It is essential to provide wildlife with the habitat components of cover, food, space, and water. Providing homes will help provide cover and will aid in attracting a variety of wildlife to your backyard. This chapter furnishes plans for the previous Homes for Wildlife chapter. Most of the plans here are for birds, but there are also structures for squirrels and rabbits. The plans for the bluebird house and bat house can be found in their respective chapters in the Species Management section. All birdhouses are made from $3\frac{1}{4}$" wood; do not use metal. Also, to prevent rain from seeping into the cracks enclose the floor with the sides instead of nailing the sides to the top of the floor. Attach birdhouses to a support post, building, or tree. All nest boxes should be predator-proofed to prevent threats from climbing predators such as housecats, raccoons, and squirrels. In most cases this can be done by placing a metal cone or a sheet of tin on poles or around trees underneath the nest box.

Two "pivot" nails, one top front and one top back, allow side to swing out for cleaning. Use one nail or screw at bottom to hold side closed. Nuthatches and flying squirrels require an entrance hole that is 1½" in diameter. Also, remember that a hole larger than 1½" in diameter will admit house sparrows.
Hinge roof for cleaning, and use a wire to keep the box shut. Place body of box 5" from the top of the back. Fill the box to the top with sawdust.

Hinge roof for cleaning, and use a wire to keep box shut.

American Robin, Barn Swallow, and Eastern Phoebe Nest Shelf

Northern Flicker

Wood Duck

Wood Duck
American Kestrel, Gray Squirrel, Red Squirrel, and Fox Squirrel

Hinge roof for cleaning, and use a wire to keep box shut. Place 3" of sawdust in bottom of box. For a squirrel box, place entrance on side of box instead of front.

Cut with tin snips to form a circle. Cut out a pie shape, and wire edges together to form a cone. Place onto tree limb with wire. A mallard basket can be made in the same way using 36" x 36" wire mesh, and placing on 2' 2" basket pipe above water. Vegetation for nesting is placed in the mallard basket and secured with soft wire.
Old tires can be reused to construct a squirrel den. Use a regular, non-steel belted tire. 

A) remove the bead from both sides of the tire, and cut the tire in half. 
B) cut a 3” triangle from each corner of the bottom of the tire. 
C) In the same end, cut a 3” diameter semicircle (this is the entrance hole). 
D) Cut 3” flaps in sidewalls about 1/3 distance up from the bottom of the tire. 
E) Punch holes into the sidewalls as shown. 
F) Fold the short end of the tire into the long end, and secure with roofing nails and washers. Hang with heavy wire or metal rod.

Rabbit Den

Dimensions of the burrow are not critical. A bottom is not necessary, as it will sit on the ground. Use durable lumber for the box, and bury it at ground level. Two semicircles should be cut on opposite ends at the bottom of the box. The tile should fit snugly into these holes. Bury the tiles at about 45 degree angle from the surface of the ground to the bottom of the box.