

BLUE BIRD BOX

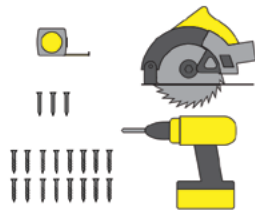
woodworking
FOR WILDLIFE

The eastern blue bird, with its deep blue wings and head and rusty-orange undersides is a welcome sight on farmsteads, suburban yards, and parks all across the Midwest. This summer insectivore thrives where forests meet open areas, a behavior that, along with their tendency to conspicuously perch on branches and fencerows, makes them an easy bird to recognize and enjoy. However, in many otherwise suitable habitats, eastern blue birds fail to find cavities in dead trees or branches to build nests and raise young. A well designed blue bird box can turn otherwise unsuitable areas into suitable ones. Build one or a few of these boxes, paying close attention to the size of the entrance hole and the dimensions of the box, and place it on a 4-6 foot post near a forest edge. Weekly monitoring during the nesting season to ensure exotic house sparrows or starlings haven't taken up residence will help blue birds or other native birds like black-capped chickadees make use of the boxes. Ideally boxes should be one hundred yards or more from human dwellings where starlings and house sparrows congregate. If a blue bird finds the box and successfully raises young, consider building more for families of blue birds to come back to every year. Clean out each box every winter and after a few years, you may have a whole community of blue birds making use of your boxes and lighting up summer days.

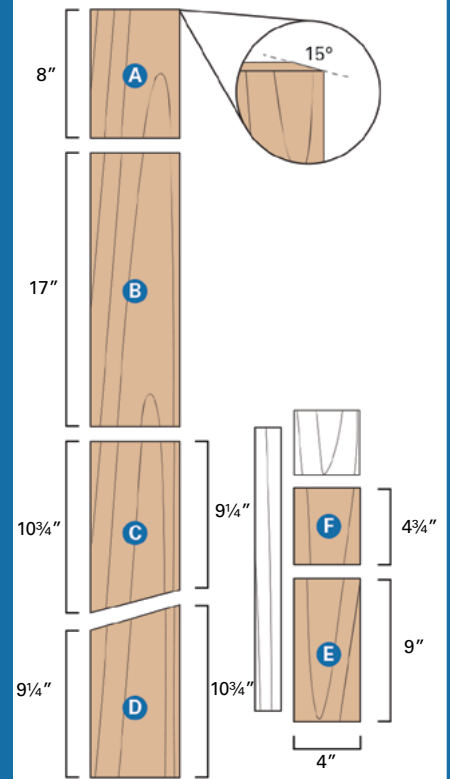
SUPPLIES

- 1 6 foot 1x6
- 16 1 5/8" deck screws
- 3 2" nails

- Circular saw
- Tape measure
- Drill
- 1/4" drill bit
- Drill bit the same diameter of nails
- 1 1/2" Hole saw bit

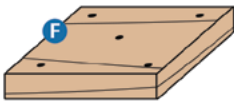


CUT SHEET

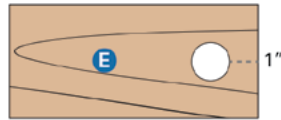


ASSEMBLY

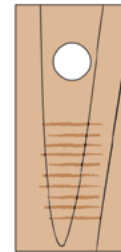
- 1** Drill five 1/4" holes through the bottom **F** to allow for drainage.



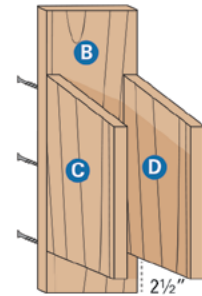
- 2** Use a hole saw to cut a 1 1/2" entrance hole on **E**. Align the top of the hole 1" from the top of the board.



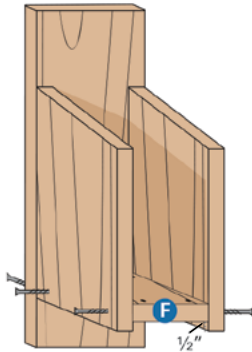
- 3** Roughen the inside surface of **E** with a rasp or utility knife.



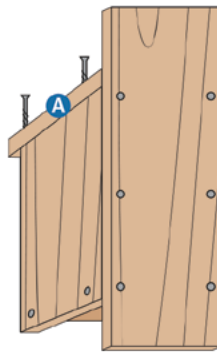
- 4** Attach the sides **C, D** to the back **B** 2 1/2" from the bottom of **B**.



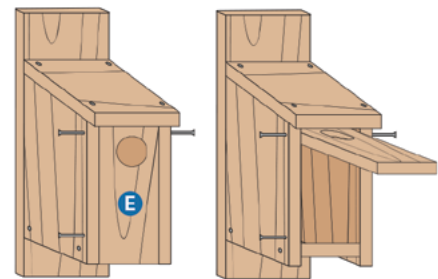
- 5** Mount the bottom **F** aligned 1/2" from the bottom of the sides.



- 6** Mount the roof **A** with the angled cut flush to the back.



- 7** Align the front **E** to be flush with the bottom of the sides. Drill two holes in a parallel plane from each side into the front and then push a nail into each hole to function as a hinge. Drill one additional hole at the bottom to keep the door closed with the third nail.



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IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

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