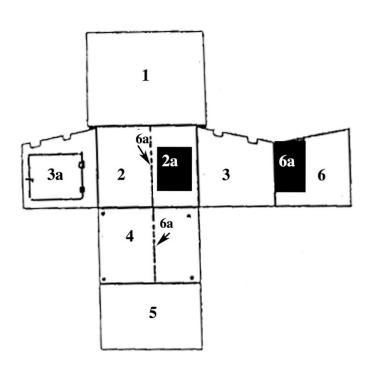


*Box must be secured to tree to prevent movement in heavy winds.

On Poles. Hilmar farmer Bill Genn has mounted nest boxes 15 to 25 feet high on utility poles. His boxes are 18 to 24 inches in each dimension with a six-inch opening. He faces the open end to the east away from the sun and prevailing wind. He also uses a double west wall with a couple of inches of space between walls and a shade over the roof to keep the nests cooler. Shavings are placed on the bottom for nesting material.

In Barns. Barn owls, of course, like to nest in barns. The Illinois Audubon Society recommends placing nesting boxes inside barn walls, 20 to 25 feet high, with a six-inch square entrance hole cut into the wall. (See Figure 2.) The barn wall acts as the front of the box. The top is hinged but kept securely latched. The box is nalled against the interior barn wall, and if necessary, is supported with wire or additional boards.





Barn Owl Nestbox Plans:

- 1. Top = 26" x 21" (2" overhang in front and 1" overhang sides and back).
- 2. Front = 24" x 18" with 7" x 10" cutout entrance (2a).
- 3. Sides = 18" x 18" x 15" (front slopes down in back). Drill two 2" air vents at top edge.
- 3a. Hatch door with hinges and latch for cleaning.
- 4. Bottom = 24" x 18" with 1/4" drain holes.
- 5. Back = 24" x 15".
- 6. Inside wall or baffle. a. Position baffle with cutout (6b) at back of box. Wall should allow 8-9" for entrance hallway.

Materials: Exterior siding or exterior plywood, 1 1/2" wood nails, wood glue, wood perservative, small hinges. Redwood ledge 1' x 3" optional.

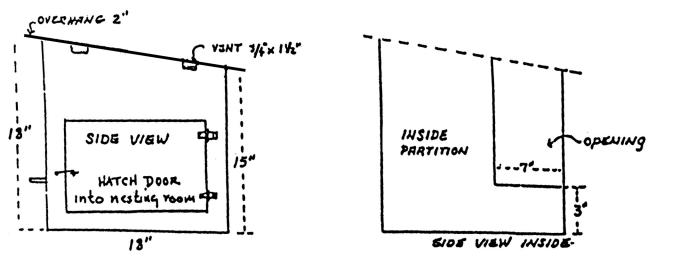
The Barn Owl nextbox should be placed 20-40' high in a large tree which provides shade during the afternoon sun. The entrance should face away from the prevailing winds and afternoon sun. The box may be bolted to 2x 4" (treated) lumber which is secured to the tree with two 8" lag bolts. Another method of placement is hanging the box with strong cable wire (see drawing).

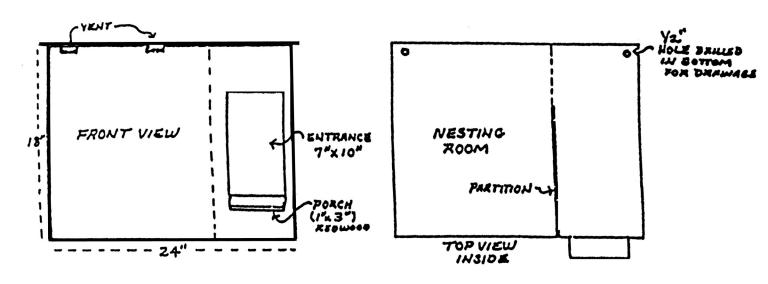
Nestbox should be cleaned out in the fall of each year.











CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

EXTERIOR SIDING 12"

REDWOOD 1"×3"

112" BOX NAILS

WOOD GLUE

HINGES OR 2"WIDD INSULATION STRIP

WOOD PRESERVATIVE

PLANS FOR BARNOWL NESTBOX UCD RAPTOR CENTER 1980
adapted from LENTON; TROLLOPE