



THE PETERSON BOX

(revised 1/94)

The Peterson nest box has been developed and refined over the last 30 years by Dick Peterson of Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. This wedge-shaped box is the most commonly used box in Minnesota and is increasingly being used in other states.

The Peterson box features a large steep roof to provide protection from the summer sun and to make predation by raccoons and cats more difficult. The sloping front reduces the probability of rain entering the box opening. The 2" x 4" framing in a Peterson box provides insulation, moderating temperature extremes within the box. While most bluebird boxes have a 1 1/2" circular opening, the Peterson box features an oval entrance. This entrance is made by overlapping two 1 3/8" circular holes for a 2 1/4" tall opening. Proponents of the Peterson box feel that this hole shape allows the adults to feed the young - and remove the fecal sacs from the box front without having to completely enter the box. Peterson boxes are easy to monitor, check for blowfly infestation, and clean through the downward swinging door. A variety of door modifications have been developed for excluding predators or trapping sparrows.

Peterson boxes are somewhat more complicated to build than conventional nest boxes due to the 45° and 27° angles within the box. For those who do not want to make their own, Peterson boxes can be purchased commercially as a completed unit or kits. Once built, this style of box should have a long life span due to their rugged construction.

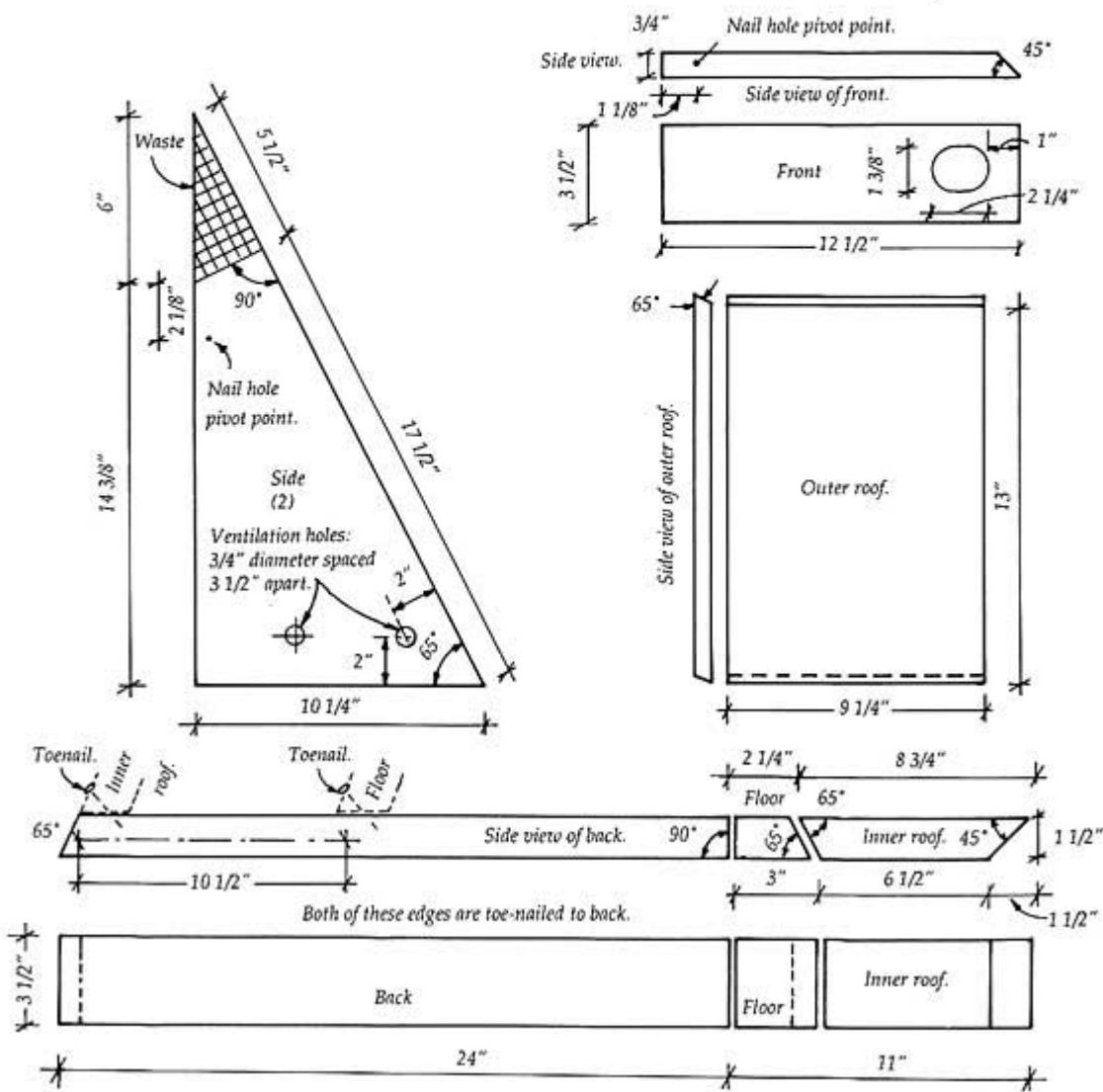
The controlled tests that I have conducted within Schoharie County indicated that both bluebirds and tree swallows very readily accept the Peterson box. Bluebird use of Peterson boxes has consistently been far higher than in standard style nestboxes. Anecdotal reports from bluebird enthusiasts have confirmed this strong preference throughout the county. While it has not been a problem in our area or in Minnesota, starlings have occasionally been able to enter Peterson boxes due to the slightly larger entry hole relative to standard boxes. Starlings are not a native bird and should not be allowed to nest in any bluebird box. In the unlikely event that starlings do use your Peterson boxes, you should switch to a box with a more conventional 1 1/2" round entry hole.

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For further information, email us at Info@nysbs.org or visit us at www.NYSBS.org

PETERSON BLUEBIRD HOUSE

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