Nest box dimensions

Read in conjunction with the drawings, the following dimension tables will provide you with all the information you need to produce suitable nest boxes for your local wildlife.

Table 4.1 Dimensions of bird boxes

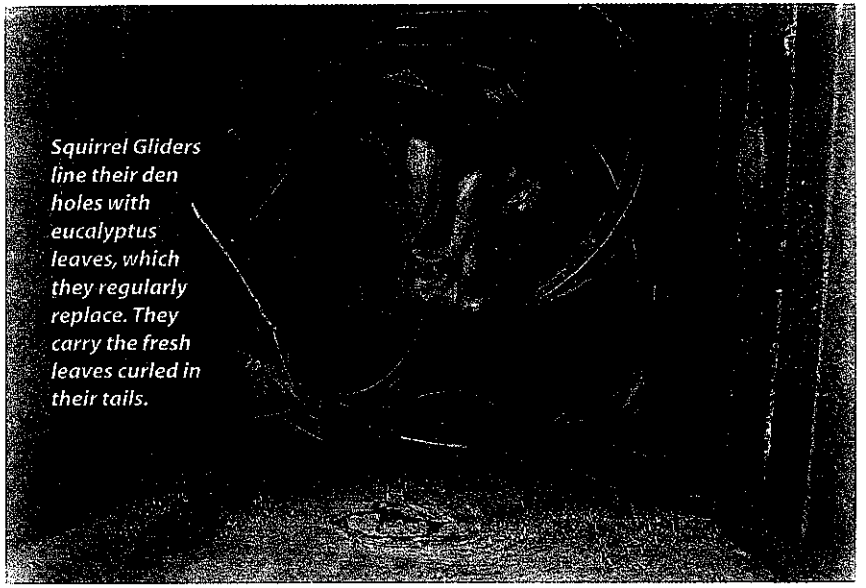
Species	*IM (mm)*	*DC (mm)*	*ED (mm)*	*HG (mtrs)*	*Comments*
Australian Owlet Night-jar	150×150	300	65	3–6	Short horizontal spout entrance for sunning
Black Cockatoo	300×400	1200	200	8–10	Very heavy chewer; Angled spout entrance
Crimson Rosella	180×220	450	75	3–5	
Dollarbird	150×200	400	70	6–10	Open access to hole
Ducks	250×300	100	150	1–3	Near water
Galah /Corella	250×250	500	100	5–7	Heavy chewer
King-Parrot	250×250	800	100	7–10	Angled spout entrance
Kingfisher	150×150	30	50	3–6	Horizontal spout entrance
Kookaburra	250×300	60	110	3–6	Horizontal spout entrance
Owl, Boobook/ Barn	250×300	500	100	4–6	Short horizontal spout entrance
Pale-headed/ Eastern Rosella	150×200	400	65	2–4	
Pardalote	100×200	100	40	3–6	Tube entrance 200mm long; fill chamber with wood shavings
Rainbow Lorikeet	150×150	400	65	2-4	
Scaly-breasted Lorikeet	150×150	400	55	3–5	Smooth bark or no bark
Thrushes and Robins	150×150	60	100	3–6	Nest builders
Treecreeper	150×150	350	60	3–6	
Wood Duck	250×300	100	150	3–10	Short horizontal spout entrance

Key: IM = Inside measurement; DC = Depth of chamber from bottom of entrance hole; ED = Entrance diameter; HG = Height above ground

Table 4.2 Dimensions of mammal boxes

Species	*IM (mm)*	*DC (mm)*	*ED (mm)*	*HG (mtrs)*	*Comments*
Brushtail Possum	250×250	300	100	2–4	Will use several den sites
Ringtail Possum	200×250	300	85	2–4	Will also build nest
Pygmy Possum	150×150	300	30	3–6	
Sugar Glider	150×200	300	40	3–6	2–5 boxes per colony
Squirrel Glider	150×250	300	45	3–6	2–5 boxes per colony
Feathertail Glider	*Top* 150×150 *Bottom* 150×20	300	30	3–6	Wedge-shaped box with bottom entry hole and/or slot
Yellow-bellied Glider	250×300	400	80	6–8	Will use several den sites
Greater Glider	250×250	400	90	6–10	Jagged spout entrance
Antechinus	150×150	200	30	2–4	
Brushtailed Phascogale	150×200	300	50	3–6	
Microbat	See diagrams	400	30 hole, 20 slot	3–5	Bottom opening

Key: IM = Inside measurement; DC = Depth of chamber from bottom of entrance hole; ED = Entrance diameter; HG = Height above ground



Squirrel Gliders line their den holes with eucalyptus leaves, which they regularly replace. They carry the fresh leaves curled in their tails.

Diagrams

When marking out from the plans, there is a simple way to maximize the use of the sheet of plywood. If you are not confident in marking out on your ply, templates can be cut from stiff cardboard and moved around for the best fit. It is then just a matter of tracing around the cardboard onto the plywood. The thickness of your saw cut needs to be taken into account.

Detail of nest box construction

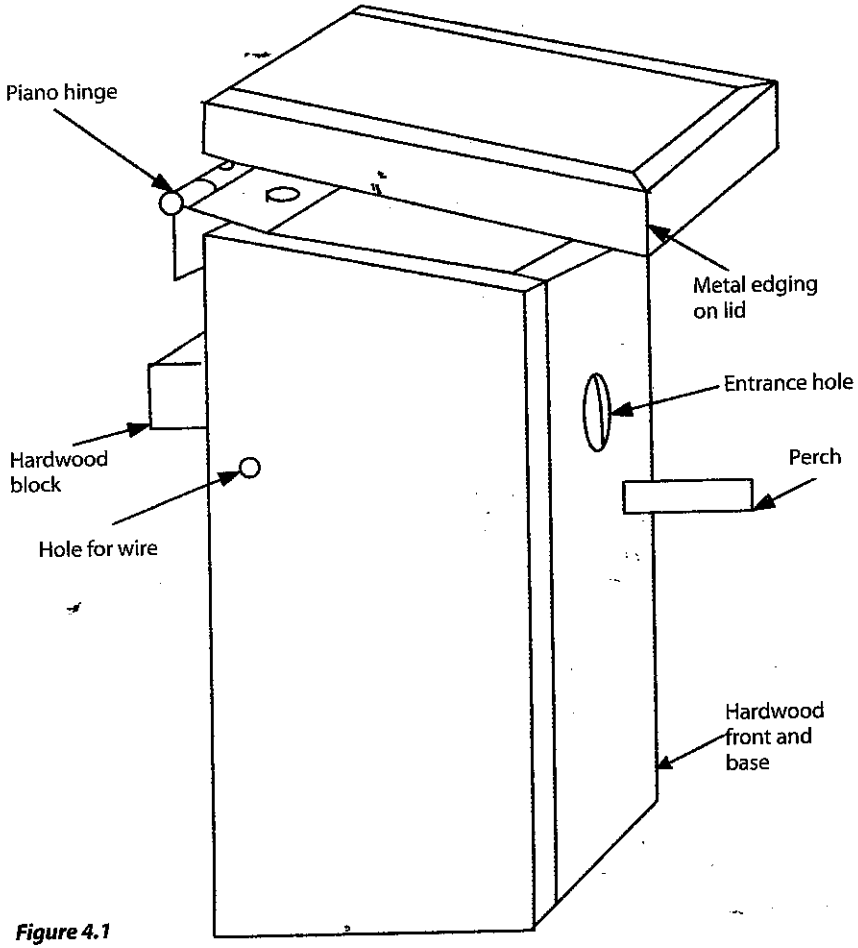


Figure 4.1

Ringtail/Brushtail Possum BOX

PLAN

These dimensions are for 19mm ply

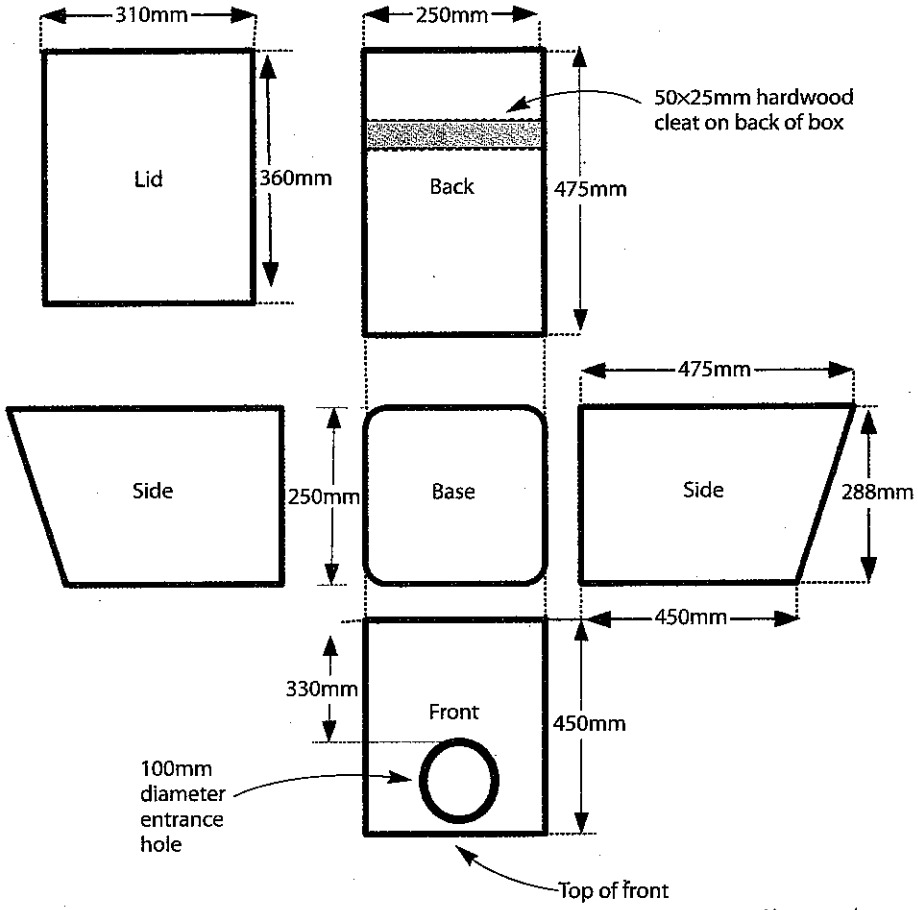


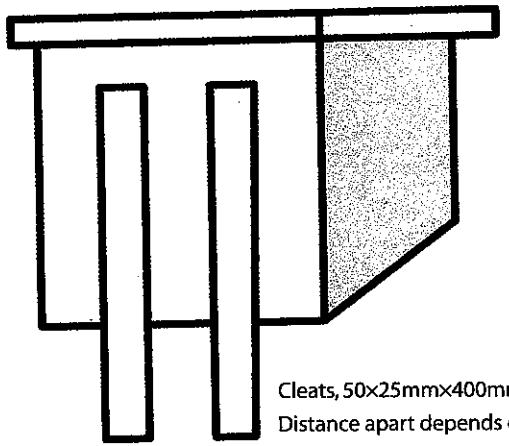
Figure 4.2

Not to scale

Kookaburra/Kingfisher/Wood Duck BOX

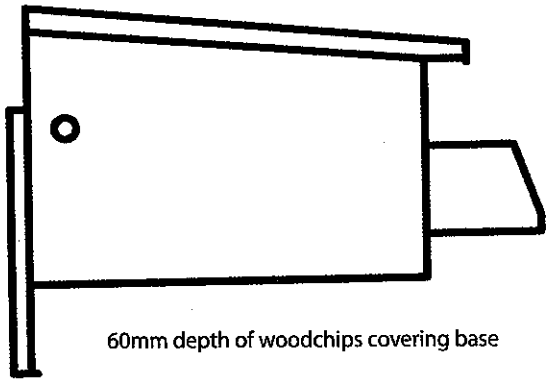
Dimensions are given for Kookaburra.
Refer to Table 4.1 for dimensions of others.

Rear view of Kookaburra box



Cleats, 50×25mm×400mm hardwood.
Distance apart depends on diameter of tree.

Side elevation



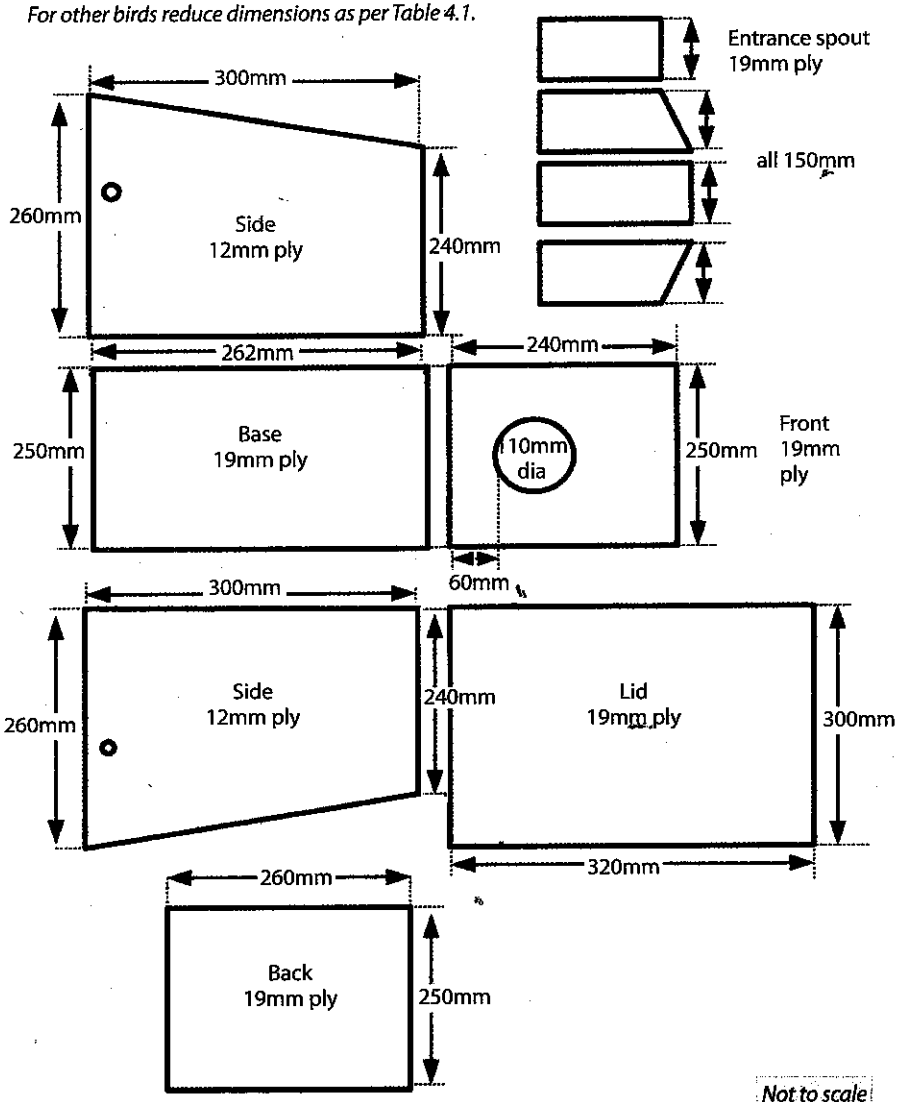
60mm depth of woodchips covering base

Figure 4.3

Kookaburra/Kingfisher/Wood Duck BOX cont.

PLAN

Plan for a Kookaburra nest box.
For other birds reduce dimensions as per Table 4.1.



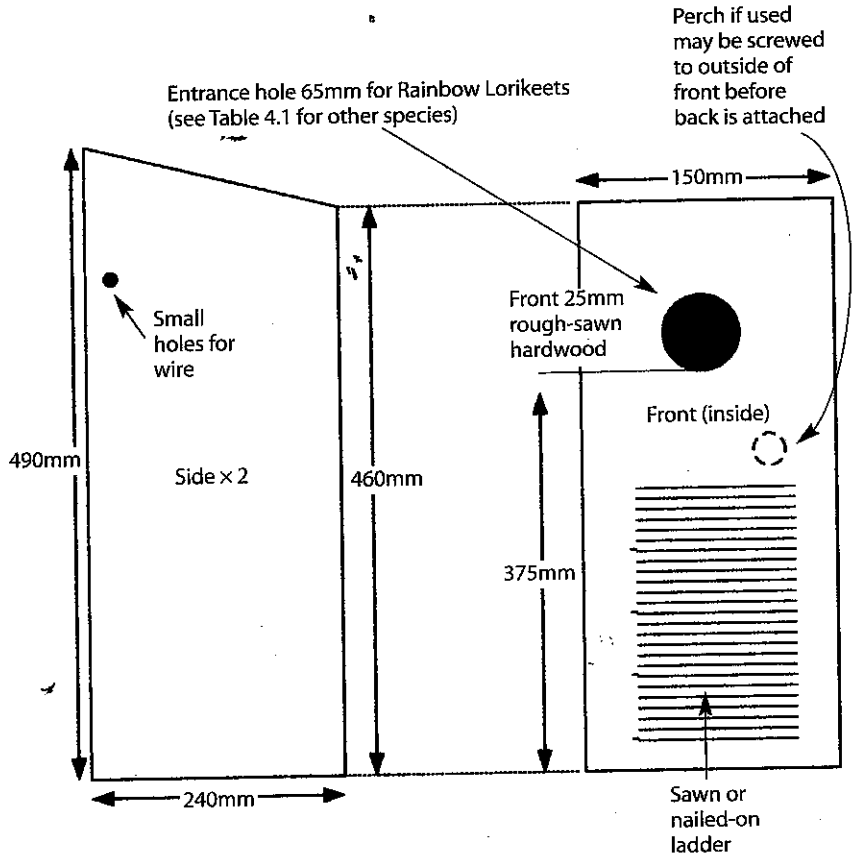
Not to scale

Figure 4.4

Rosella/Lorikeet/Sugar Glider/ Squirrel Glider BOX

PLAN

For Sugar and Squirrel Gliders hole size can be reduced to 45mm and perch omitted. It is important to ensure that there are no sharp edges or protruding screw tips.



Note: 50mm deep fine wood chips should be placed in base of finished box to replicate rotting matter in natural hollow.

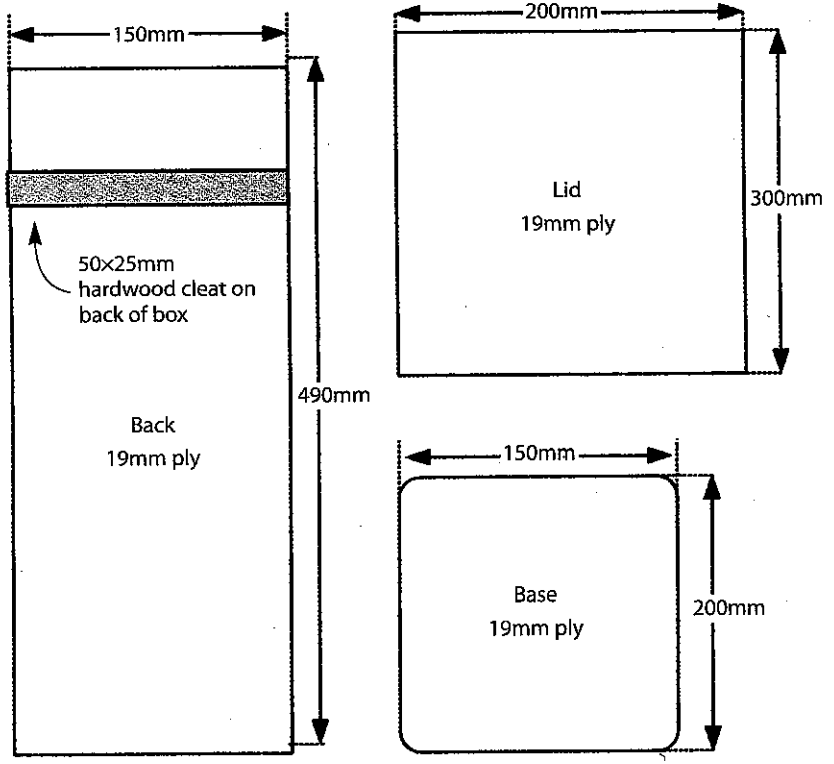
Not to scale

Figure 4.5

Rosella/Lorikeet/Sugar Glider/ Squirrel Glider BOX cont.

PLAN

Perches can be attached in several different ways. You can use dowel or, better still, find interesting branches. They are not a necessity, but birds do seem to like to sit on them at the entrance to the box.

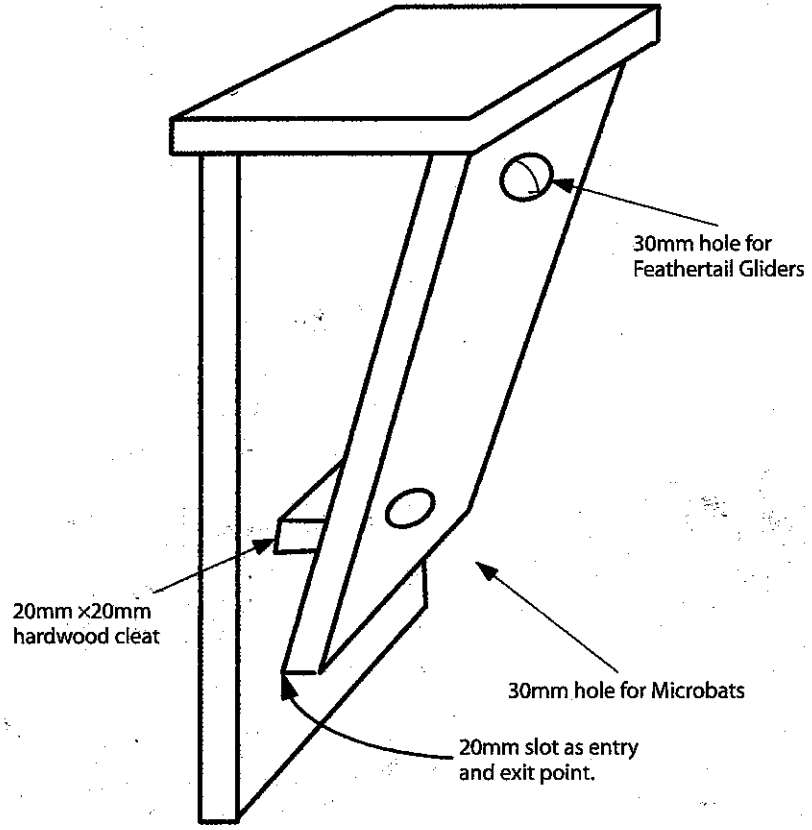


Not to scale

Figure 4.6

Feathertail Glider/Microbat BOX

Note: Side removed to show detail



Not to scale

Figure 4.7

Feathertail Glider/Microbat BOX cont.

PLAN

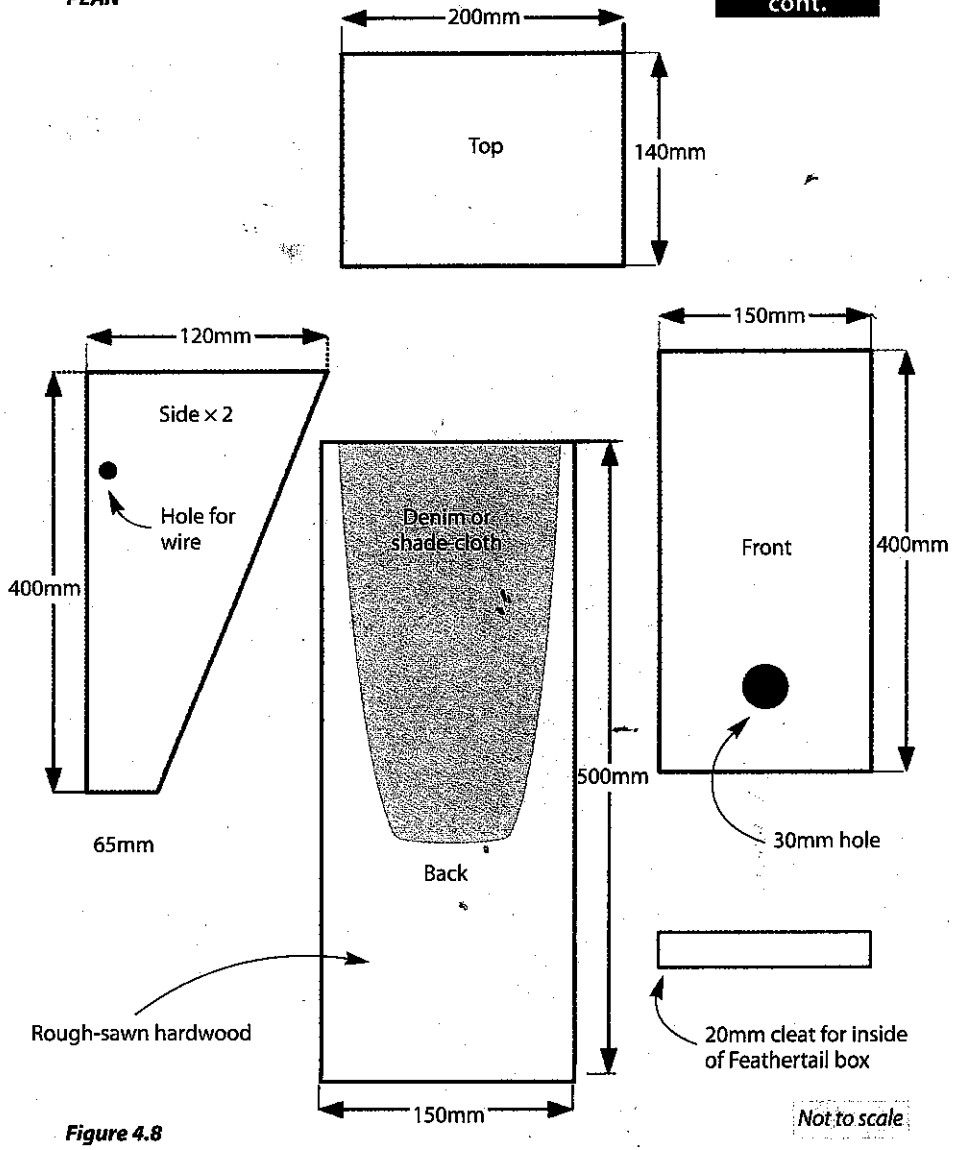
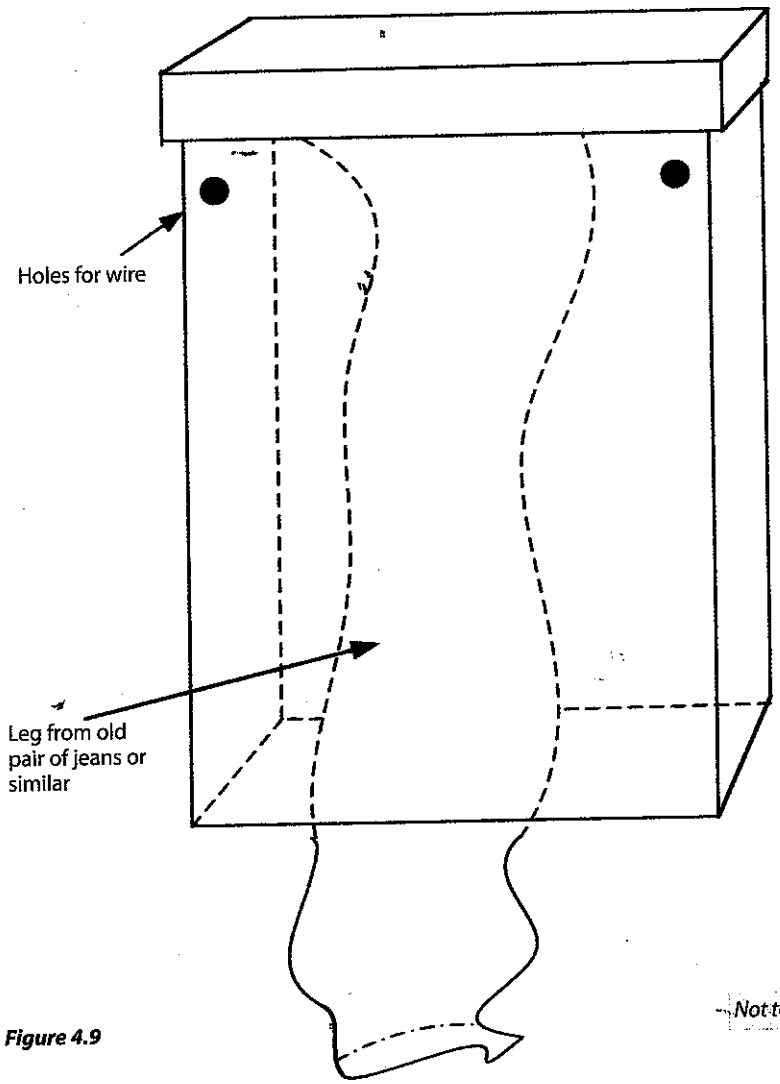


Figure 4.8

Not to scale

A simple hanging Microbat BOX

This box hangs under a horizontal limb.
The dimensions may be varied to almost any size.

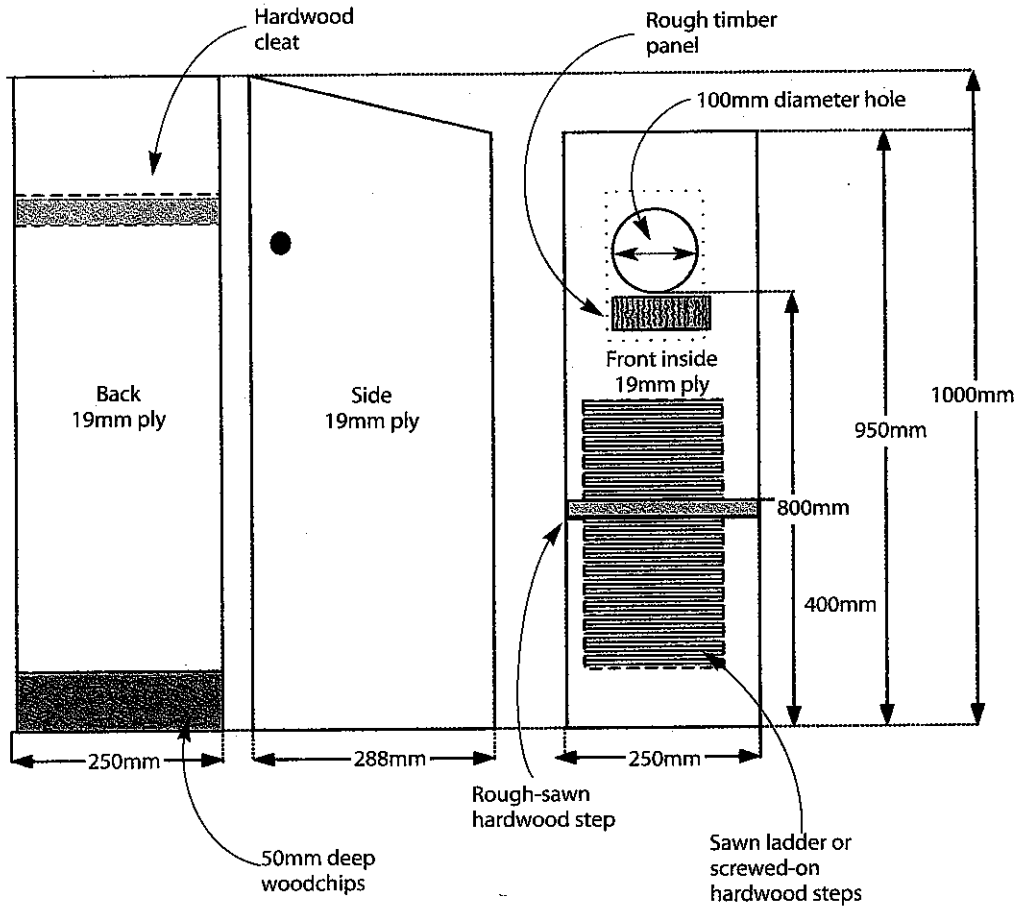


Not to scale

Figure 4.9

King-Parrot/Boobook Owl BOX

PLAN



Not to scale

Figure 4.10

King-Parrot/Boobook Owl

BOX cont.

PLAN

Note: If making the entrance hole 100mm or larger, a rough-sawn shelf and a rough panel at the entrance hole need to be included in case Wood Ducks use the box.

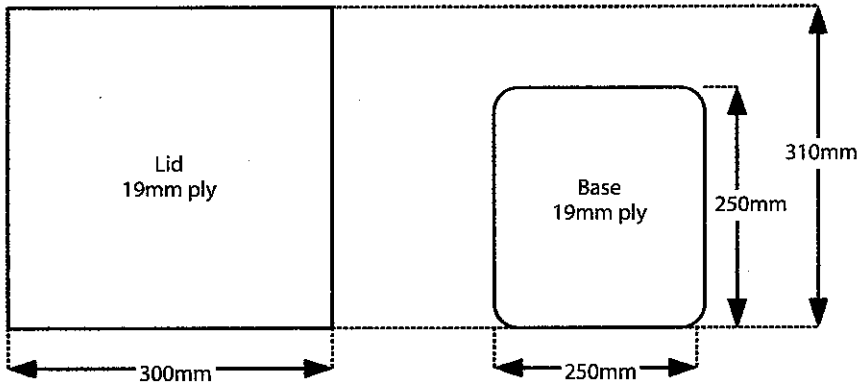


Figure 4.11

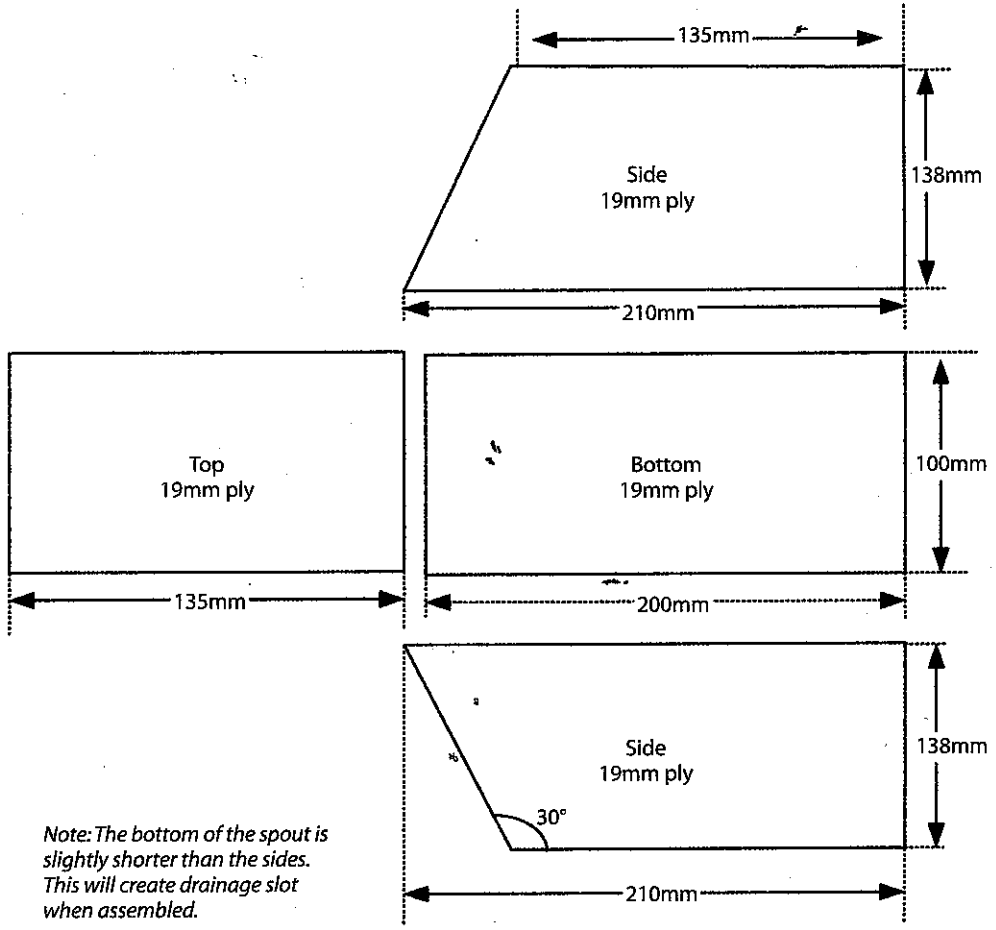
Not to scale

Spout of King-Parrot/Boobook Owl

BOX

PLAN

For King-Parrots place angled end over entrance hole; for owls place flat end over entrance hole.



Note: The bottom of the spout is slightly shorter than the sides. This will create drainage slot when assembled.

Figure 4.12

Not to scale

King-Parrot BOX

Note: For Boobook Owl, reverse spout

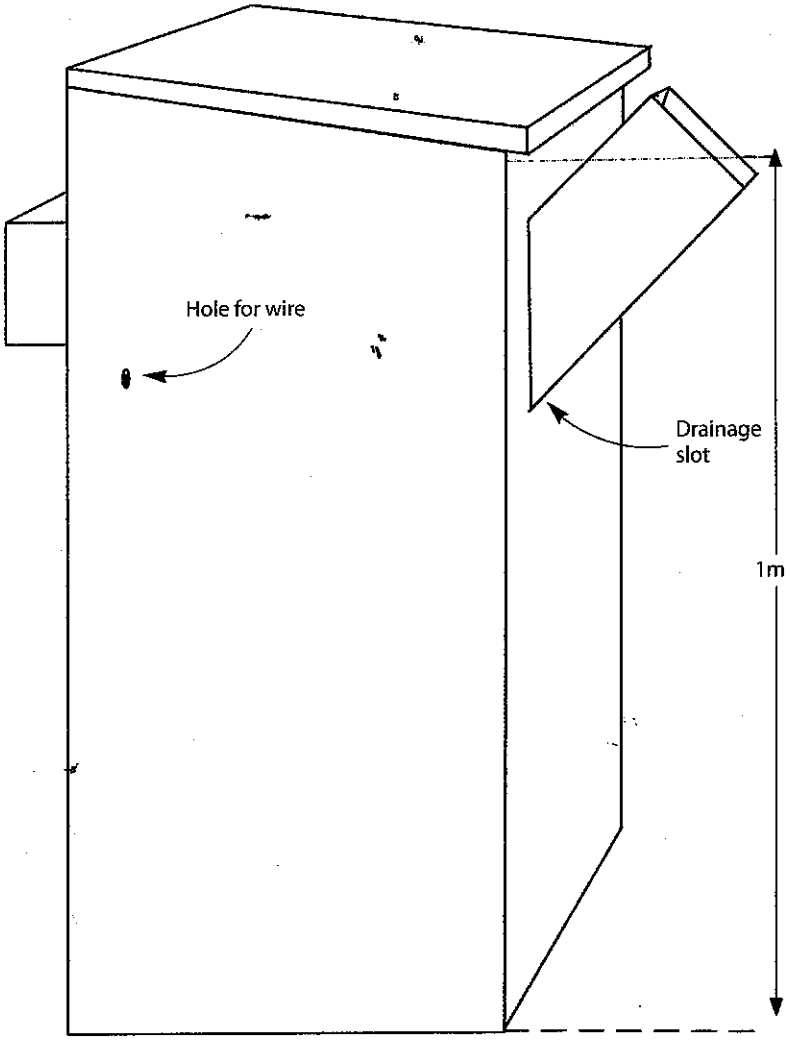
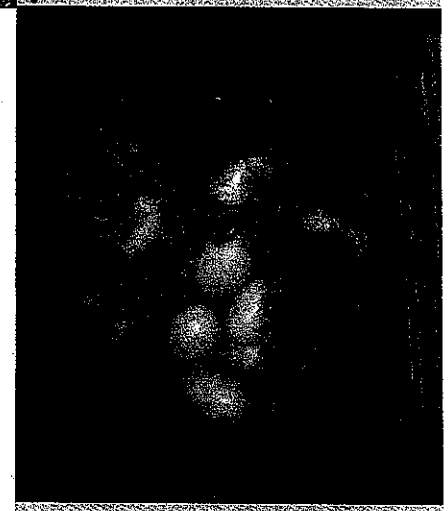


Figure 4.13

Chapter 5

In the garden



Wood Ducks have large clutches of eggs which they cover with down.

Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe.

H. G. Wells 1920, *Outline of History*

Food and water

As we have mentioned in Chapter 1, food will be the major attraction for wildlife in your garden. If you plant local indigenous plants you should attract local indigenous animals which feed from native plants. If you visit a reliable nursery that either specializes in native plants or has expert staff that can guide you in the right direction, you should be able to source the right types of plants for your area.

There are almost as many theories on feeding native animals as there are species. It is the authors' view that feeding native animals, if it gives you pleasure, is quite okay. You will not harm the animals or make them reliant on handouts. You will just see a little more of them than if they were off foraging all day. Keep in mind, however, that carnivorous birds such as Butcherbirds and Magpies will