

## Teacher's notes to accompany Powerpoint presentation 'Bird box making'

Slide no.	Suggested points to be made (The presentation is animated to allow children time to discuss questions raised)
1.	Ask – what do you think that we are going to be talking about today?
2.	<p>What do birds need?</p> <p>In the wild the birds may have sufficient places to build their nests without help. i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bigger, older trees – can use holes in trunks and branches at the top</li> <li>• bushes and vegetation - so look in clumps of ivy, in hedges</li> <li>• holes in walls – e.g. Robins like this kind of place</li> </ul>
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With a shortage of bigger, older trees or established bushes what hope is there for a blue tit finding an unoccupied hole, a robin finding a crack beneath a branch, or a flycatcher discovering a cleft in the ivy.</li> <li>• With man removing too much dead wood, ivy for sheltering, and leaving no cracks in the eaves or crannies in houses or outbuildings, what chance has a starling of squeezing under a loose roof tile or an owl getting into a nice dry loft?</li> </ul>
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bird box in cold months can provide shelter for small birds to roost or feed, while getting used to the location in readiness for nesting in the spring.</li> <li>• This can help preserve body fat and aid survival, when they're at their most vulnerable from the freezing conditions.</li> <li>• Wren data – what does this tell us about the size of a wren?</li> </ul>
5.	<p>So <b>we</b> can help by providing nest boxes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– they are out in all weather and need to be strong</li> <li>– if too large predators will easily get inside and rain/wind will get into the box</li> </ul> <p><b>Ask why they need these properties.</b></p> <p>The 'should nots' are to ensure chicks can fledge otherwise they will be stuck inside and parents will not feed them forever.</p>
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are going to use special kits.</li> <li>• Demonstrate procedure.</li> <li>• Organise groups – allocate each to an adult according to planner.</li> <li>• Group work to make boxes (45 mins max).</li> <li>• To wash hands after making boxes.</li> </ul>
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call children back together.</li> <li>• Now we need to think about where to put these boxes.</li> <li>• The highest priority must be to provide a safe and comfortable environment in which birds can nest successfully. How do we find these spots?</li> <li>• They can be sited on walls, in trees or under the eaves. Near quieter parts of the garden.</li> <li>• The box should give a clear flight path – do any branches or stems need removing to allow birds easy access to the box? (Vegetation may need lopping off – show loppers!)</li> <li>• Should be tilted forward slightly to protect from driving rain.</li> <li>• <b>The opening of the box should face between north and east, so that it is protected from strong sunlight and prevailing wind.</b></li> <li>• How will we decide which way is NE?</li> <li>• Give out compasses and practise finding NE.</li> </ul>

9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate clip boards / paper / pencils to group scribes .</li> <li>• Explain that they need to draw a rough sketch map of the garden and mark where they think their boxes <u>could</u> go.</li> <li>• Bring whole group together to share out the best spots</li> <li>• Erect the bird boxes if help is available</li> <li>• Return to class</li> </ul>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 60 species have been known to use nest boxes.</li> <li>• Which of these birds do the children recognise?</li> <li>• Regular visitors include blue tits, great tits, coal tits, house &amp; tree sparrows, nuthatches, pied flycatchers, robins, house martins, owls (mention owl boxes needing to be bigger – on farms? Do any children live on farms with outbuildings? If so are there spaces for birds to enter?)</li> </ul>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are to be tasked with observing their own group’s boxes and recording what they see.</li> <li>• Signs to look out for include birds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ investigating the box</li> <li>○ visiting with nesting materials</li> <li>○ visiting with food for the young</li> <li>○ peeping out as chicks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The birds will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ take in nesting materials to line the box</li> <li>○ will lay the eggs</li> <li>○ will keep the eggs warm until they hatch</li> <li>○ take in food for the new chicks</li> <li>○ when they get bigger the chicks will begin to peek from the box</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the idea of a recording sheet so that the children can monitor what is happening with their boxes</li> </ul>