



NEST BOXES FOR NATIVE ANIMALS



Many native animals live in tree hollows, but with fewer hollows available, where else can these wild creatures call home?

In Australia, about 300 vertebrate species (including birds, possums and microbats) use tree hollows for nesting, protection from predators, shelter and roosting. But a tree needs to be quite old to develop the sorts of hollows useful to arboreal animals. And we're running out of old trees!

By providing nest boxes, you can help species survive, even in your own backyard.

Know your Neighbours

Different animals require different types of boxes so it's a good idea to investigate the animals that visit your area and the types of homes they require. Depending on the size of the animal and whether they live alone or in family groups will also determine the size of the nest box and its opening.

Buy or Build?

There are a number of organisations that make nest boxes such as Busselton Men's Shed or FAWNA. If you would like to make your own nest-boxes, there are resources online with designs and instructions on making different boxes.

Pick the Right Location

Every species is different. Bats like to roost in thick cover, possums like to snooze away the day close to their foraging trails, larger cockatoos will only use a box that's way up high.

Do a little research to discover what animals are in your area and what will suit your back yard, then pick somewhere that is private and snug but accessible if you need to get to your box.

Remember: A box in your garden is your responsibility. If you want to put a box on public land around your home you will need to check with your shire for permission.

Maintaining a Balance

Just like natural tree hollows, nest-boxes can be invaded by European Bees or (feral) Rainbow Lorikeets. Your box/es will require occasional maintenance to keep these pests away. (If your box is colonised by native Australian bees, have a think about whether they can become the permanent residents instead. Native bees are gentler, super-important to your garden and really doing it tough in the wild).

No Chemicals

Remember: Spraying your box with pesticides might harm/injure the animals using it as a home. Look for organic/natural alternatives or use ventilation to deter bees.

