

THIS ALONG WITH COPY OF SHEET ON WOOD DUCK NESTING BOXES SENT TO
THOSE ON THE ATTACHED YELLOW SHEET 9/13/63

REPORT TO WOOD DUCK OBSERVERS

Twenty people reported their observations on 50 nesting boxes with the following totals:

31 boxes produced successful hatches.

371 is the estimate of total ducklings hatched which equals an average of 12 young per brood.

Squirrels destroyed one nest.

Racoons destroyed one nest.

Horned Owl destroyed one brooding female duck with resultant loss of the eggs.

Two nests contained broken eggs - probably squirrels.

Three nests containing eggs were deserted - cause unknown.

Four boxes were thought to have contained eggs, but results unknown due to insufficient observation.

43 total nesting attempts - estimated - of which 31 produced young. This percentage of success is doubtless much higher than would hold true under wild conditions where rate of predation would be much higher than it is in our city yards.

Thank you for participating - let's try again in 1964. I suggest that you check your boxes to see all is in order for the nesting season next March.

Frederic Leopold
111 Clay Street
Burlington, Iowa
September 13, 1963

January 17, 1963

WOOD DUCK NESTING BOXES

Material must be rough, unplanned 1" thick lumber. A "sound" grade of rough cypress is preferred due to its attractive appearance when weathered and, further, due to its durability. Do not paint or stain.

The outside dimensions of the box are 12 x 12" in horizontal section with a height of 24" at the front and 25" at the back. A lid is to be made out of material 12" wide x 13" long so that it projects about 1" at the front - must be flush at the back so that the box can be mounted securely against a tree trunk. The lid should be equipped with reinforcement about 9½" square so located as to fit inside the frame. The lid should be held in place by two screen door hooks to prevent predators from removing the lid.

An entrance hole, oval in shape, 4" wide x 3" high, should be located about 3" below the lid, of course, on the front of the box. At least four ½" drainage holes should be bored in the bottom of the box.

The box should be assembled with rust-resistant nails, zinc coated or other suitable type, of about 8D or no larger than 10D.

The simplest way to hang the box is to insert a 3/8" x 5" long hanger bolt into the tree trunk, allowing a projection of about 2½". A ½" or 5/8" hole should be bored in the back of the box directly behind the entrance hole. The bolt is to pass through this opening. The box is to be held in place with the use of lock washers and wing nut. It is important to relieve the pressure of the growing tree by readjusting the wing nut annually, otherwise the tree growth will pull the washers and nuts right through the back of the box on a fast-growing tree. The box should be hung about 15" above the ground on a tree trunk of substantial size in an area relatively free of twigs and branches that might interfere with access to the hole, with the opening so located that it is visible from whatever observation point you may normally select.

About 4" or 5" of decayed vegetation, preferably rotted wood or sawdust, if former is not available, in the bottom of the box. This should be checked and renewed annually as necessary.

It is advisable to inspect the boxes in early March each spring so as to remove squirrel nests or other objectionable litter and for maintenance.

The ducks carry no nesting material. They add only the down which is picked from the breast of the female bird.

Bear in mind that Wood Ducks are secretive shy birds. Keep out of sight to avoid flushing them during the early period of nest selection and egg laying when the birds may be seen sitting in the trees. By all means, try to make at least a weekly inspection of the boxes during April and May so that you will know whether nesting is in progress. Just seeing a bird enter your box does not necessarily mean that you have a nest. Such inspections should be made during the afternoon or evening since eggs are generally laid in the morning. The nesting pair will be off in the swamp somewhere during the remainder of the day. Remember that the first 6 to 8 eggs are buried in the litter so reach down and feel whether you have buried eggs before deciding that the box is empty.

If you hope to see the exodus of young ducks, try to establish the date on which the last of the eggs is laid. This is not difficult when you bear in mind eggs are usually laid at the rate of one per day. Approximately 30 days after the last egg is deposited, your ducks will be hatching and will leave the nest the following morning.

Frederic Leopold
111 Clay Street
Burlington, Iowa

Number of areas.	Number boxes.	Number used.	Successful.	Number hatched	
McChung ⁺	3	1	1	11	
		1	1	26	
		1	1	8	
Bobt Saar ⁺	1	0	0	0	
J. S. Buis ^{R. 1900 Kivon}	1	1	?	?	(Walker's)
Geo. Beck ⁺	1	1	?	?	
Jack Tod ⁺	1	0	0	0	
Wurtan Kraft ⁺	1	1	1	10	
Dale Kelley ⁺	1	0	0	0	
Leita Kuban ⁺	0	0	0	0	send info boxes
(G.) P. Bussel ⁺	2	0	0	0	
P. H. Kneuzle ⁺	0	0	0	0	send info
Paul Lehner ⁺	1	1	1	10	
Milton Paule ⁺	1	1	0	0	perhaps
B. B. Bell ⁺	0	0	0	0	send info
James Gathkar ⁺	1	1	?	?	
Wayne ⁺	1	1	1	?	
Alv. Friday ⁺	3	0	0	0	write him
Sam Schow ⁺	0	0	0	0	send info
Nic Wallen	2	2	1	18	deserted
Mark Barr	1	1	0	0	racoon
Ralph Davies	1	0	0	0	
Chap. Park	9	9	9	110	15 left behind
" "	2	2	0	0	broken eggs
Keopold	19	19	15	178	1-racoon #3-deserted

Mr. Hut 4
Red Carthage to suit

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