LONG POINT TREE SWALLOW NEST BOX: Measurements in INCHES

The following pages describe how to build the Tree Swallow box we've used at Salmon Creek since 2003. It can be seen in many photos on www.treeswallowprojects.com. It's a modification of a design we saw at the Long Point Bird Observatory in Ontario, Canada. We hope they don't object to our use of their name.

Our Long Point Boxes are made from ½" thick exterior-grade plywood. Thinner plywood is weaker and hard to nail into, and interior-grade doesn't withstand the elements well. Ten boxes can be made from one 4' x 8' sheet of plywood (see below).

Long Point Boxes are slightly larger inside (5 ½" x 6" floors) than Golondrinas Boxes (5" x 5" floors). This gives nestlings more room to spread out in hot weather, lets them move outside the nest cup to defecate, and allows more space for wing exercise prior to fledging.

Our version of the Long Point Box has no upper openings for ventilation and no openings in the floor for drainage. We believe that in most of the Tree Swallow breeding range there is far more danger to nestlings from damp and chill than from overheating, so we make our boxes as weatherproof as possible by sealing seams, having ample roof overhangs, and adding weatherstrip pieces around doors. (Weatherstrips are cut from thin pieces of wood, roughly ½" thick x 2-½" wide x 2'- 3' long, available in hardware stores). These provisions make our boxes snug and dry for nestlings and may also help incubating and brooding females maintain good body condition.

Long Point Boxes have "drop down" doors rather than "lift up" ones. This frees both hands when examining contents, but also makes use of Keeper Nails essential.

Here are some construction suggestions:

Use a power saw. Plywood is difficult to cut with a hand saw.

1-½" galvanized "finish nails" work well for fastening box parts and for Hinge and Keeper Nails.

Use a power drill to make small "pilot holes" before hammering nails in.

Before nailing, put strips of yellow carpenter's glue along surfaces to be joined.

Remove any nails that penetrate into the box interior. They could cause injuries.

Use wood filler or glue to seal gaps in joints.

Make gripping surfaces for nestlings (scratches, kerfs, or cleats) on the inside of the Front before fastening the Front to the Side and Back.

Be very careful lining up the Hinge Nail holes so the Door opens and closes smoothly. It may be necessary to trim or sand Door edges slightly if closing is too difficult.

Make the Keeper Nail hole deep enough so the nail doesn't protrude obviously, but not so deep it's hard to extract.

Consider backup Door fasteners, such as simple pivoting ones made of "Strap", so there's always a way to close the Door if the Keeper Nail gets lost.

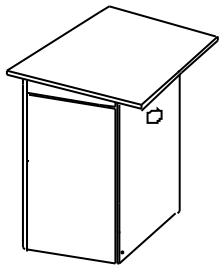
"Pipe Hangers" make handy door handles.

Extend box life by treating the exterior only with a "solid" wood stain.

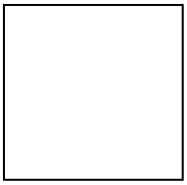
LONG POINT TREE SWALLOW BOX

cut from
1/2'' thick EXTERIOR GRADE PLYWOOD

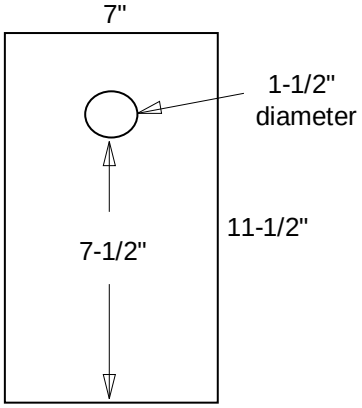
Measurements in INCHES



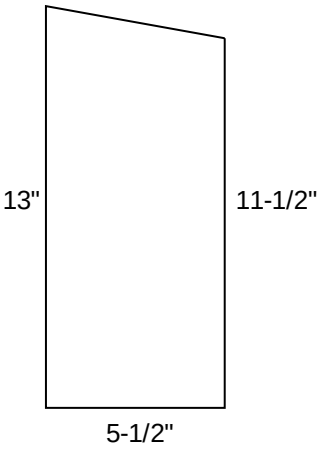
FLOOR



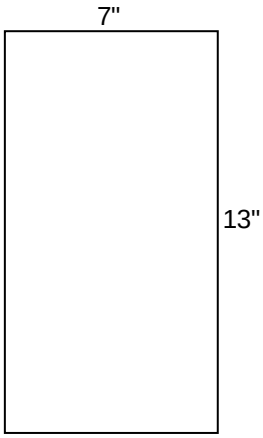
FRONT



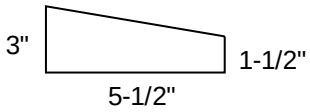
SIDE



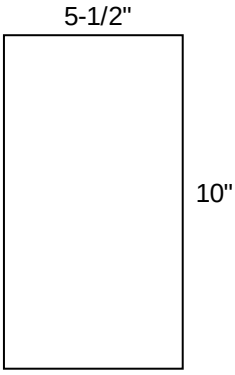
BACK



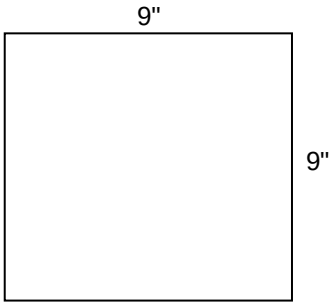
PIECE ABOVE DOOR



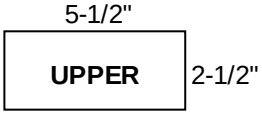
DOOR

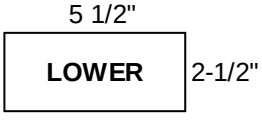


TOP

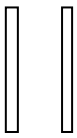


WEATHERSTRIPS
cut from
1/4" thick x 2 1/2" wide Wood Strips



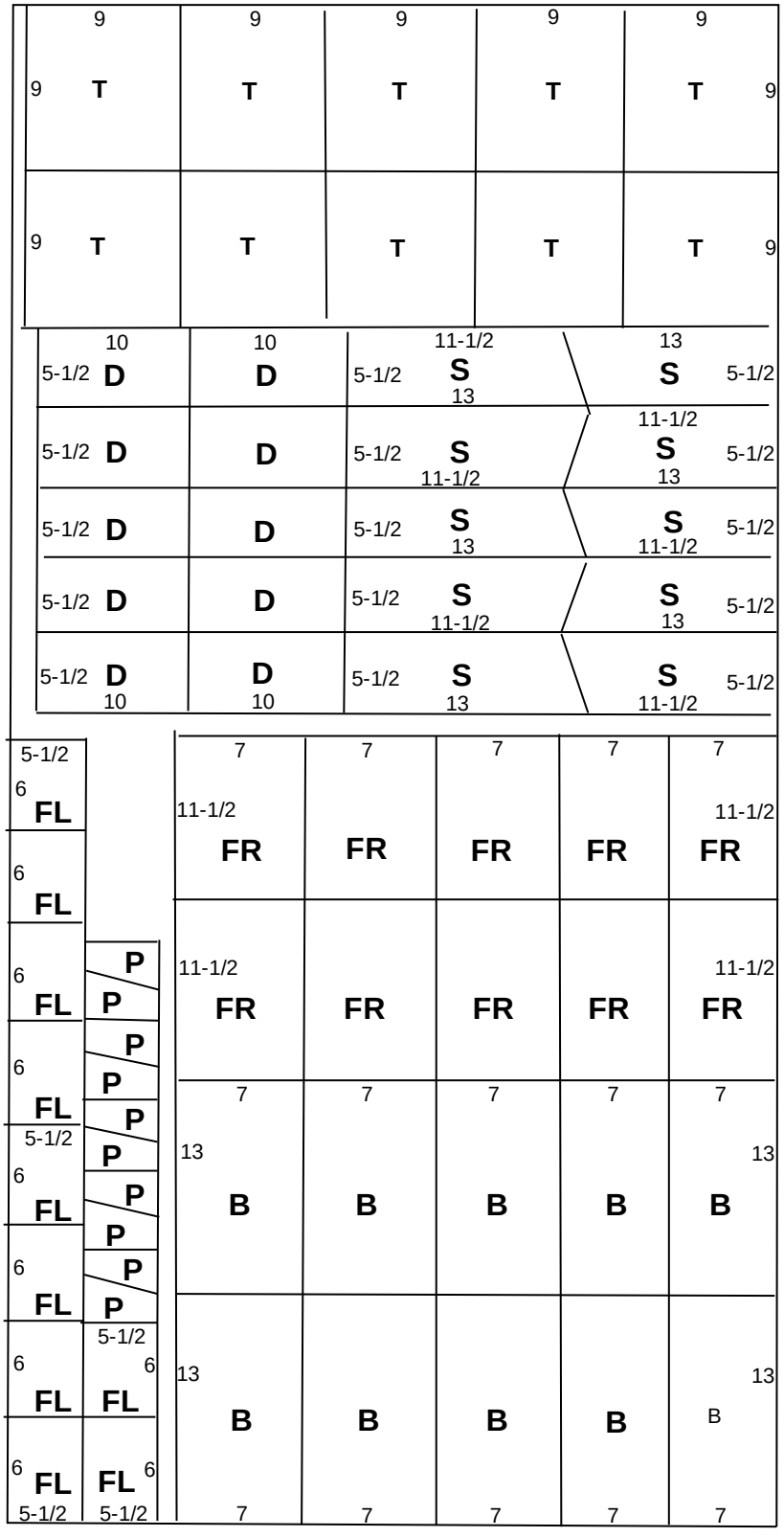


SIDES
4-1/2" x 1/2"



Cutting 10 Boxes from one 4 x 8 feet piece of Exterior Plywood: All dimensions in Inches

48 INCHES

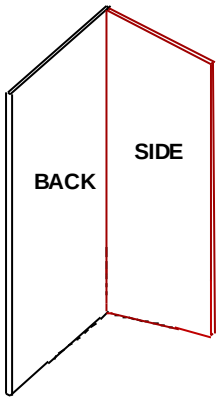


96 INCHES

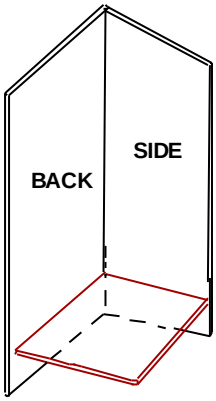
Small Pieces - P - are 3 x 5-1/2 x 1-1/2 inches

NEST BOX ASSEMBLY

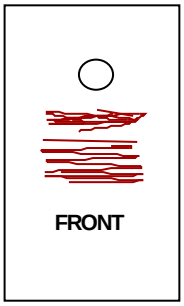
1. **Attach SIDE to BACK, nailing through Back into SIDE.**



2. **Attach FLOOR to BACK and SIDE, recessing it at least 1" or 3.8 cm from bottom.**

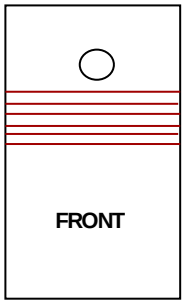


3. **On the inner FRONT surface do ONE of the following:**



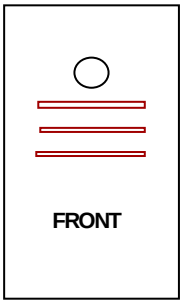
SCRATCH with a sharp nail

OR



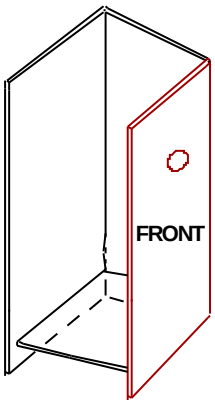
CUT "KERFS" with a saw

OR

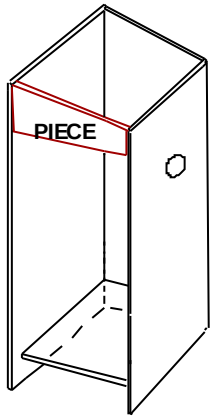


GLUE on CLEATS

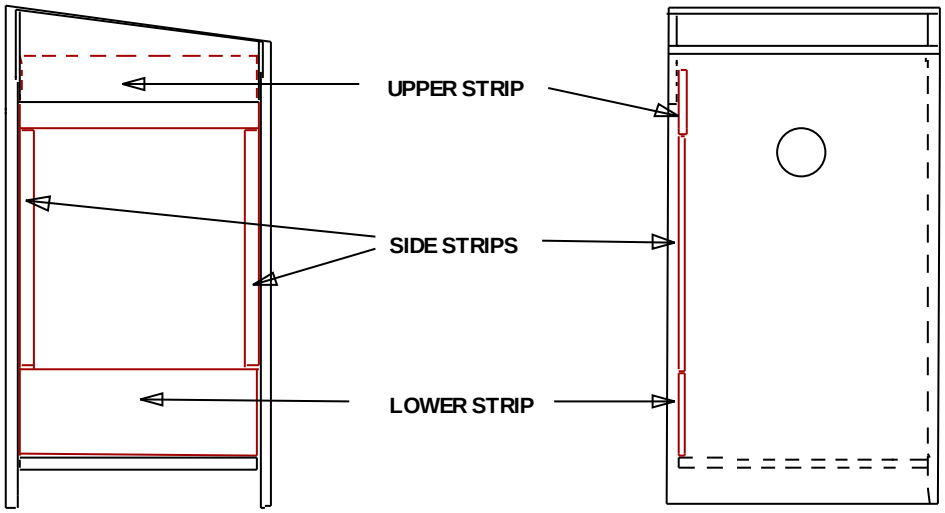
4. **Attach FRONT to SIDE and FLOOR.**

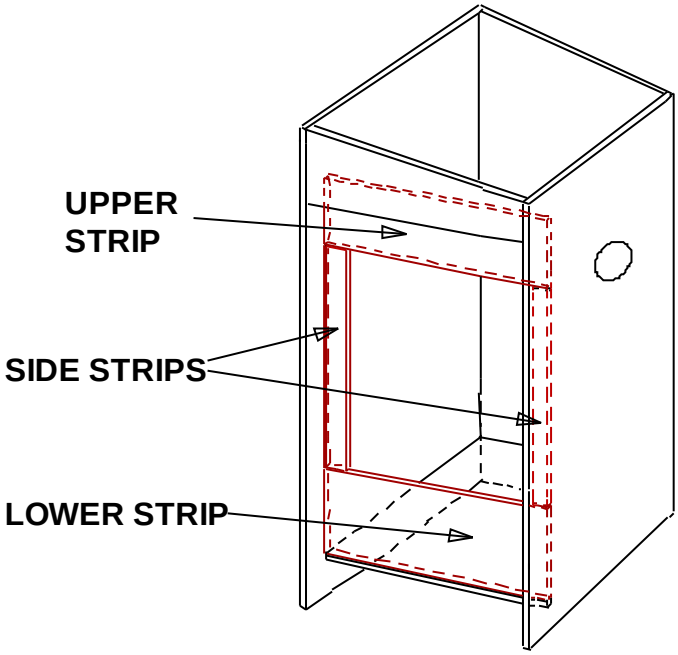


5. **Attach small PIECE above DOOR space.**

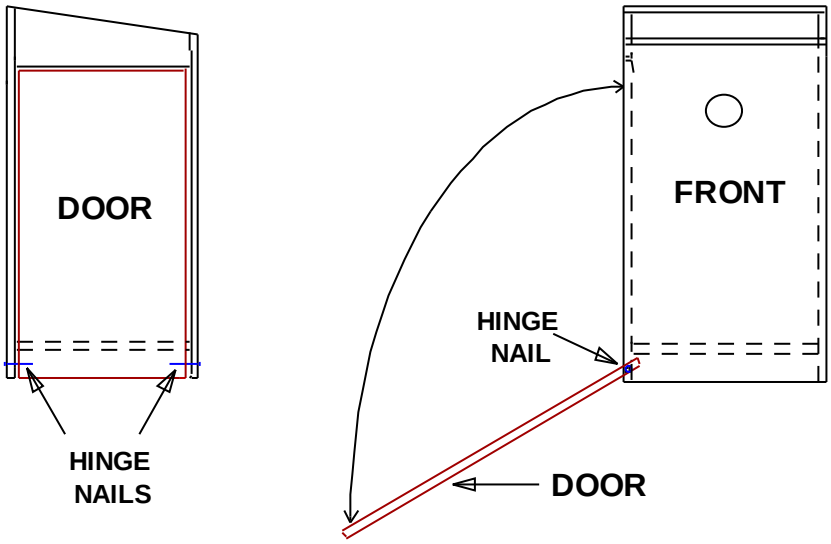


6. **Glue WEATHERSTRIPS in place, recessed so DOOR has room to close.**
   UPPER STRIP should be glued to back of PIECE above DOOR, with 1" showing.
   LOWER STRIP should be glued even with FLOOR front.
   SIDE STRIPS should be glued even with front of UPPER and LOWER STRIPS.

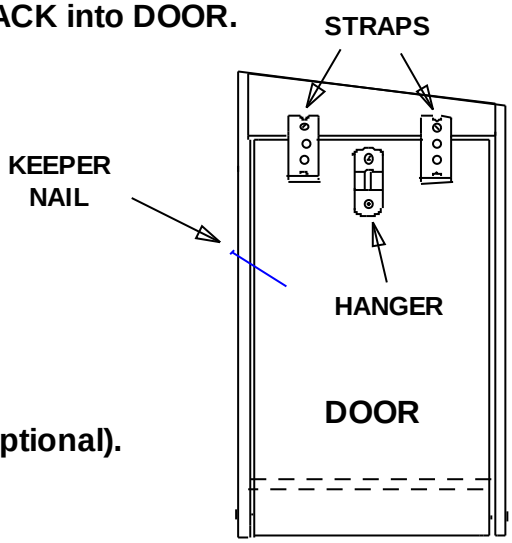




7. **Attach DOOR using HINGE NAILS in predrilled holes, making sure HINGE NAILS are on the same line and perpendicular to box walls.**



8. **Drill slanted KEEPER NAIL hole through BACK into DOOR. Install KEEPER NAIL.**



9. **Add Strap Fasteners and Hanger Handle (optional).**

10. **Attach TOP.**