



Helping RURU with WINGSPAN National Bird of Prey Centre



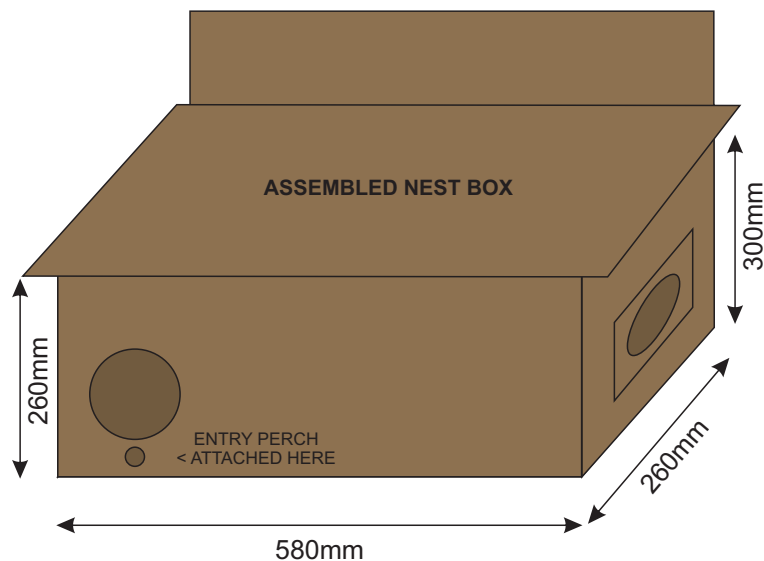
There are lots of ways to help our native morepork owl or ruru but one of the best ways is to put up a ruru nest box.

Wingspan has developed the following design which has proven effective both out in the wild and in captivity, to attract ruru when looking to nest, providing a safe environment for them to do so.

Although ruru can and do nest in tree cavities and epiphytes, they sometimes choose to nest on the ground often somewhere as simple as under tree fern fronds or logs.

With many introduced pest species preying on ground nesting birds, this puts them at great risk. A simple solution, to encourage them back up into the trees if there are no hollows around, is to construct and pop up a nest box.

The following pages illustrate how you can construct a simple yet effective nest box to help out our native ruru. A sex bias towards male ruru recorded in one study suggests that females may be vulnerable to predation when incubating and brooding. A nest box can help reduce the risk of predation on this species.





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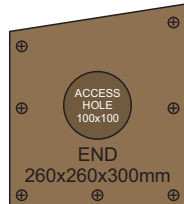
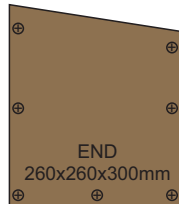
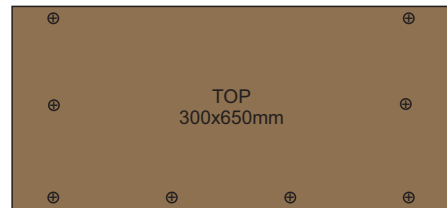


MATERIALS:

- ⊕ 12mm tanalised plywood
- ⊙ Galvanised screws 30mm (x39)
- Galvanised screws 20mm (x2 for access panel)

DIMENSIONS:

- Top: 300 x 650mm
- Front: 245 x 580mm
- Back: 350 x 580mm
- Base: 260 x 580mm
- Ends: 260 x 260 x 300mm
- Door: 150 x 150mm
- Entrance & Access Holes: 100mm





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INSTRUCTIONS FOR RURU NEST BOX ASSEMBLY:

Screw front and back onto inside edge of base (4 screws along each edge using pre-drilled holes).

Screw end-piece with hole onto outside edge of front, back and base at opposite end to front entrance hole (3 screws along each edge).

Screw other end-piece onto front, back and base (3 screws along each edge).

Screw top piece onto front, ends and back using pre-drilled holes (This ensures top piece is overhanging and sloping).

Attach cover piece over inspection hole at end using 2 short screws. This access hole will allow for the box to be cleaned annually and checked to see if it is being used by owls.

A suitably sized branch (or large piece of dowel) should be placed underneath the entrance hole to act as a perch aiding entry. Push perch approximately 6cm through hole, below entrance hole and secure with screws through underside of base.

The floor of the nest box should be filled with small bark chips at least 50mm deep.

You can add solar lights around the area to attract moths and other insects that ruru like to eat.

TIPS ON THE BEST SITE TO INSTALL THE BOX:

Choose a dark, quiet, sheltered area in a stand of trees or up near the roof of a shed or barn to position the box.

The nest box should be situated well off the ground.

If placed in a tree, a metal strip around the tree trunk will help protect any nesting ruru from pests such as stoats, cats and possums.

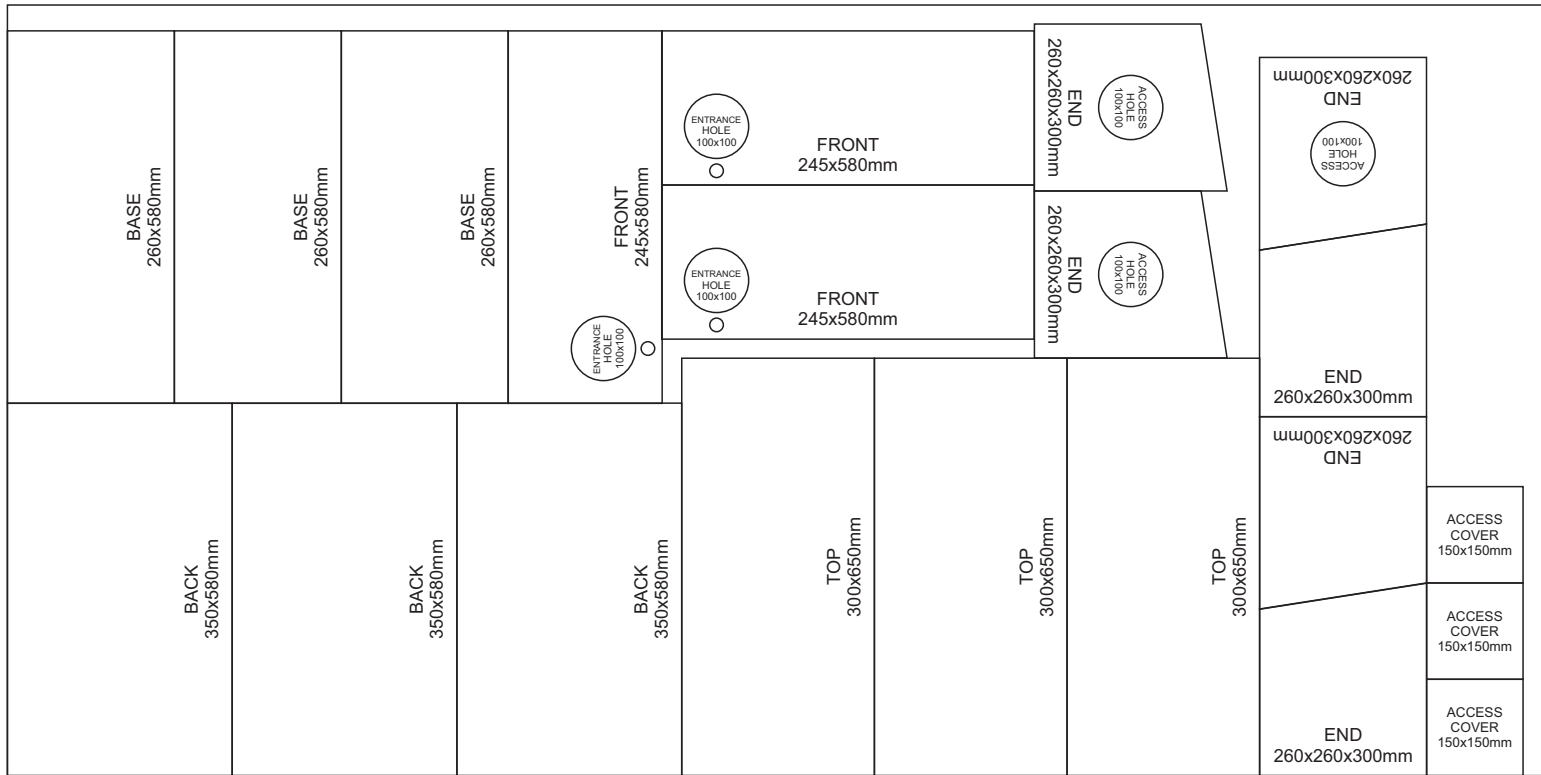
Cleaning the box annually will eliminate the risk of disease. This is best done during winter (seasonal off-peak for breeding).

Trapping for rats, stoats and feral cats within the area will further reduce the risk of ruru being predated upon. Trap wherever possible and avoid using baits. If baits must be used, insist on purchasing products that do not cause secondary poisoning, as ruru are very susceptible to secondary poisoning.

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If you are looking to build more than one nest box then
ONE 1200mm x 2400mm SHEET OF PLY MAKES THREE NEST BOXES USING THIS LAYOUT



Thank you

for helping us help ruru. You, just made a difference!

