

PARDALOTES



Habitat Box Designs

Lifestyle Capital of Victoria

There are two species of Pardalote found in the Frankston area, the Spotted Pardalote and Striated Pardalote. They are small birds approx. 8-12cm in size that feed on lerps, sap-sucking insects, in the canopies of eucalypts. Their control of the lerps assist trees to maintain better health.

Their calls will be familiar to many with the Spotted Pardalote having a three note call “wee- dee-dip” while the Striated Pardalote has a two note call “witta-chew”.



Spotted Pardalote (photo credit: Patrick Kavanagh (CC BY

Both Pardalotes build nests by tunneling into banks, road cuttings, piles of dirt and sand, between the brickwork of houses, with the Striated also nesting in tree hollows. They will nest in habitat boxes of the right size and shape, with an entrance tunnel fitted.

General tips:

- Face away from prevailing winds
- Face them away from direct midday sun- north-east
- Ensure water proof with drainage an sealant
- Monitor your habitat box (from a distance as to not disturb the birds)- this data is useful for council and Birdlife
- Be aware of unwanted visitors moving in!
- Please resist feeding your new neighbours as it creates a dependency on artificial food sources

Materials

Material	Quantity (per box)
Timber	3000mm length, 200 mm wide, 17 mm marine ply
	600mm x 70mm x 35mm treated pine for box mount
PVC Pipe	32mm diameter x 120mm long
Screws	20 x 40mm stainless steel screws
Gap sealer	To seal box eg. Silastic
Cup head bolts	2 x bolts, nuts and washers, recommend M8 ≥60mm (for attaching box to mount)
Coach / screws	2 x coach screws M8 ≥90mm (for attaching box to tree). Can also use large treated pine screws of similar length (would need washers for TP screws)
Rubber Grommet	4 x grommets, 2 per screw
Silicone	To secure PVC pipe
Paint / timber seal	Acrylic paint or organic sealer to preserve box (eg Tung Oil)
Box lining	To insulate box - natural wood chips / shavings. Avoid treated wood

Equipment

Bench Saw	To cut timber lengths
Cordless Drill	For construction and installation
Jig saw or similar	For entrance hole – drill pilot hole (8mm bit) so jig saw blade can fit in
8mm drill bit	For drainage holes, for jig saw, fixing cup head bolts to box mount and coach bolts
Screwdriver / screwdriver bit	For box construction
3mm drill bit	Pilot holes for screws
22mm Spade Bit	To countersink nuts and washers into box mount
Socket wrench	Helpful to tighten cup head bolts into box mount / coach screws into pole / tree

Assembly

Prepare the Pieces

1. Cut the timber to the dimensions provided to make the pieces. **See Diagram Insert.**
N.B Dimensions are for 18 mm ply and will need to be adjusted for other materials.
2. Use a jig saw to cut the 32mm entrance hole towards the top of the box at the front– drill pilot hole (8mm bit) for jig saw blade to fit into first.
3. Drill (8mm drill bit) 4 drainage holes in the bottom piece.
4. To prepare for assembly- drill pilot holes (3mm drill bit) into ply to avoid splitting. 2 holes on short edge and 3 holes on long edge are recommended.
5. Mark and drill 2 pilot holes (8mm drill bit) on the back piece and the box mount. Countersink 2 bolt holes with 22mm spade bit into box mount pilot hole for the washers and nut. Add another 2 pilot holes (3mm drill bit) to box mount 40mm from each end.



Construction

6. Bolt the box mount to the back panel using cuphead bolts, nut and washer (cuphead on the inside of the box). Don't tighten it until you have determined the positioning of the box on the tree.
7. Prepare the joints with Silastic or similar sealant.
8. Screw the box edges together.
9. Insert the PVC entrance pipe and secure in place with Silicone
10. You can now paint or coat the outside of the box.
11. Add two handfuls of your insulation (e.g. wood chips etc.) to the box.

Installation

Note: Your box can be installed professionally by an arborist or wildlife expert. Or if possible safely erect ladder and affix to the tree with a strap or similar to hold the ladder while in use.

Pardalotes like a habitat box that is easily accessible by flight and 1-3 metres above ground.

12. Select a suitable site for your habitat box. With the box mount against the tree, drill and mark the position of the holes on the tree.
13. Return box to the ground and drill 2 holes (8mm drill bit) for coach screws into tree.
14. Attach box to tree with coach screws using the socket wrench (put grommets on screws before screwing into place). If using timber screws, place a washer between the screw head and the two grommets to ensure screw doesn't go through the grommets while drilling into the tree.
15. Congratulations- your nest box is ready for use!



Pardalote poking through habitat box (photo credit faunature.com.au)

Diagram

