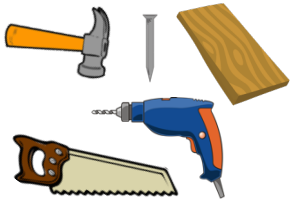
Insect Hotel for Native Bees

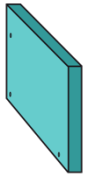
THE SUPER POLLINATORS
AUSSIE NATIVE BEES

Kids Connecting Nature
kidsconnectingnature.com.au

YOU WILL NEED

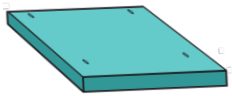


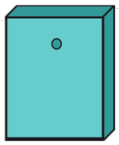
Pre drill holes in sides & roof to accommodate nail.



SIDES: 3 holes 6mm from edge i.e. half the timber width

ROOF: 4 holes 30mm from each edge



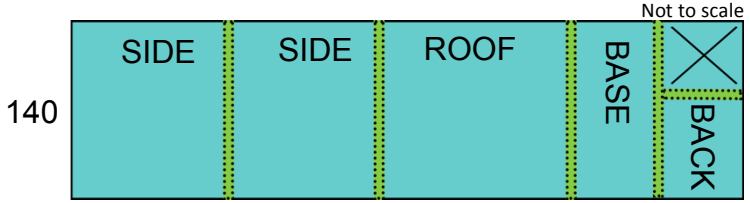


BACK: A larger hole for hanging the hotel

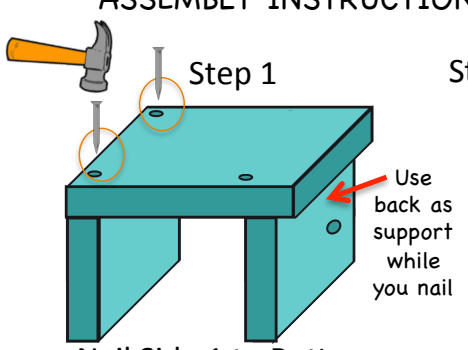
NOTES

Dimensions based on timber 12mm thick x 140mm wide. Adjust dimensions to suit - use untreated recycled hardwood if possible! You may find bamboo growing near you - ask around - or purchase from a hardware or garden centre

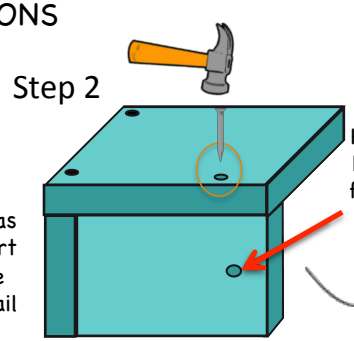
Not to scale



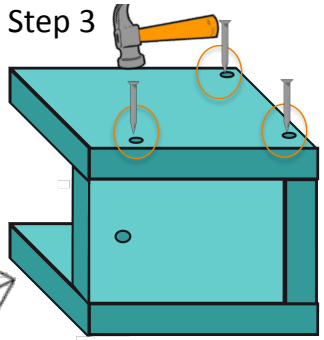
ASSEMBLY INSTRUCTIONS



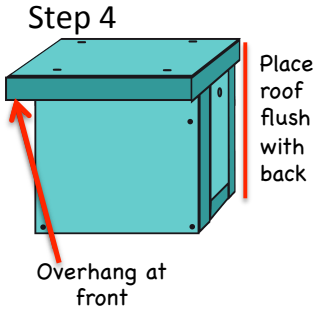
Nail Side 1 to Bottom

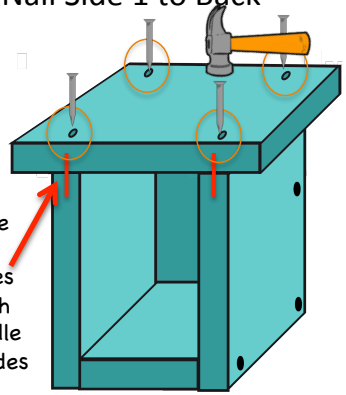


Nail Side 1 to Back

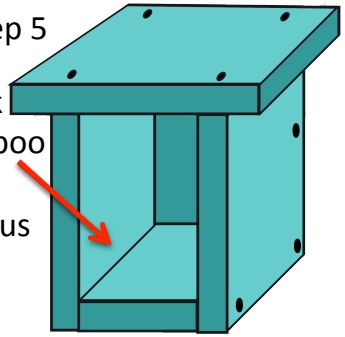


Nail Side 2 on to Back & Bottom

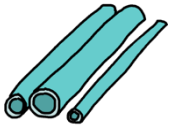




Place Roof on & check position before nailing to top



EASY BEESY!



Cut bamboo into 11cm lengths with a mix of entrances from 2mm-9mm

You can also add hardwood timber rounds or offcuts with 2-9mm holes drilled

BEE IN THE KNOW

PAINT
- Decorate & seal the box with non-toxic paint in ‘floral’ colours.

PLACE
- Secure your hotel 1-2m above ground where it receives morning sun, afternoon shade & minimal weather exposure.

PLANT
- Feed your bees! Place the hotel near flowers of different colours & shapes – exotics & local natives – something in flower all the time!
- The closer your hotel is to flowers, the less flight time required by the female to collect pollen & nectar for the brood, & the more eggs can be laid! More bees!
- Leave some bare earth & dead wood for blue-banded bees, carpenter bees and other species.

CARE
- Chemicals and pesticides can kill bees – BEE friendly!
- Do not stand in the flight path of your bee guests – observe from the side.
- Most solitary bees have an annual cycle – it may take several cycles for them to find your hotel. Other insects may like it too – it’s good habitat!

WATCH
- Many solitary bee species can sting you, however they are not aggressive and it is very rare for them to do so.
- Monitor & report insect activity to build our knowledge with the aid of citizen science.

REPEAT
- Once the young emerge they will not reuse the same cavity, so replace the content with bamboo, curled bark, pithy stems or drilled rounds for new uptake.
- Different species seek different size holes – provide a range of 2-9 mm holes.
- Make another hotel – salvaged untreated recycled hardwood is ideal.

KNOW YOUR GUESTS

There are about 2000 native bee species in Australia. Several species will use an insect hotel to create their nests. Most bees are solitary with each female independently creating her own.
The female flies backwards and forwards over the warmer month collecting enough food - pollen and nectar - for one larva, before she lays an egg on top. Some species create a divide between each egg. When the nest is finished the mother seals it. The nest closure is different depending on the species.
Once the young have finished the food, they metamorphose into an adult bee and emerge. As the weather cools off, all adult bees die. Late season young remain in the nest over winter and emerge the following spring – beginning the whole cycle again!

Resin bees (Megachile spp.) carry pollen on their abdomen. They use resin to create and seal their nest, sometimes even adding small stone particles.

Masked bees (Hyaleus spp.) appear similar to a small wasp and are relatively hairless with yellow markings. Their cellophane-like closure looks a bit like spiders web

Erica Siegel, Katja Hogendoorn

Leafcutter bees (Megachile spp.) use soft leaves such as rose leaves to build individual cells for their young. Check your garden for the tell tail semi circle cuts!

Book a school incursion or workshop:

kidsconnectingnature.com.au