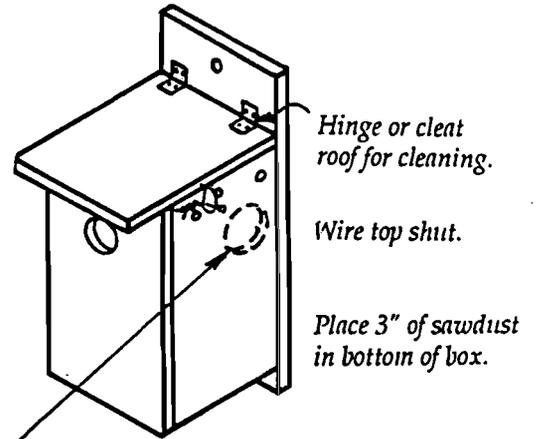
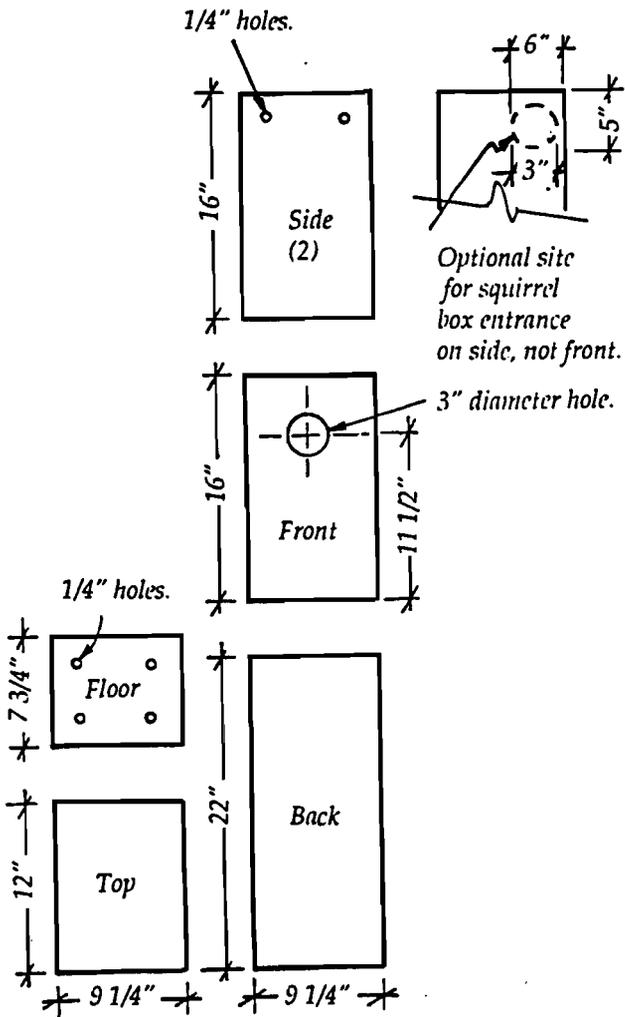


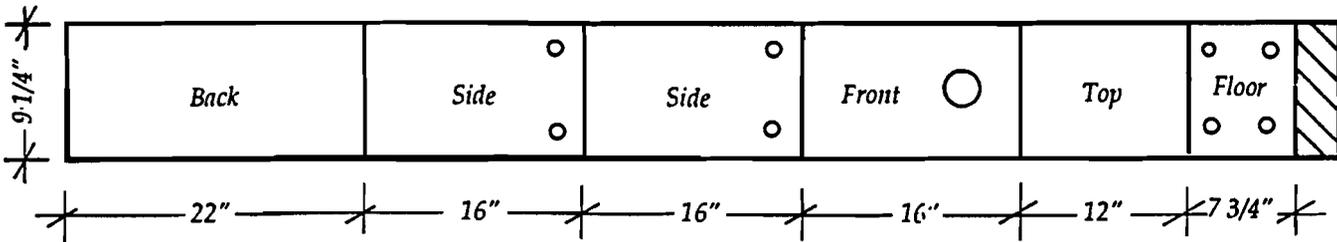
Homes For Wildlife

American Kestrel, Northern Screech-owl,
Northern Saw-whet Owl, Boreal Owl,
Gray Squirrel, Red Squirrel, and
Fox Squirrel Nest Box



Optional:
Locate 3"
diameter
entrance hole
here for
squirrel box.

Lumber: One 1" x 10" x 8' 0"



Compliments of:



MICHIGAN'S WILDLIFE NEED YOUR HELP.

"Look For the Loon" on your State income tax form and give to the Nongame Wildlife Fund. You can make a direct contribution to the Fund with a check made payable to: "Nongame Wildlife Fund." Mail to: DNR WILDLIFE DIVISION
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Your contributions are the primary support for critically important work for Michigan's nongame wildlife and endangered plants and animals.

Acknowledgement: Minnesota DNR,
Nongame Wildlife Program

Northern Saw-whet Owl

The tiny northern saw-whet owl is our smallest owl — only 7 inches high. It does not have ear tufts like the screech owl. It is seldom seen, but more common than formerly believed.

Preferred habitat includes either coniferous or deciduous forests, mixed stands of conifers and hardwoods, woodlots and swamps. Saw-whet owls will use the same type of nest box as northern screech-owls.

Saw-whet owl nests are usually quite high — 14 or more feet off the ground. Nest boxes should be placed in live mature trees. Most success reported by Doug Keran in Brainerd has been with boxes placed in red pine and jack pine trees. Areas near water seem to be preferred. As with screech-owl nests, 2-to-3 inches of wood chips should be placed in the bottom of the box.



Boreal Owl

Several years ago a pair of boreal owls was first recorded nesting in Minnesota. They can be expected to nest occasionally in Cook, Lake and northern St. Louis County. They are perhaps more common than formerly believed. More can be learned about the occurrence of this owl by placing nest boxes like the one in Figure 12 in coniferous forest habitats of that area.

Boreal owls usually nest in abandoned woodpecker holes like those of the pileated woodpecker and they have attempted nesting in wood duck boxes on the Superior National Forest. They have not yet responded to a planned nest box program, but it is likely that they will. Try placing nest boxes from 12 to 16 feet high in live hardwood trees. Report any nesting success to the Nongame Wildlife Program.

Northern Screech Owl

Northern screech owls are small gray or reddish owls with ear tufts which live in our hardwood forests. They are only about 8 inches high and resemble a miniature version of the more common great horned owl. The nest box for screech owls shown in Figure 12 should be placed at least 10 feet high in a hardwood forest. Preferred habitat seems to be on the edge of woods adjacent to fields or wetlands. To prevent use by squirrels the box could be placed on a pole with a predator guard. Since the entrance hole is 3 inches in diameter, persistent starling control may be necessary. About 2 to 3 inches of wood chips should be placed in the bottom of the nesting box.

American Kestrel

The American kestrel is our smallest falcon and is abundant in agricultural areas which are characterized by scattered woodlots, scattered trees, shelterbelts, meadows, highway rights-of-way, pastures and hay fields. This species is valuable because of the large numbers of rodents and insects eaten. Kestrels are frequently seen sitting on powerlines along highways or hovering above the grassy roadside ditches in search of their prey. An adult kestrel is about the size of a grackle.

Iowa has a program in which kestrel nest boxes are placed on the back of information signs along Interstate Highway 35 in the northern part of the state. The boxes are predator proof because the steel posts supporting the signs can't be climbed by cats or raccoons. The grassy interstate right-of-way is ideal habitat for kestrels. The boxes are strapped to the vertical sign posts with steel bands by using a steel banding tool that is normally used for strapping steel bands around freight.

The nest box shown in Figure 12 is ideal for kestrels. Place the box in orchards or relatively open country on a tree or a free-standing post that is 10 to 30 feet high. The tree or post should have a sheet of tin or aluminum nailed or stapled around it, under the box, to prevent squirrels and predators from using the box. Used aluminum offset printing plates can be purchased very cheaply from newspaper offices and used for this purpose. The nest hole should be 3 inches in diameter and preferably face south or west. About 2 to 3 inches of wood chips should be placed in the bottom of the box. Grassy habitat should be in the vicinity to provide hunting habitat for the kestrels.

Starlings may be a persistent problem in a kestrel box. The boxes will need to be checked regularly — every week or 10 days — to remove starling eggs and nests. Starlings are an unprotected species.

Kestrels normally lay five eggs that are white, pinkish-white or cinnamon, and they are evenly covered with small spots of brown. Occasional checking of the nest will not cause the kestrels to abandon the nest.

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For information or assistance on this publication, contact MDNR, Wildlife Division, P. O. Box 30444, Lansing, MI 48909-7944.

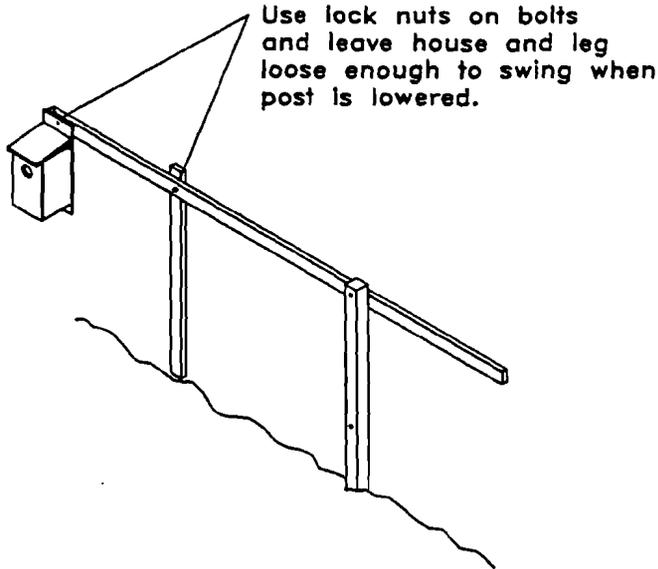
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
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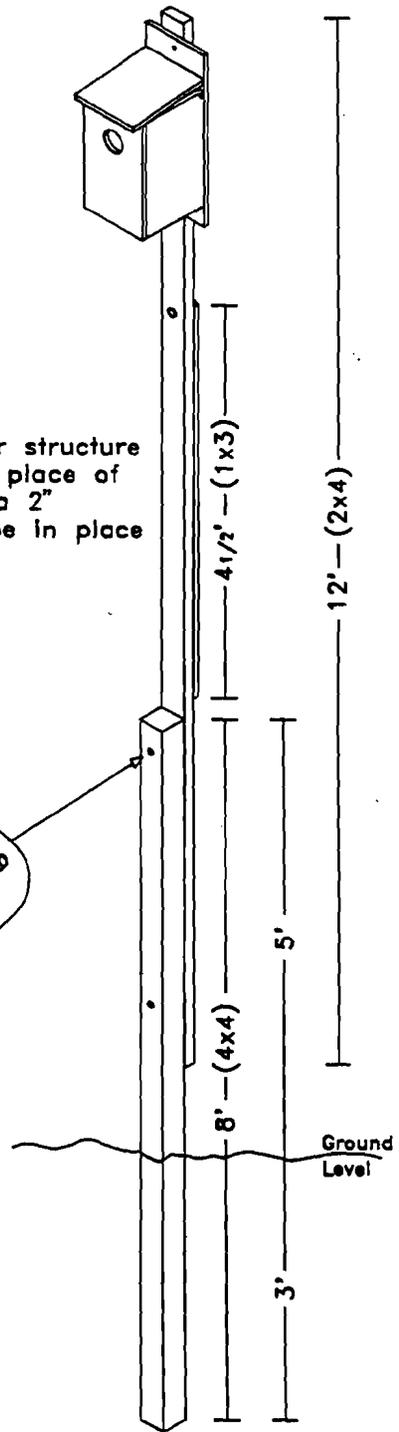
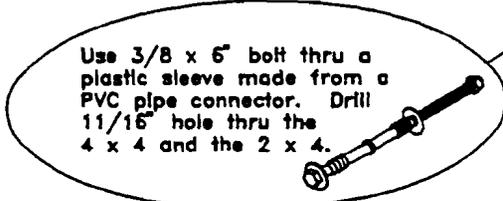
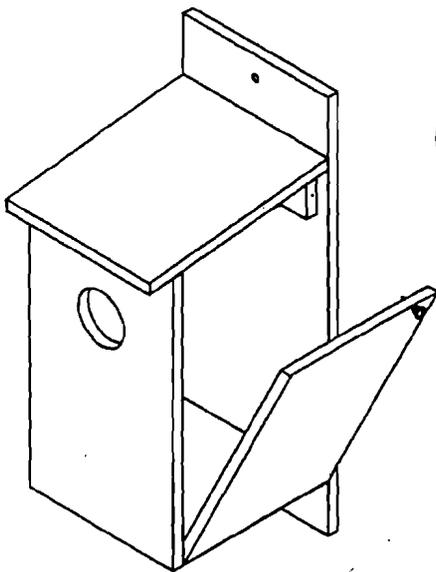
KESTREL HOUSE

WITH ONE PERSON

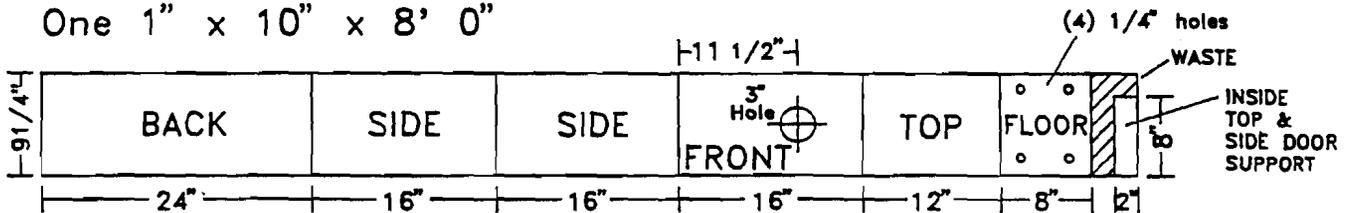
EASY CHECK MOUNTING



NOTE:
For a stronger structure use a 4x6 in place of the 4x4 and a 2" galvanized pipe in place of the 2x4.



Lumber for Kestrel house:
One 1" x 10" x 8' 0"



Compliments of the:
DNR Michigan Department of Natural Resources Nongame Wildlife Fund

KESTREL BOX MODIFICATIONS

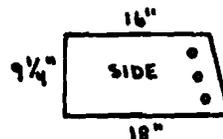
To Increase Box Suitability and Longevity

NOTE: These modifications apply to the box plans distributed by the Nongame Wildlife Program, Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources, Box 30028, Lansing, MI 48909. The modifications were developed in conjunction with the I-75 Kestrel Nest Box Project (1987-88) by Bert C. Ebberts, Consulting Wildlife Biologist, P.O. Box 156, Indian River, MI 49749. Sergej Postupalsky (Madison, WI) contributed some of the suggested changes.

1. Use rough-sawn cedar (white or red) or, as a last resort, white pine boards. Boxes made of pine should be stained to preserve the wood, while cedar needs no manmade preservative. Cedar boxes may last 25-30 years if properly constructed.

2. Use number 4 ardox box nails (spiral shank, gold color) to assemble the box, or brass wood screws.

3. Change the box design so that the roof slopes down from back to front, allowing it to shed water. A sufficient slope (12°) can be obtained by using the following side dimensions:



4. Use one large hinge on the roof instead of two small ones, and replace the wire closure with a hook-and-eye to secure the roof to the box.

5. Drill five drainage holes (1/2 inch diameter) in the box bottom and likewise three ventilation holes near the top of each side panel.

6. All boxes should be protected by a predator shield such as a 20 inch wide strip of metal flashing that tightly circumscribes the tree or post below the box. The overlapping edge should be securely nailed with 10-12 galvanized roofing nails to prevent raccoons from gaining a foothold in the seam. If necessary the entire shield can be coated with axle grease as an extra measure of protection against large raccoons.

7. Place about three inches of wood chips, not sawdust, in the bottom of the box for use as nesting material. Sawdust is so fine that it soaks up and retains moisture, thereby slowing drainage. Red cedar wood chips can be purchased at stores or co-ops that sell pet supplies, where the chips are usually marketed as dog bedding. Planer shavings also work well. The wood chips or shavings are needed because kestrels bring very little of their own nesting material into a box.

8. (Optional) Make the length of the back piece 24-26 inches instead of 22 inches, to facilitate ease of nailing during box placement.