

Installing a Wild Owl Tawny Owl Nest Box



Erecting a tawny owl nesting box is a valuable contribution to tawny owl conservation. Installed in a suitable wooded area or copse where natural hollows may not be available, the box will provide a valuable nest site or roost.

Here are some tips on installing a Wild Owl tawny owl box, including maintenance and monitoring.*

* This advice is relevant to boxes put up for tawny owls - boxes for other species may have other requirements.

Installation

Nb. Please ensure that all relevant safety precautions are taken to avoid injury when climbing ladders and using tools - safety helmets should be worn at all times.

- Tawny owl boxes should be installed externally (i.e. not inside buildings)
- Ideal fixing point for this type of box is on the trunk of a large tree on the woodland edge, a copse or in a stand of trees in a garden or similar.
- Avoid installation within close proximity to major roads or motorways, to minimise risk of low flying owls becoming traffic casualties.
- Height of box top fixing point should be approximately 10 -16 ft
- Ensure entrance hole is not obstructed and bird has a clear flight path into box
- Box should preferably face approximately East / N.E. / S.E. This is not critical in dense woodland.
- Tawny owl chicks will leave the box at approx. 3½ weeks of age, to branch into the upper tree canopy, where they will grow up. Therefore, it is important that there are branches close to the box entrance to assist the young in climbing up to the canopy.
- Do not put any nest material inside the box - this is not needed.
- Fix box using steel M10 Hexagon headed bolts - one bolt at top and one at bottom on fixing points. Ensure bolts are tightened securely to avoid the box moving, but make allowance for the natural bend in the tree trunk and do not over-tighten against the bend, as this may result in damage to the box and/or fixing point. If necessary, brace box using additional fixings to ensure that it is firmly fixed.
- Avoid placing box above water-filled ditches, which may present a hazard to chicks if they fall from the box.
- It is not recommended that tawny owl boxes are installed close to areas of regular family activity, as tawny adults can be very protective in the breeding season and may attack humans and/or pets in defence of their young.