Bird Box

This straightforward project doesn’t require any sophisticated jointing techniques, so it is great for a beginner to tackle. The panels, once marked out and cut, are fixed together simply. The bird box shown is made from Western red cedar, but larch and plywood are good alternatives. Each bird species requires a specific-sized hole, so research how big your hole should be. This box has a 25mm (1in) diameter hole, which is suitable for a blue tit.

**Dimensions:**
210 x 200 x 204mm (8½ x 7½ x 8in)

**How the elements fit together**
All of the panels fit together with pins except those for the roof, which are screwed in place. The roof panels need to be removable so you can discard old nesting material and clean the box.

**Preparation of the Components**

1. **Mark the shape of each panel** using a pencil and combination square. Shade in the waste, so it’s clear what you are cutting off.
2. **Following your markings** cut the top of the front and back panels to 45 degrees, this creates the roof’s pitch.
3. **Mark 45-degree cuts** on the side panels and the long edge of the roof panels, and cut using a panel saw.

**Cutting List**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Material</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Width</th>
<th>Thickness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front and Back</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>175mm</td>
<td>110mm</td>
<td>8mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sides</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>110mm</td>
<td>54mm</td>
<td>8mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>204mm</td>
<td>150mm</td>
<td>18mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td>Cedar</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>114mm</td>
<td>105mm</td>
<td>18mm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tools and Materials**

- Pencil
- Ruler
- Combination square
- Panel saw
- Shooting board
- Plane
- Marking gauge
- Sandpaper
- Drill and bits (4mm/5⁄₁₆in and 25mm/1in)
- Screwdriver
- Rubber strip (recycled inner tube)
- Drill and bits (4mm/5⁄₁₆in and 25mm/1in)
- Screw gun or hammer and nails
- Screwdriver
- 8 screws (4 x 40mm/1½ x 1½in), plus more for fixing to post
- Rubber strip (recycled inner tube)
- 10 panel pins

**Assembling the Box**

1. **Nail all the panels together.** Use four nails in the front and in the back panels, and two nails in each side panel to secure the base and form the box carcass.
2. **Drive the screws** into the roof panels to fix the roof in place, no countersinking is needed for the cedar.
3. **Attach the rubber strip** to the roof with panel pins. To avoid awkward stretching of the rubber, hammer in the pins alternating each side of the roof line as you move along.
4. **Clean up the 45-degree cuts** on a shooting board using a plane.
5. **Using a marking gauge** set to 27mm (1in) and 195mm (7½in), scribe lines for the screw hole positions on the roof pieces.
6. **Mark up the access hole** position in the front panel using a pencil and combination square. Next, using a marking gauge, mark drainage holes in the base panel (inset).
7. **Drill the holes.** Use a 25mm (1in) drill bit for the access hole and a 4mm (5⁄₁₆in) drill bit for the drainage and screw holes (inset).

**Finishes**

Cedar will weather over time and fade to a silvery grey; if you choose a wood that needs protecting from the weather, be sure to check that any finish is safe for birds.