

# Barn Owl

With its ghostly appearance, rasping shrieks, and habit of roosting in such places as church belfries, this bird has attracted many superstitions. However, it is a good omen for farmers who find it in their barns, for it preys chiefly on mice and rats. Discovered in its daytime retreat, the Barn Owl bobs its head and weaves back and forth, peering at the intruder. At night it is often heard calling as it flies high over farmland or marshes. The Barn Owl is one of the most widespread land birds found on six continents and many islands.

**Habitat:** Barn Owls like woodlands, groves, farms, barns, towns, and cliffs. Barn Owls may nest in forests or a city if a nearby area has good open foraging territory, such as farmland, marsh, prairie, desert.

**Nesting:** In courtship, the male performs display flight, including loud wing-claps; the male feeds the female.

**Nest:** Uses sites in caves and hollow trees, also many artificial locations such as barn lofts, church steeples, abandoned houses, dry wells, crevices under bridges, and nest boxes. The Barn Owl will dig holes in dirt banks where no existing cavities are available. No actual nest built but will arrange debris into crude depression.

**Nest Box Placement:** Mount the nesting box between 8 and 25 feet from the ground. The nesting box entrance hole can face any direction. Space boxes 100 feet apart.

## Helpful Tips

- Prefer open habitats, such as agricultural fields.
- Barn Owls are very sensitive during the early phases of nesting (April–May) and will abandon a nest if disturbed.
- Boxes can be placed in various structures, including barns, silos, granaries, grain elevators, and church steeples, or mounted on a free-standing pole.
- When siting your Barn Owl box, keep in mind that hungry owlets can be noisy when clamoring for food. Take care not to place the box near your home, or they might keep you awake at night.
- Clean out the old nest materials when the owls are not nesting; December is generally a good time.

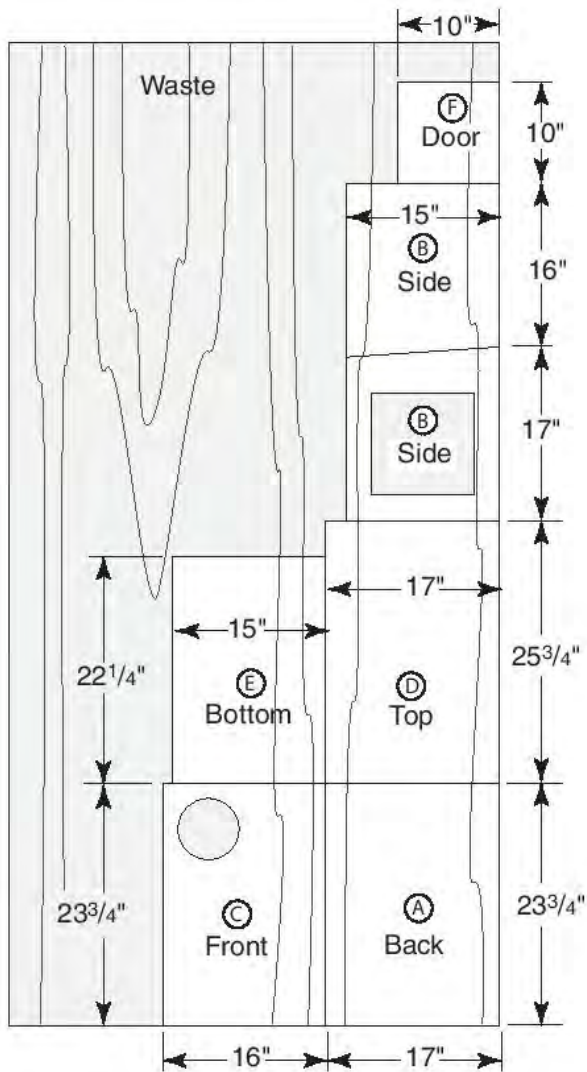
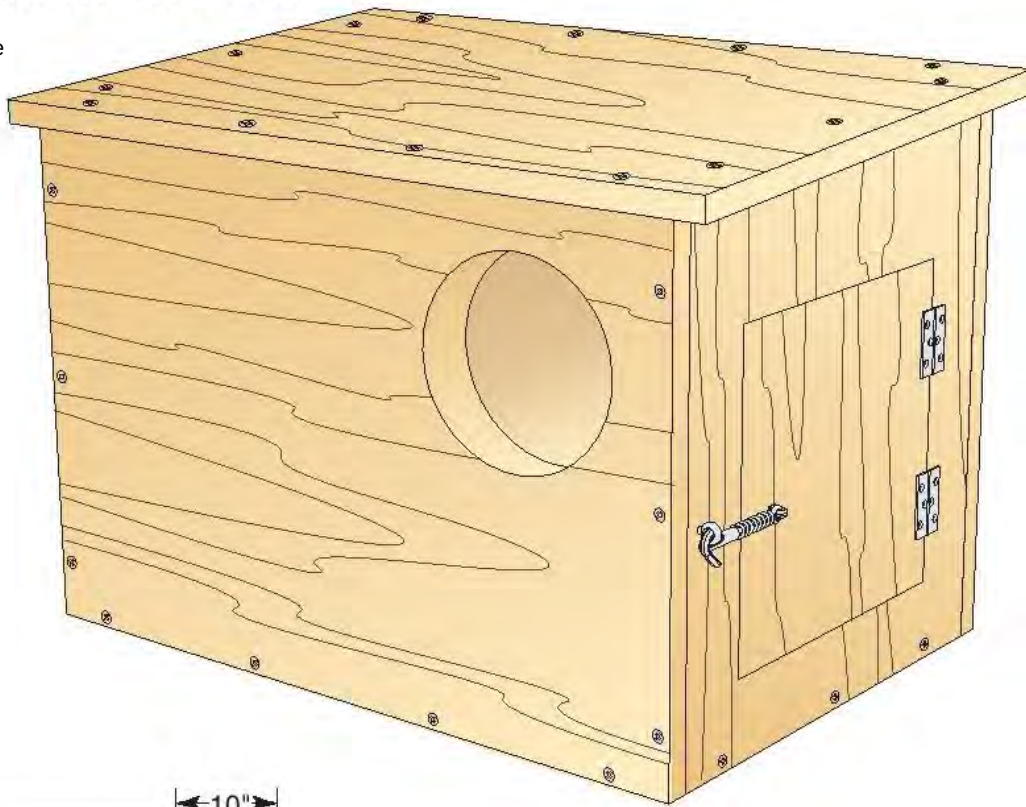
To learn more about North American birds and backyard birding activities, visit:

<https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities>

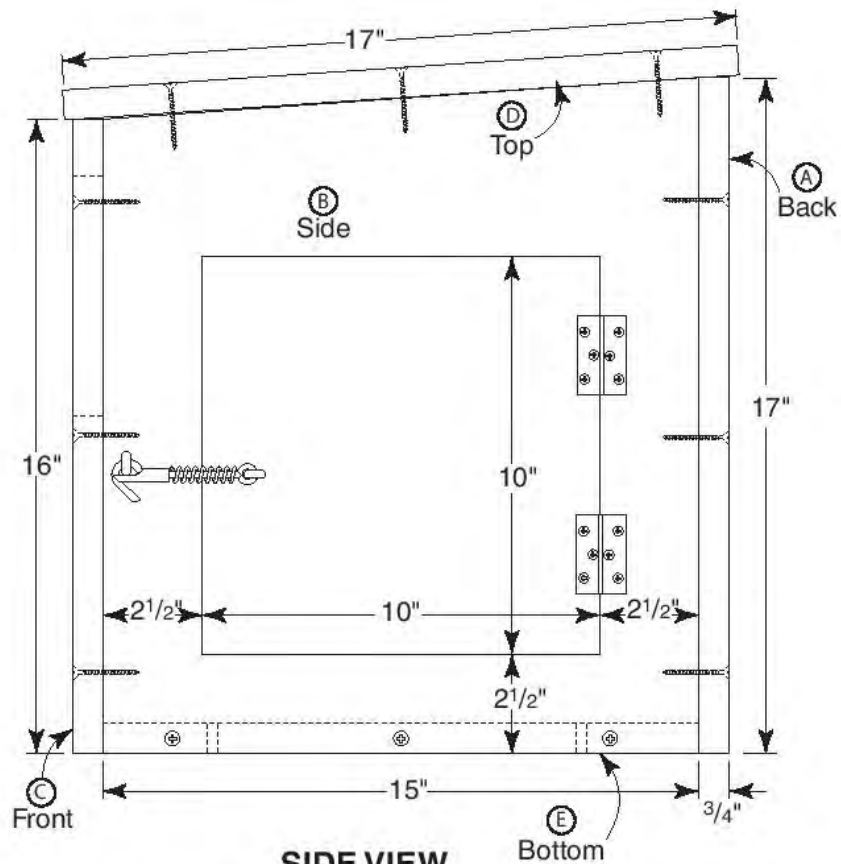


# BARN OWL NESTING BOX PLAN

Project Plan: Marlen Kemmet  
Illustrations: Roxanne LeMoine



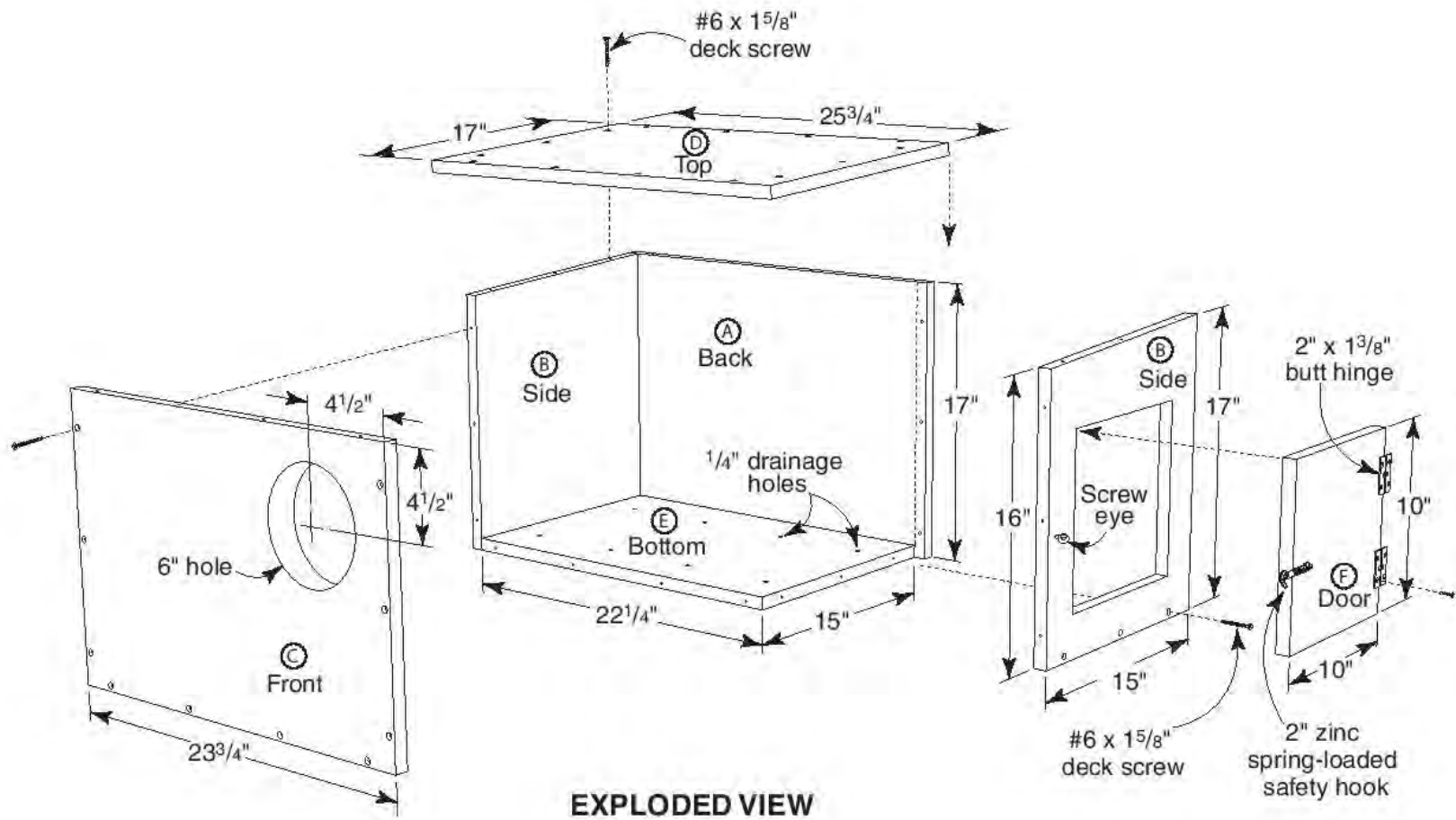
3/4 x 48 x 96" plywood



**SIDE VIEW**

**CUTTING DIAGRAM**  
(1 OWL NESTING BOX)

# BARN OWL NESTING BOX PLAN



MATERIALS LIST FOR BARN OWL NESTING BOX						
Parts	Thickness	Width	Length	Material	Pieces	
A	back	3/4"	17"	23 3/4"	C	1
B	sides	3/4"	15"	17"	C	2
C	front	3/4"	16"	23 3/4"	C	1
D	top	3/4"	17"	25 3/4"	C	1
E	bottom	3/4"	15"	22 1/4"	C	1
F	door	3/4"	10"	10"	C	1
C-choice of cedar siding, plywood						