

Broughty Ferry Environmental Project

Bird box check list

The best place for a nest box is not always the most obvious! Sometimes a bird will use a box almost as soon as it is put up, while another box might stand empty for years. Follow these guidelines and you will increase your chance of success. Good luck.

- **Boxes should be placed where cats cannot reach them.**
- **Try to place them where they will not be exposed to severe weather. If you know there is a lot of wind or rain in a particular corner avoid that site.**
- **Put the box in a place where the bird has a clear line of flight. If possible there should be trees or bushes where the bird can land to check for predators then fly straight in to the nest.**
- **Avoid the mid-day sun, birds find it much easier to keep their young warm than to keep them cool. If it gets too hot in the box then the young may die. Some experts say that bird boxes should be placed on the north east side of a tree or building, while others say that if the nest box can get the early morning or late evening sun then the birds prefer it.**
- **It is important that nest boxes are water tight. Young birds get very cold if the nest gets wet.**
- **Think about the amount of disturbance the birds will get. If there are people always walking past the box or it is near a site where there are often sudden loud noises, then the bird may desert the nest and the young will die.**
- **Think about the fledglings learning to fly. If they fly straight into traffic and die on their first flight then you won't have many years of success.**
- **Don't use wood preservatives on the box, young birds are particularly susceptible to pesticides.**
- **Clean out the box once the birds have stopped using it, ideally in the autumn. Some people pour hot water through the box to reduce the risk of infection.**
- **When placing a bird box try to think like a bird. They are probably more like us than we realise! When looking for a house they want somewhere nice and warm, with nice neighbours, not too much hassle and a safe from disturbance.**
- **However much you are tempted, don't look in the box too often. The birds will be put off by disturbance and may desert their young.**

Broughty Ferry Environmental Project (BFEP) works with local people to improve the local environment and raise people's awareness of environmental issues. If you would like further information about BFEP or have ideas of your own that you would like help with, please get in touch. Call 436932, email environ.project@dundee.gov.uk or pop into Broughty Ferry Library.

