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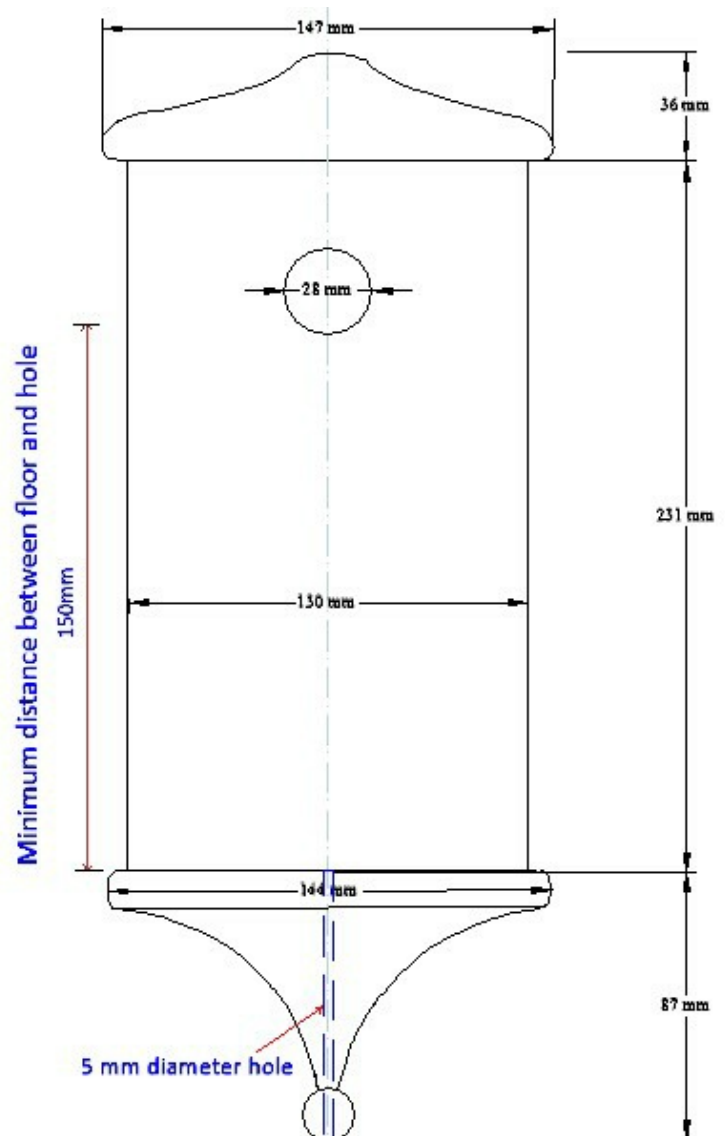
Bird Nesting Box



I think it was last year when a demonstrator at the club turned a bird nest box. It looked an interesting project so, having an ash log handy I decided to have a go. Maybe it will attract a better class of bird life.

I try to avoid deep hollowing as a general rule and this project certainly makes plenty of shavings but it was a chance to put the Sorby ring tool through its paces. It makes short work of end grain but becomes aggressive if tilted much beyond 11 o'clock. Don't worry if you haven't got a special hollowing tool

When hollowing the nesting chamber large jaws on the scroll chuck are desirable because of the long overhang



Note groove in base to help centralise base unit

A couple of tips when hollowing out the bird box. It is a virtue to leave the inside walls rough and there is no point sanding inside. The R.S.P.B stipulates that the wall thickness of the box should be left at a minimum of 15 mm. to provide sufficient insulation. Birds can use nest boxes for shelter during inclement weather and cold nights as well as rearing young. So a 6 mm wall thickness used in some nest box plans would be inadequate.



If you haven't got Cole jaws a jam chuck will be fine when you are reverse chucking having completed the inside

To make the hollowing process easier it would be possible to hollow from both ends and meet in the middle so that a tube results. A little ingenuity may be required to devise a method of holding the work safely.

Drill the hole for the bird to enter.

The bird species you are trying to attract determines the hole diameter. For a great tit a 28 mm diameter is recommended. For a blue tit a 25 mm diameter hole is best

In this design the base and roof are made from different timbers to provide a colour contrast. Of course this would be pointless if you plan to paint it.

The photo opposite shows the base. The 4 holes in the rim allow the base to be screwed to the body. The base is screwed rather than glued so that the nest box can be cleaned out at the end of each nesting season as recommended.

Drill a 5 mm hole through the centre of the base to facilitate drainage. (See photo on right)

In terms of finishing there is a debate about the use of paints .If you decide to paint it the R.S.P.B. advise the use of non-toxic water based paints. You may need to repaint it as the paint weathers and starts flaking.



Rather than paint it I used a couple of coats of boiled linseed oil which is suitable for external use. Only the outside of the box was treated.

Site the nest box so the entrance faces somewhere between north and east but not south.

John Hawkswell