

Bird Houses: Expert Tips

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Finding ideal nesting spots can be very challenging for wild birds. There may be a shortage of dead trees or an abundance of nest-seekers. When you place birdhouses and nest boxes in your yard, you invite wild birds to nest, raise their young, and retreat from inclement weather. Here are a few helpful tips you can use when you offer housing for wild birds.

Predator Protection

When you offer wild birds a place to call home, you may also invite unwanted guests and predators to your yard in search of an easy meal. To keep nesting birds safe, [pole mount](#) your [nest box](#). Many predators like raccoons, snakes, and cats have a difficult time climbing them. Also, place a [predator guard](#) at the entrance to further discourage harmful or destructive behavior.

Nest Box Pairing

Nest box pairing can help you attract a variety of species in the breeding season. Place single boxes in pairs, pole mounted 15-20 feet apart. Species such as tree swallows and [bluebirds](#) often nest close to one another.



Know Which Species Nest in Your Area

A great way to tempt local birds to nest in your backyard is to know which bird species thrive in your area. Each species has slightly different housing needs, so it is important to offer [housing](#) appropriate for the desired bird species.



Keep the Nest Box Clean

Prepare your birdhouses for new spring residence by washing

your nest box interior with a weak bleach solution. Rinse and dry the house thoroughly before placing it in your yard. It's also a good idea to place nesting material near your birdhouse to persuade nesting birds when they return after migration.



Keep Water Handy

Try placing your [birdbath](#) near one of your backyard [bird houses](#). Birds are naturally drawn to water and will be tempted to drink, bathe, or play in the birdbath after they've eaten.

Open Water is Essential in Winter

Birdbaths are especially crucial in winter, since birds are actually at greater risk of dehydration than starvation in winter. A heated birdbath can be a life-saving source of open water to wintering birds.