

Build a Microbat Roost Box



Have you ever seen a microbat? Above is the Eastern Horseshoe Bat. Photo: Doug Beckers. Below is the Goulds Wattle Bat. Photo: Steve Amesbury. Photo right: Dave (Flickr).



It's good to construct more than one roost box if you can. Three attached at the same height on a tree is ideal, as it allows your microbats to hop from box to box to find the right temperature.

Construct your own roosting box. This design is suitable for most kinds of Australian microbats. Adult help is required to make this project.

Roost box plan from Tweed Valley Wildlife Carers.

You will need

- 3 cm thick plantation pine or structural or external pine plywood. Rough-sawn or even secondhand timber is ideal, although you must make sure it is free of nails and paint.
- Screws
- 1 or 2 hinges
- A piece of old rubber tyre
- Shade cloth, mesh or bark
- Staple gun and staples
- Wire
- Old piece of garden hose or a nail and hammer

Instructions

1. Cut your pieces as the per sizes on the next page.
2. Screw your pieces together except for the top/roof.
3. Attach the top/roof piece to the box with a hinge so you can open and close it.
4. Attach the piece of rubber so that it's covering the hinged bits of wood - this will help waterproof it.
5. Screw a couple of off-cuts on the inside of the roof so that it sits snugly.
6. Staple shade cloth, mesh or bark to all inner surfaces, and your backboard.
7. Choose your location - you want somewhere shaded during the hottest part of the day, but not in full shade all day. Trim a few branches in front of the box to allow an uninterrupted flight path.
8. Thread wire through the garden hose and attach to back of box to hang from a tree, or nail your box to a tree about 3-5 m high.
9. Better still, make 3 boxes and hang at the same height on 3 different sides of the tree. The bats will move between them to find the right temperature at different times of day and during different seasons.

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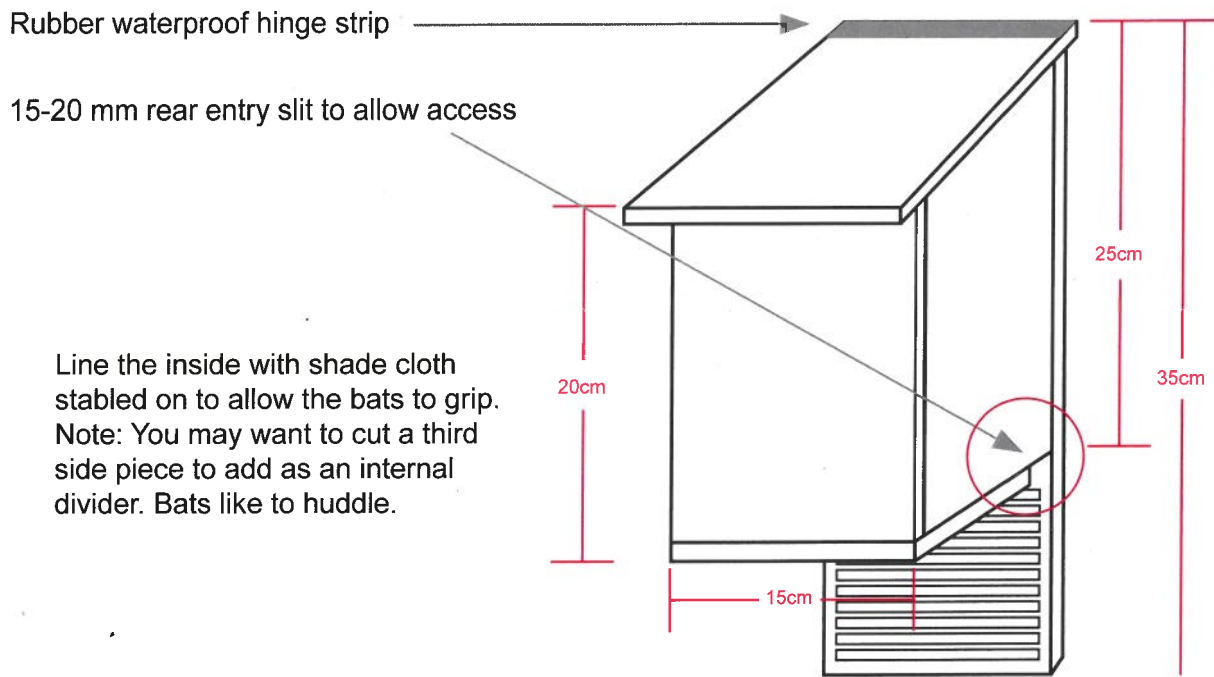
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Backboard with either bark, grooves or shade cloth tacked on to act as a 'landing pad'.

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