



The Lord God planted a garden in Eden and he put the human he had formed in it. In the fertile land, the Lord God grew every beautiful tree with edible fruit, and also he grew the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:8,9)



## Getting back to our roots

If there is one occupation that all human beings should be involved in it has to be gardening. Caring, tending, weeding, cultivating, it is in our DNA, it is where we belong. Strange then that the 21st century idea of a front garden is paving for parking. Look around your neighbourhood, see just how many front gardens that once were gardens are now carparks. This destruction of hedges, flowerbeds and trees so that we can park our pollution wagons is largely ignored as part of the problem, but the loss of habitat for birds and beetles, worms and weevils, moths and mice is incredible, particularly in our cities. Furthermore, look at the trend for back gardens, patios, decking, hot-tubs and wicker furniture. It is time to get back to our roots, to return to the good garden God had planted. To get back to where we belong. Let the adjacent poem be an inspiration, for prayer and for planting. See what habitats you can create, what animals and birds you can befriend.



*"Then he took the human being and put them in the garden to work it and to care for it." (Gen 2:15)*

## Let us pray:

THE Lord God planted a garden  
In the first white days of the world,  
And He set there an angel warden  
In a garment of light enfurled.

So near to the peace of Heaven,  
That the hawk might nest with the wren,  
For there in the cool of the even  
God walked with the first of men.

And I dream that these garden closes  
With their shade and their sun-flecked sod  
And their lilies and bowers of roses,  
Were laid by the hand of God.

The kiss of the sun for pardon,  
The song of the birds for mirth, –  
One is nearer God's heart in a garden  
Than anywhere else on earth.

(Dorothy Frances Gurney 1858-1932)

## Get Active:

The 'go-to' website for this month is

**ECOGREENLOVE**

<https://ecogreenlove.com/2016/02/19/ecofriendly-garden/>



- ✿ Church gardens are wonderful wildlife spaces. Develop a more wildlife friendly church.
- ✿ Put in place bird boxes, hedgehog homes, bat boxes, insect hotels, composting areas.
- ✿ Have a wild flower area.
- ✿ Plant a fruit tree.

HAVE GARDEN PARTIES AT CHURCH AND IN YOUR HOME GARDEN.  
SHARE IDEAS, SKILLS AND LABOUR—COFFEE AND CAKE, CULTIVATE A  
CONVERSATION—JOIN TOGETHER AND HELP ONE ANOTHER.



### BIRD BOX: What you need:

1 board 152mm x 19mm (not planed), approximately 1450mm long  
24 oval 38mm nails  
2 brass hooks and eyes  
several copper tacks  
strip of rubber/waterproof canvas/leather 150mmx50mm  
saw, hammer, brace and 28mm bit



### What you do:

Cut the wood as shown in the diagram.

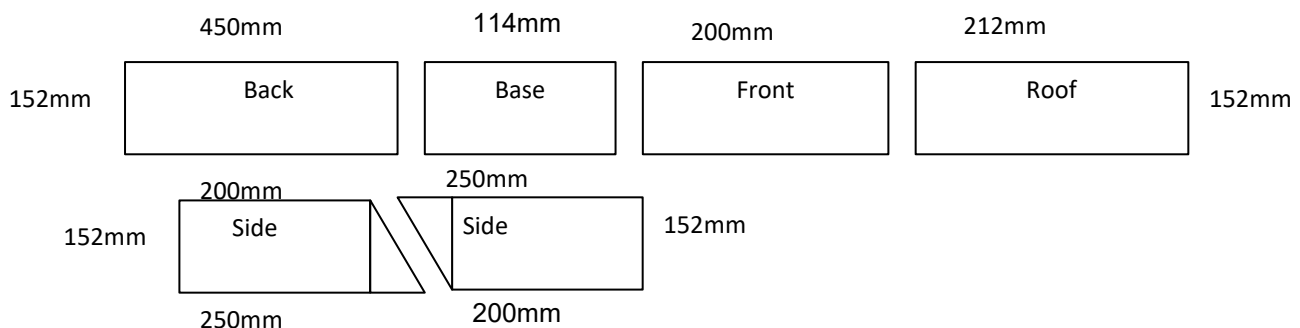
One diagonal cut will form the slopes of the two sides.

Make an entrance hole in the piece that will form the front of the box 28mm in diameter and about 25mm from the top to attract Blue Tits and Great Tits.

Make a box using nails. It should be a box shape with a slanted roof.

Hinge the roof with a piece of rubber, waterproof canvas, or leather, and attach the hooks and eyes to secure the box. This will help you to clean the box out in autumn ready for the spring.

Position the box high up on a tree or wall so that predators cannot get to it.



### Bat Box: What you do:

Bat boxes must always be made of untreated wood. Use the same measurements as described for the bird box.

Bats need holes in the bottom, towards the back of the box about 12mm wide.

On the inside of the box on the back wall, make grooves with a saw. These should be about 3mm deep and 9mm apart. These enable the bats to hang in the box.

Site the box high up on a tree, with no branches near it so the bats have easy access.

Paints or preservatives must never be used on the box as they can harm or kill a bat.

Bats like different temperatures at different times. So, it is best to make two or three boxes and position them around a tree. This means in colder weather they can generate more heat.

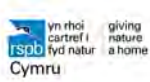


Bats (and their living quarters) are protected by law. You must not harm them or destroy where they live. If you need to move them for any reason, you need to get a licence from the Countryside Council for Wales or contact your local bat group to find a licensed member who might be able to help you.



### WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

Be one in a million - take part in *Big Garden Birdwatch*



In the last 50 years, 38 million birds have been lost from UK skies. The RSPB depends on your support to save nature and to look after places where nature can thrive. Join a million other people and count the birds you see in your garden or local park for one hour at the end of January. Sign up and get your free guide at <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>

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