

# Bird Houses & Bat Boxes Conservation Practice



A boreal owl in a nest box, with eggs and newly-hatched chicks.  
Photo: Jack Whitman, ADF&G

## Overview

Bird houses can enhance habitat for many species including swallows, woodpeckers, and owls. Bat boxes can provide bats a suitable home, augmenting natural homes and providing alternatives to other man-made structures, like attics and sheds. Through the conservation practice 'Structures for Wildlife,' the Natural Resources Conservation Service helps landowners improve habitat for wildlife.

Preferred habitats vary according to species needs, but often include hayfields, pastures, large grassy patches, shrubby areas, marshes, grassy right of ways, and edges of forests, usually where disturbance factors like traffic are minimal.

## Assistance

Contact an NRCS office to learn about conservation planning.

## NRCS Wildlife Structure Conservation Practice Specifications

Wildlife structures can be purchased or you can construct your own. All structures must meet NRCS specifications for the designated type of structure and desired wildlife.

Periodic inspection, removal of debris, cleaning and repair is required to maintain function and assure proper operation. The practice should be evaluated annually for the first few years of operation and adjustments made for local conditions based on observations.

Nest boxes shall be cleaned out each spring and disinfected to prevent the spread of avian diseases. Be sure to dry the inside and, if necessary, add fresh, dry sawdust or wood chips.

### Contact NRCS in Alaska

**North Hub, Fairbanks**  
(907) 479-3159

Delta Junction  
(907) 895-4241

**South Hub, Kenai**  
(907) 283-8732

Homer  
(907) 235-8177

Juneau  
(907) 586-7220

**Central Hub, Wasilla**  
(907) 373-6492

**State Office, Palmer**  
(907) 761-7760

[www.ak.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ak.nrcs.usda.gov)



The little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*) lives across nearly all of Alaska. Photo: J. Reimer