

## Barn Owl Nest Box Information

Information taken from The Barn Owl Trust

<http://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/barn-owl-nestbox/owl-boxes-for-trees/>

Barn owl boxes should be placed in a suitable tree. A suitable tree would be:

- A mature tree with a thick trunk.
- Isolated, in a hedgerow or on the woodland edge.
- With a high canopy.
- With few or no low branches.
- Where a nestbox can be placed at least 3 metres above ground level.
- Where the nestbox access hole would be visible to a passing owl, even when the tree is in full leaf and seen from a distance.
- Quite close to strips or patches of rough grassland.

### **Minimum requirements for Barn Owl treebox designs**

*If you choose to use a different design for your tree nestbox, ensure it meets these criteria:*

- Entrance hole: Optimum size: 100 x 130mm; minimum size: 100 x 100mm; maximum size: 150 x 150mm.
- Floor area of nest chamber: Good size range: 0.2 to 0.4m<sup>2</sup>; absolute minimum: 0.16m<sup>2</sup>.
- Depth from bottom of entrance hole to nest must be not less than 460mm.
- *NB: owl boxes with less depth may be acceptable if placed within the branches of a tree that a fallen nestling could climb, however, deep owl boxes are so much safer that we no longer recommend boxes with less depth.*
- *The ideal size for Barn Owl boxes is 1m<sup>2</sup> (floor area) x 1m depth but such big boxes are generally impractical.*
- Barn Owl boxes must have an exercise/landing platform below the entrance hole that allows climbing / jumping young birds to get from the box into the tree and vice versa.
- The platform must have a generous raised edge suitable for Barn Owls to grip easily and it should be positioned, and have sufficient shelter and drainage, to prevent rainwater being deflected into the box entrance.
- Interior must remain dry during prolonged heavy rain coming from any direction.
- All sides should overhang the floor and the floor should have adequate drainage. The installation of a (drier) false floor can be an advantage.
- There must be sufficient height difference between the nest and the external platform so as to prevent the accumulation of a continuous (internal/external) layer of pellet debris allowing rainwater to soak through the debris to the inside thereby chilling the nest contents.
- Roof should be covered in thick roofing felt guaranteed for not less than 10 years. Very steeply sloping roofs may not need covering but any apex join must be permanently waterproofed.
- Human access for easy clearing-out of nest debris is essential.

- Timber liable to decay within 20 years must be treated with long-lasting preservative: either pressure treated (tanalised) or surface treated including all edges of all component parts.
- All screws/nails and any metal fittings used should be rust proof.
- Measures aimed at reducing the chances of entry by other species (such as Jackdaws and Beech Martens) are to be encouraged provided that they do not significantly reduce the box's suitability for Barn Owls.
- Should be substantially constructed yet light enough to permit safe erection using basic equipment. Normal treebox weight range is 13-18kg. Total weight should not exceed 25kg and a tree box under 10 kg is probably not substantial enough.
- Should not be constructed from tropical hardwood unless the timber is certified as sustainably grown (FSC approved).
- Barn Owl boxes should be supplied with information that specifies an erection height of not less than 3m above ground level and stresses the importance of positioning within the tree branches in the case of boxes that have less than 460mm internal drop.
- Information provided with owl boxes should also cover the following subjects:
- foraging habitat requirements, nestbox positioning to maximise the chances of occupation (entrance hole visibility), the need for clearing out debris so as to maintain internal depth, nest box erection and attachment methods, human safety issues.
- As a general rule, Barn Owl boxes should not be erected within 1 km of any motorway, dual-carriageway or similar unscreened major road.



The can be bought from [http://www.nhbs.com/title/200041/barn-owl-nest-box?bkfno=216673&ca\\_id=1495&gclid=CKTGhanE98wCFdMV0woduc0NqA](http://www.nhbs.com/title/200041/barn-owl-nest-box?bkfno=216673&ca_id=1495&gclid=CKTGhanE98wCFdMV0woduc0NqA)