

# fauNature Kookaburra Box



## Encouraging wildlife at home!

Thank you for purchasing a fauNature nesting box. It is hoped this “home” will give you many hours of pleasure, as it provides sanctuary for our feathered friends.

The clearing of native trees across Australia has resulted in the loss of millions of natural hollows. The devastation is particularly apparent in urban environments, which account for 85% of the nation’s human population.



## Which birds will use a nesting box?

Over 100 bird species rely on hollows for nesting or shelter throughout the country. These include many parrots, kingfishers, raptors, and ducks as well as other lesser-known species. This nesting box has been specifically designed for Kookaburras. However, a range of different animals may use the box depending on local hollow availability (e.g. possums, other birds and insects).

Kookaburras are highly territorial and remain faithful to successful nesting sites. If you have a pair of Kookaburras in your area that are successfully breeding, it is unlikely they will be enticed to a nesting box. If however, appropriate hollows are not available, Kookaburras will readily nest in an artificial nesting box.

## Siting and installation instructions

You’ve bought this nesting box to enjoy it, so locate the box where you can see it regularly and access it relatively easily. Having said that, it is preferable if certain parameters are met:

A mature gum tree is ideal; if not, an exotic tree will do. Few birds nest close to the ground – most prefer hollows higher up in a tree. Some species will utilise the box as low as 2m off the ground, however, 5m-8m would be preferable for Kookaburra species.

The nesting box needs to be protected from the hot north/westerly sun and the entrance avoiding the wettest winds; northeast through to a southerly direction would work (for southern Australia). Ideally, the box will also be placed on a vertical or slightly forward-angled trunk, to reduce rainwater entry which could affect the inhabitants. Thus, the specifics of erecting the nesting box will vary from one location to another.



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Hanging a nesting box by wire was historically recommended to prevent damage to the tree. However, the damage done by securing tek screws is likely to be minimal; while wire-mounted boxes compromise the tree, if not regularly managed.

Fix the attachment board to the box, using the bolts supplied. A couple of tek screws have been included to enable you to affix the box to a tree. Pre-drill the tree and screw in the top tek screw (3/4s of its length) then hang the box through the “keyhole” at the top of the attachment board. Next, drill the lower hole and screw in the second tek screw. Finally, tighten both tek screws, ensuring the box is firmly affixed to the tree.

The use of “PV Spacers”, small spacing rings which fit over the tek screws between the tree and the box, is highly recommended. They serve two purposes 1) simplify the installation process on difficult trees; 2) perhaps more importantly allow the tree room to grow while minimising the impact on either the tree or the box. These have been included with your box.

Once the nesting box is in place: empty the bag of wood chips into the bottom of the box, to serve as nesting material.

## Potential predators

A range of predators may take advantage of eggs or fledglings present in nests (e.g. cats, foxes or exotic rodents). “Tree collars” are guards which can be placed around the trunk of a tree to prevent these predators from gaining access to the box. While guards are not essential, such devices may be particularly useful in reducing the impact of the threats identified above.

## Keeping the nesting box clean

Putting up the nesting box is just the first step, for its continued success maintenance is crucial. The box (assembled) has already been treated. However, to extend its useful life we would recommend re-treatment/coating the exterior of the box with oil or paint. If oil is used (e.g. environmentally friendly Lanotec timber seal), it is recommended to retreat the box every 1-2 years, or exterior grade acrylic paint is likely to last the life of the box, with a few minor touch-ups. The PV Spacers will need to be replaced every 12-24 months and the bedding material ideally changed every year. The removal of pest species is likely to be of prime importance.

European Honey Bees may inhabit the box. This pest species is likely to displace or exclude Kookaburras and would need to be removed. Obtaining advice from a beekeeper or pest controller is recommended.

## Enjoy your new neighbours

Some nesting boxes are occupied quickly, others may take a little longer. Often you will attract the species you are targeting, though not always. Either way, we hope you enjoy providing for your wild neighbours.



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Any feedback to help us provide the products or services you may be looking for is most welcome.

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[www.faunature.com.au](http://www.faunature.com.au)



[info@faunature.com.au](mailto:info@faunature.com.au)



0406 400 933



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