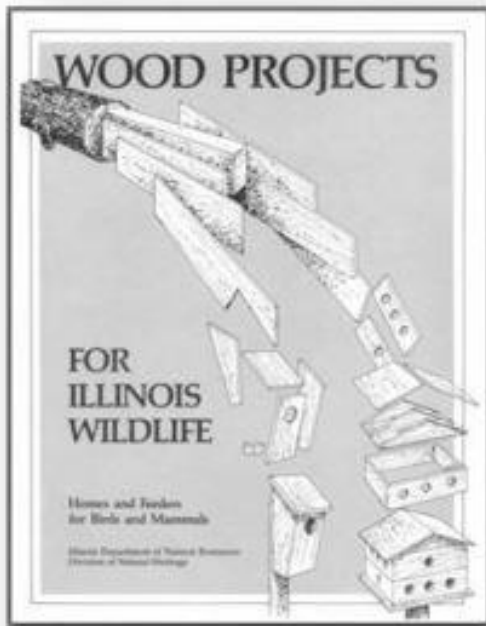




# Modified Barred Owl Nesting Box

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Based on the design from  
*Wood Projects for Illinois Wildlife*  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Natural Heritage



The modified – open top design was created from observing that most Barred Owls prefer an “open chimney” type cavity. Several boxes were placed in various areas along with the more traditional box design and all of the modified designs had owls nesting in them. Raccoons really love the traditional design. The open top discourages raccoons and squirrels from using the box as they don’t like being exposed to the elements. The open top also allows the chicks to “branch” out onto the roof for their first journey into the great outdoors.

Box is built from  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch treated plywood. One 4 foot x 8 foot sheet can make two boxes. Use stainless steel or coated 1  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch screws to assemble the box. Adding some outdoor construction adhesive to all contact areas wouldn’t hurt either but isn’t necessary. Use 4 inch stainless steel or coated screws to attach to the tree. A washer on the screw will prevent the screw from pulling through the plywood over time.

If using a rope hauling system / rope access to install the box it helps to round off all corners so the rope can slide off corners instead of snagging on them while moving around the box. Also make sure you add the  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch holes on the sides for threading a hauling rope.

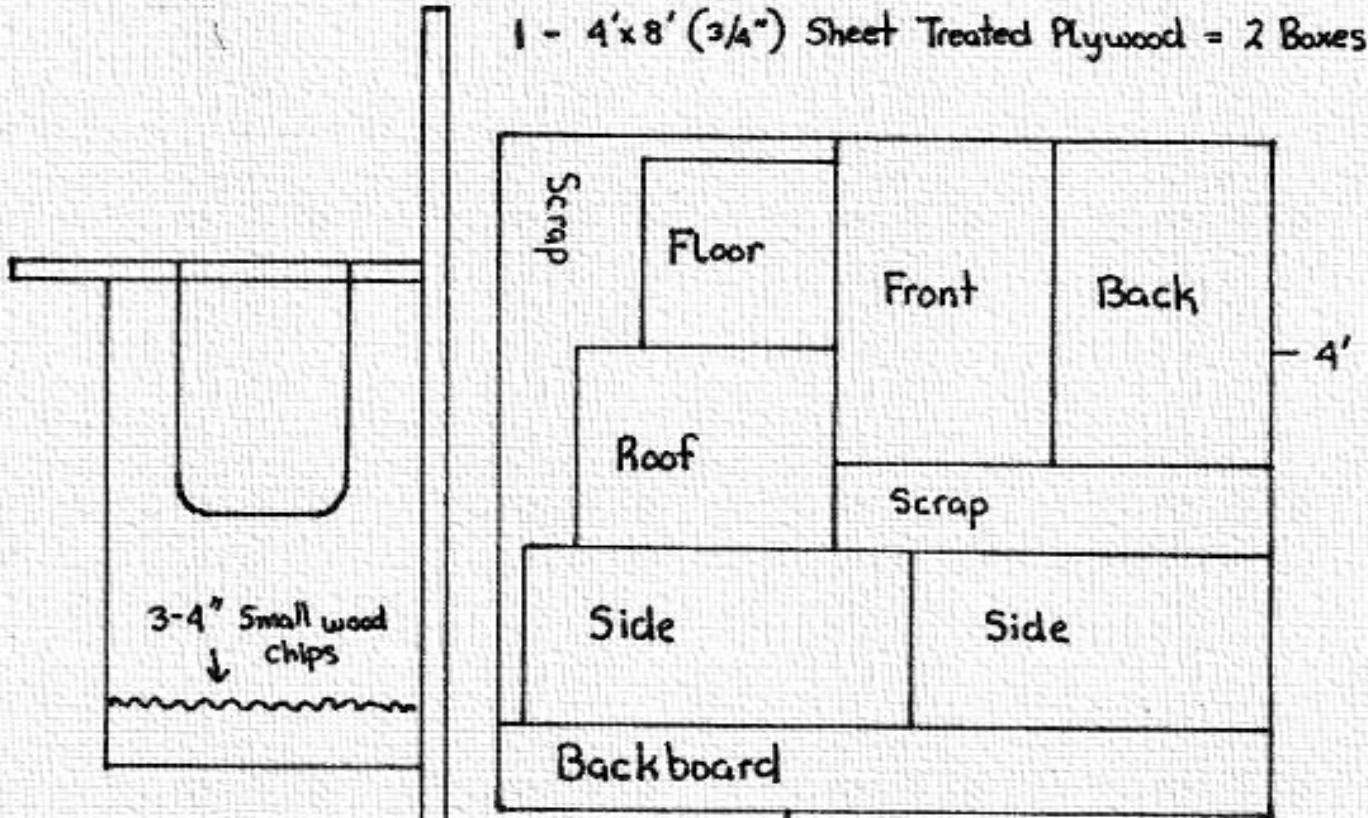
The alternative opening is a more contoured “natural look” but isn’t necessary for box function. It is not necessary to paint or stain the box. 3 to 4 inches of soft small wood chips or shavings need to be placed in the bottom of the box. Barred Owls don’t bring nesting material to the box so there needs to be something soft for the birds to lay eggs on. Make sure you have the  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch holes drilled in the floor for drainage.

Boxes should be installed in a mature hardwood tree in a lowland area 200 feet from water. Do not place the box on the edge of a clearing. Trees should be alive and at least 12 inches in diameter. Do not block the entrance with limbs, but limbs should be near by the hole for food transfers from males to females and for chicks to “branch” onto. Place the box at least 25 – 35 feet up. This may be difficult for some to do. Contact a local arborist or the IRC for help on installing a nest box on your property.

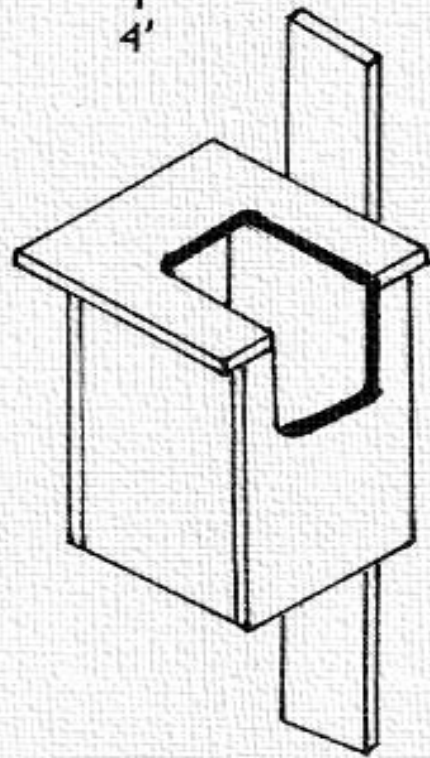
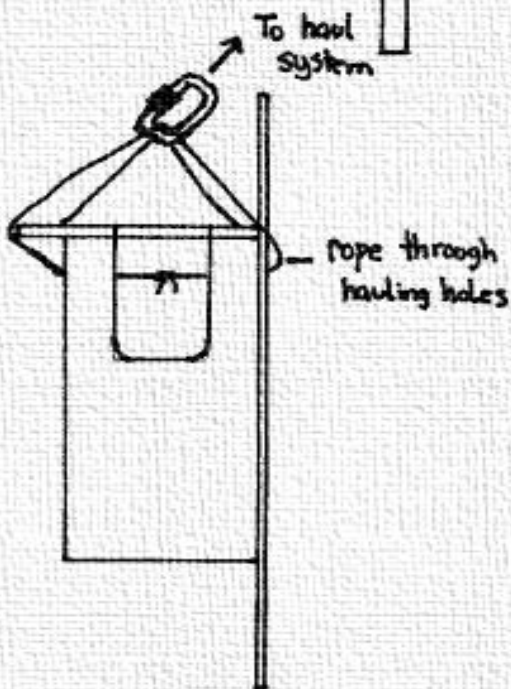
Note the hole for the box is on the side of the box. This make it much easier to clean the box if it needs cleaned.

Boxes should be installed between November and January. There is a chance that Great Horned Owls could use it too (though not confirmed at this point).

1 - 4'x8' (3/4") Sheet Treated Plywood = 2 Boxes



3-4" Small wood chips  
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Place 25'-35' in a mature lowland hardwood area, and preferably within 200' of water.

