



WHERE TO MOUNT YOUR NEST BOX

Place the nest box in habitats receiving 40-60% sunlight such as forests, woodlots, and yards with mature hardwood trees, forest edges or meadows.

Mount the box on a tree, pole, or on the wall of a house or shed about 5 to 15 feet above the ground (in an area safe from cats or raccoons). There should be enough open space in front of the entrance hole, without branches and leaves in the way, for the birds to easily fly in and out.

Chickadees feed their young insects so nest boxes should only be installed in gardens managed without the use of pesticides.



HOW TO MOUNT YOUR NEST BOX

Mount the nest box by drilling an exterior grade 3" (minimum length) screw to a pole leaving about 1" of the screw head exposed. Hang the box through the upper bolt hanger hole and pull down lightly until the screw comes out the top of the slot.

Lightly hammer a 2" (minimum length) nail through the middle of the lower stabilizer cut to prevent the box from swaying.



WHEN TO MOUNT YOUR NEST BOX

Mount your nest box anytime, preferably long before the Chickadees' breeding season begins (i.e., a sunny winter day). As winter residents, Chickadees will use nest boxes for roost sites during really cold winter nights. Remove the old nest materials annually prior to the breeding season .



NESTING BEHAVIOUR

Black-capped Chickadees can lay their eggs anytime between early March and early July. Laying begins one to two days after the nest is finished. Females lay one egg per day, in the morning. A complete clutch contains a maximum of six to eight eggs. Only the female incubates the eggs. The male brings food for the female during this time. The female will brood the nestlings until they hatch. The incubation period lasts 12 to 13 days. The amount of time she spends brooding the young gradually decreases but doesn't stop completely until the nestlings are around 12 days old. The male does most of the feeding of the young, but after the female ceases brooding, she and her mate feed equally. At 16 days, the young fledge. They continue to be fed by the parents for two to four weeks after they leave the nest, although they can feed themselves after 10 days.



MORE ABOUT NEST BOXES

Visit our website to view and download the Burke Mountain Naturalists reference document *How to Build Bird Nest Boxes* .

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Much of the research for the information in this document was provided by our long-term member, Kiyoshi Takahashi.

We acknowledge and appreciate Kiyoshi's tireless commitment and efforts to the local environment and bird populations.

BURKE MOUNTAIN NATURALISTS



HOW TO BUILD A CHICKADEE NEST BOX





NEST BOX BUILDING TIPS

- 3/4" Red Cedar lumber is recommended as it provides the best weather resistance. Douglas Fir, Western Hemlock and Pine may also be used. Use only unpainted non-treated wood.
- Joints should be joined with 1 1/2" to 1 3/4" exterior grade wood screws and caulked (only if absolutely necessary) using silicone caulking or equivalent (non-toxic material) to resist rainwater leakage.
- Asphalt shingles can be attached to the roof by means of roofing nails or heat-seal which will protect the roof from damage and decay over time.
- About a 1/2" to 3/4" opening at the top of the front entrance board, combined with about a 1" protruded roofline will provide good ventilation.
- Four drain holes drilled in the floor, each approximately 1/2" in diameter, will provide water drainage.
- The entrance size should be exactly 1 1/8" in diameter. This will snugly fit to the bird's body size and will help prevent intrusions by other species or predators.
- A perch is not recommended as it may invite predators. Chickadees are able to fly right into the nest box. It is a good idea to use rough-cut lumber for the box construction as rough surfaces will help the birds to enter in the box, and will improve weather resistance over time.
- A small amount of dry grasses or wood shavings could be added as a bottom layer to the nest. Add no more than an inch in depth. Chickadees will blend pet hair with nesting materials. Any type of pet hair can be collected in a net and hung on the tree or eaves for Chickadees to pick up for their nest.



NEST BOX PLAN

A variety of small birds may use this nest box including Black-capped Chickadee, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, and Bewick's Wren.

