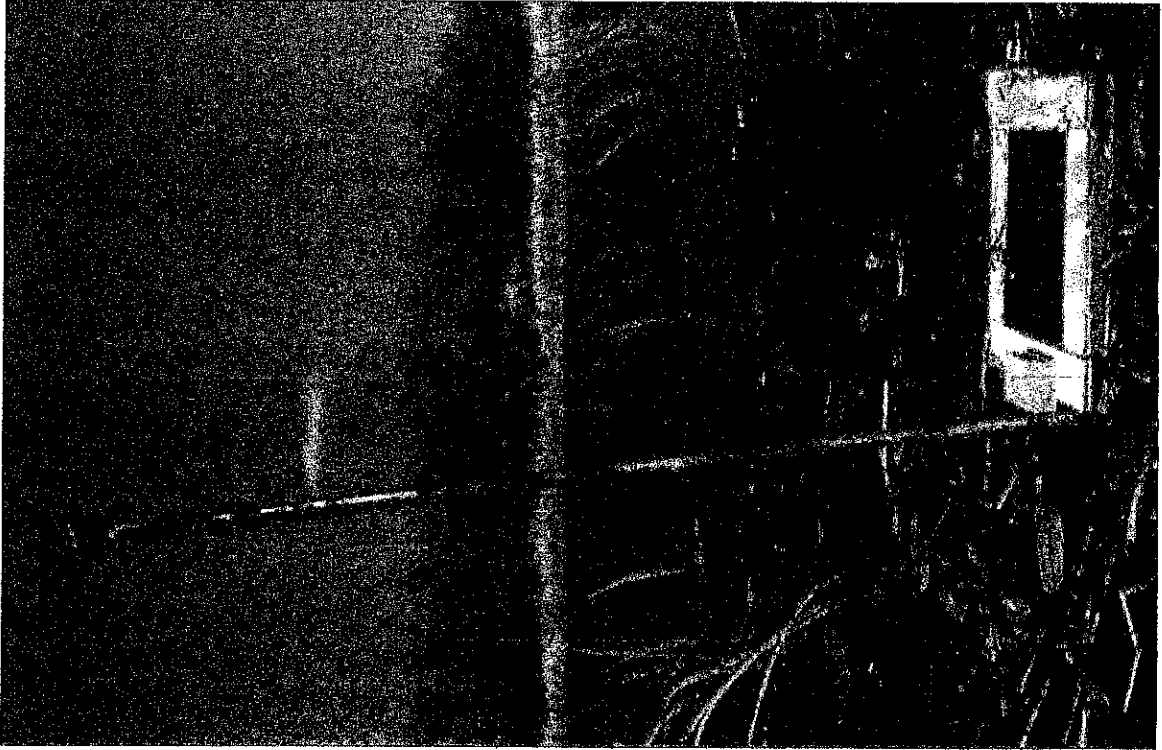
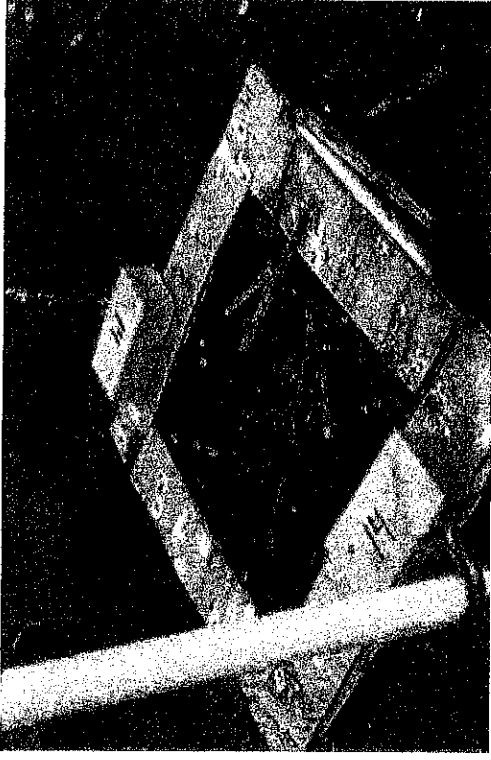


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# Green Landscaping with Native Plants

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## Green Landscaping Wild Ones Handbook

DISCLAIMER

All the Life There Is

The Landscape That  
Was, Is, Will Be

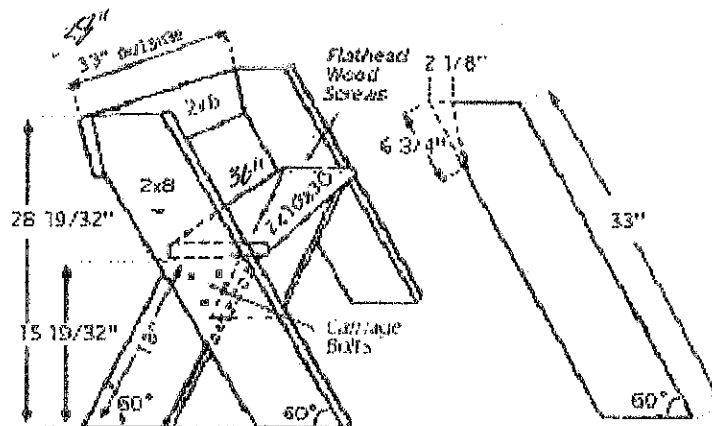
What Every Wild One  
Should Know

Wood Projects

### WHAT EVERY WILD ONE SHOULD KNOW

#### WOOD PROJECTS

##### ALDO LEOPOLD BENCH



*"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to plan in and pray in, where Nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike."* -

**John Muir**

To spy a Leopold bench in someone's yard is to know something about the family who there resides. Even if you haven't read Leopold's opening lines, ***"There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot. These essays are the delights and dilemmas of one who cannot,"*** from A Sand County Almanac, you will appreciate this easy-to-build bench. If left untreated, this stable bench develops a characteristic gray patina, however, putting some preservative where bench meets ground will prolong its life. Its form, resting alone under a tree or in congregation around a firepit, reminds us of Leopold's thoughtfulness:

*"When some remote ancestor of ours invented the shovel, he became a giver: He could plant a tree. And when the axe was invented, he became a taker: He could chop it down. Whoever owns land has thus assumed, whether he knows it or not, the divine functions of creating and destroying plants."*

*"The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant, 'What good is it?' If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not. If the birds, in the course of aeons, has built something we like but do not understand, then who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering."*

**Materials:** One 2x6x33", one 2x10x30", one 2x8x10", six 3/8" x 3 1/2" carriage bolts with washer and nut, twelve 3/8" x 3 1/2" #12 or #14 flathead wood screws. Use Douglas Fir



# Build a duck nest box

Wood ducks, Barrow's goldeneyes, common goldeneyes, hooded mergansers, common mergansers and buffleheads are all cavity nesting ducks. They build nests in abandoned woodpecker holes or natural tree cavities caused by disease, fire or lightning. These ducks will also use a constructed nesting box. Here are plans for a nest box that you can build, install and maintain. The design, which is used by the Ducks Unlimited Greenwing program, may even attract other cavity nesting birds such as kestrels, tree swallows, great crested flycatchers or screech owls.

## Cedar is ideal\*

Cedar lumber is recommended because it is naturally resistant to weather and insects. You can also use any materials you have available such as pine or plywood. The box pictured uses 10.5 linear feet of 1" X 10" (3/4" thick by 9 1/4" wide) lumber that is rough on one side (for the inside of the box). \*Ducks Unlimited staff in the interior of British Columbia indicate that plywood boxes better withstand the region's temperature extremes.

## Finishing touches

Ducks Unlimited does not recommend applying a finish to cedar boxes. A finish might help to extend the life of a plywood box.

If you decide to apply a finish to your nest box, use a nontoxic wood preserver or a light shade of an earth tone paint. The ducks will find your box by seeing the contrast in color caused by the entry hole. Do not apply finish inside the box.

Cavity nesting ducks do not carry nesting materials. It's important to help them out by placing four to six inches of wood shavings in the bottom of the box. You can find wood shavings at your local pet or farm supply store. **Do not use sawdust.** It can suffocate ducklings.

Every year, in the fall after the nesting season has completed or in the winter, clean out old nesting material from the box and replace it with a fresh layer of wood shavings. This annual cleaning needs to be a part of your long-term maintenance commitment once you place your nest box.



Constructing and placing a nest box is a fun project that brings years of enjoyment. Above: this pole mounted nest box features a conical metal predator guard. Below: wood duck drake.

## PROCEDURE

Tools needed: handsaw or table saw, drill and 1/2" bit, jigsaw, screwdriver, sandpaper, pencil, measuring tape, straight-edge

- 1) Measure and cut your wood to produce the six pieces. Number the pieces as shown. See material measurements.
- 2) Attach the back (1) to the side (2) using four screws fastened from the back of the box. See exploded view (next page).
- 3) Drill five 1/2" drainage holes in the floor (3). Attach the floor by fastening two screws through the back and two through the side.
- 4) Draw the entry hole on the front (4) using a pencil (4 1/2" x 3 1/2" oval). Drill a pilot hole and cut out the entry hole using a jigsaw. See detailed view.
- 5) Score the inside face of the front (4) using a saw. The horizontal slots will provide toe holds when the ducklings climb out. See detailed view.

*continued...*

## MATERIAL MEASUREMENTS - not to scale

