



Tree hollows and nest boxes

Tree hollows

Every creature on earth needs a home and, when reproducing, many species need a special, comfortable tree hollow just right for their needs.

In Australia there are 300 vertebrate species that use tree hollows, including over half of the microbat species.

Artificial tree hollows or nest boxes can be used by a range of birds and animals as a replacement for natural hollows in the landscape.



Although nest boxes are a great way to assist in conservation and observe local wildlife, they are only a stop-gap measure to make up for the loss of hollow-bearing old growth trees.

As a first-step, make sure existing natural hollows are protected and support the regeneration of trees that will form new hollows.

Natural hollows take 100 years and more to develop

Make sure there are other resources available that your target species will need, such as fresh water, a reliable, natural food source and safe areas in which to forage, shelter and socialise.



It's also important to know that the species you want to attract is appropriate for your area. For example, attracting an already abundant species, such as some larger parrots, may drive away other smaller species.

For smaller birds, it's often more helpful to

plant thickets of native vegetation in which they can hide and nest.

Be aware also that nest boxes can attract feral birds and bees so you need to monitor the nest box to see which species has moved in.

So if you're thinking of installing a nest box, it's very important to do your research and then keep an eye on it.

There are many helpful sites about nest boxes. These two are excellent.

[Build your own Wildlife Nest Box: A guide for Western Sydney](#)
[Bush Futures Nest Box Manual](#)

Council may support the use of suitable nest boxes on public reserves, but only if they form part of a Bushcare Group's approved educational program.

Nest boxes

Just as a natural hollow needs to be just right for a bird or mammal (including bats and possums), a nest box must be designed carefully and specifically for each species and its placement carefully considered.

In the same way we choose a home, a particular animal will be fussy about choosing a nest box and it must be comfortable and meet their needs.

Dimensions, entrance size, hollow depth below the entrance, construction materials, location and aspect are all important. Materials are important to provide insulation to minimise temperature variations.

For further information, contact Council's Natural Resources Unit on 4429 3392.