

Build a Nest Box

THERE are few things in life more rewarding than watching a new generation of garden birds being raised in a nest-box that you've made yourself. Building a nest-box is great fun and is much easier than you might think.

To make a small-hole nest box you'll need to get a plank of wood from your local timber merchant or DIY store. The size of the plank is shown on the drawing. The thickness of the timber needs to be a minimum of 15mm.

You'll need a wood saw for cutting the plank into the pieces as illustrated, a hammer for nailing the box together and a drill for making the entrance hole.

To allow access to the box – for future cleaning – the lid can be hinged using a piece of rubber.

The species most likely to use your new box are Great tits and Blue tits although the boxes entrance holes for each species is slightly different. For the Blue tit the entrance hole needs to be 25mm and for the Great tit 28mm.

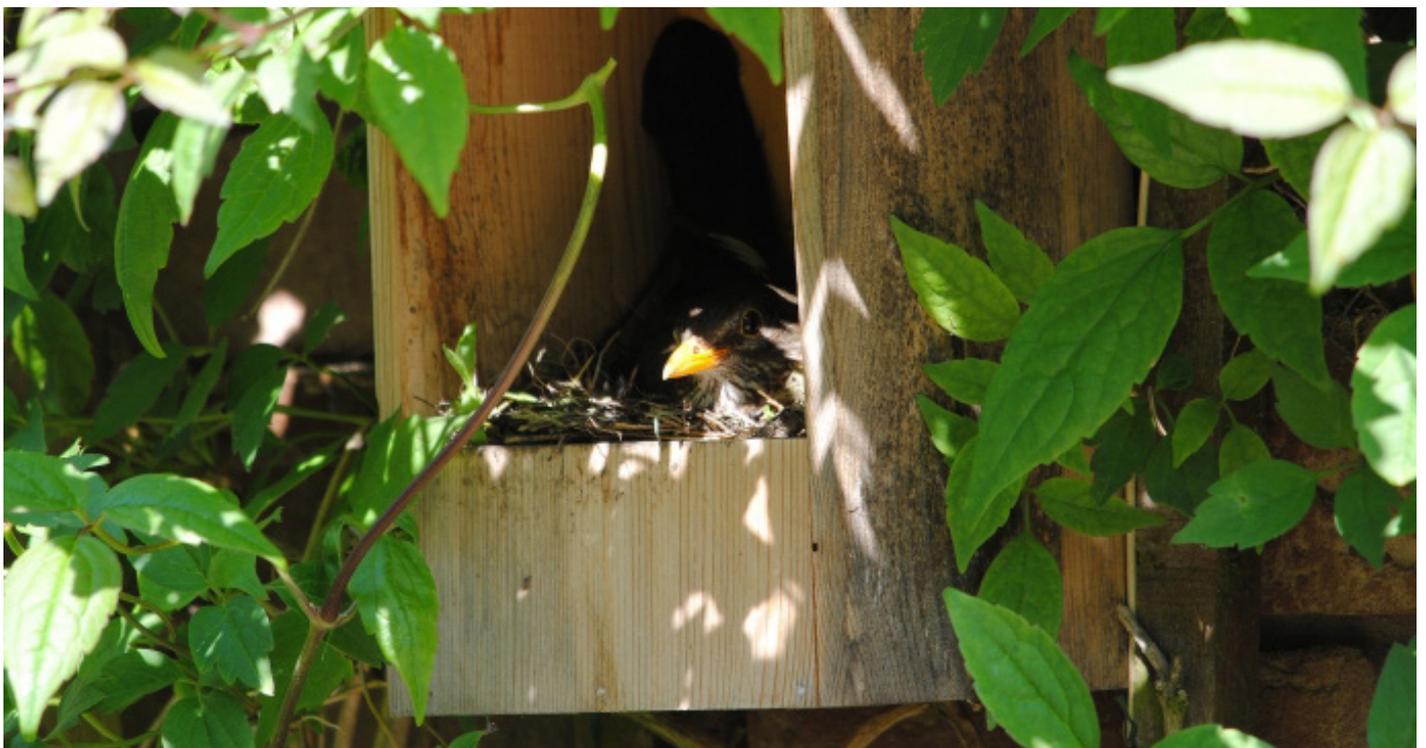
Some tips for when you fix your box on site –

- **Face the box either to the north or to the north-east – a south-facing box can get very hot during a sunny day.**
- **If you can, make sure the box is tilted slightly downwards, not upwards for the rain to come in.**
- **Fix the box around 4 to 5 metres high and ensure that birds have a clear flight-path to the entrance hole.**
- **Try to ensure that the box is out of reach of any of the neighbourhood cats.**

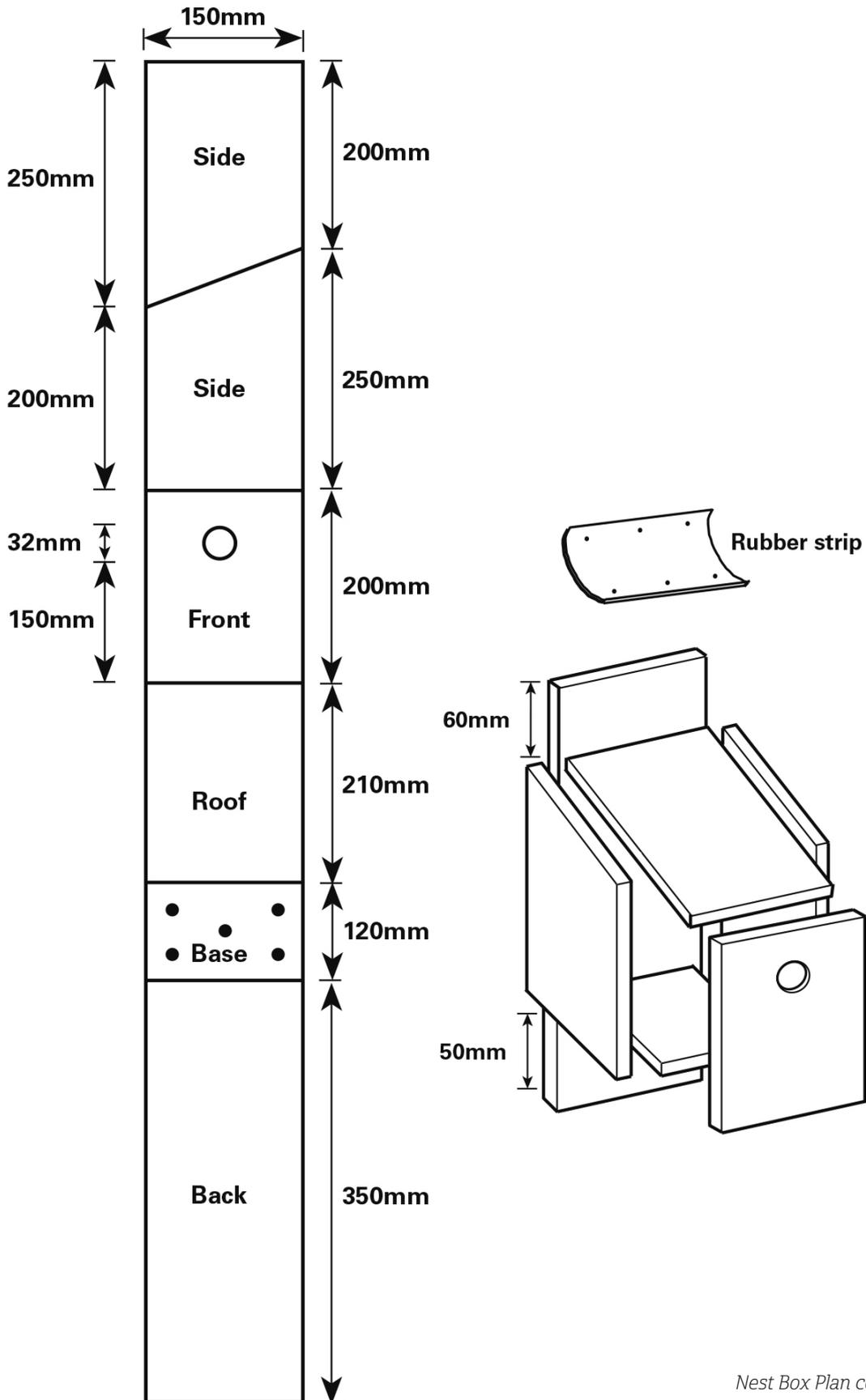
Finally, do ensure that your nest-box is kept clean once the birds have left – you'd be surprised the amount of bugs, centipedes, snails and other creepy-crawlies that are happy to move in once the box has been vacated.

Egg-laying usually occurs in May so, with not too many weeks left, it's time to get out the hammer and get 'boxing' – good luck!

MS



Nest Box Plan



Nest Box Plan courtesy of RSPB