

## 5 Facts about the Northern Saw-whet Owl

1. It is one of the most common and smallest owls in forests across southern Canada and the northern and western United States, extending through central Mexico.
2. The owls are strictly nocturnal, with activity beginning at late dusk.
3. They seem to prefer mature forests with open areas for foraging, deciduous trees for nesting, dense conifers for roosting, and riverside habitat nearby.
4. Saw-whets nest in previously excavated holes (usually those of Northern Flickers or woodpeckers) in dead snags. They also use nest boxes.
5. They lay their eggs on debris at the bottom of the cavity—such as wood-chips, twigs, moss, grass, hair, small mammal bones, or old starling nests—without adding new material to the nest.

Source: [www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org)



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The Redberry Lake Biosphere Reserve Research & Education Centre and Office is located in the Redberry Lake Regional Park: GPS Coordinates 52.717163, -107.215233

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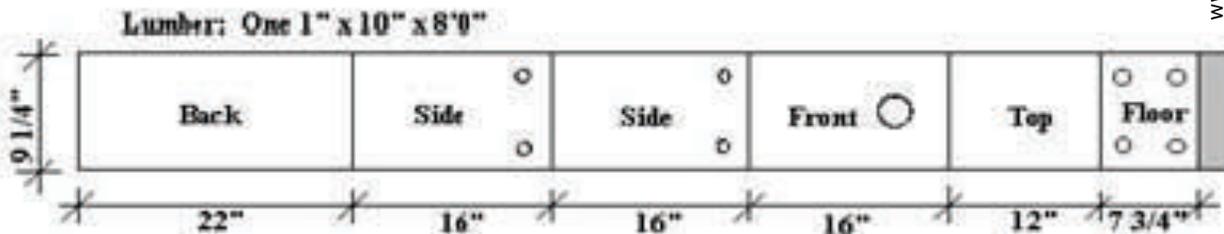
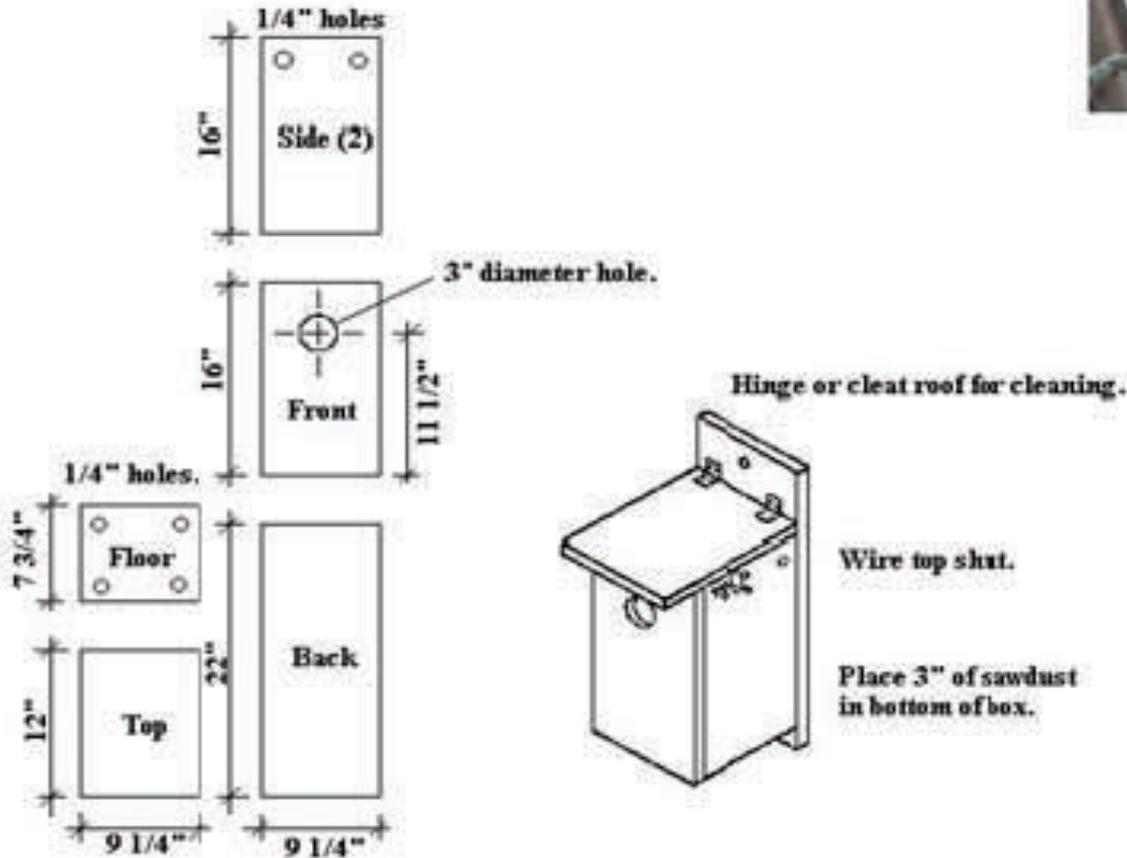
Northern Saw-whet Owl

(Photo: [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com), Kameron Perensovich)

## How to Build: A Saw-whet Owl Nest Box

## Northern Saw-whet Owl Nest Box Plans

Entrance hole diameter is 3 inches.



www.shawcreekbirdsupply.com

### You will need:

- 1" x 10" x 8' untreated solid wood
- Weather resistant screws between 1 1/4" and 1 1/2" long
- 2 hinges and shutter hook (optional)
- Drill and table saw

Using a table saw, cut the board to the dimensions as shown (left).

Drill 4 drain holes on the floor, and 2 ventilation holes on both sides.

Drill a 3" diameter hole in the front.

Assemble the nest box by carefully screwing it together.

Screw in the hinge to the top and the back, as shown (left). Use a shutter hook to secure roof in closed position.

*Put up the nest box between 8–44 feet off the ground.*

### Helpful Tips

Use rough feeling wood. It helps adults cling to the side of the box when bringing nesting material and feeding their young.

Put roughly 3" of saw dust on the bottom of the box.

If you plan on painting, only paint the outside. It is toxic to the owls if painted inside.

**Find more ideas for nest boxes here:**

<http://www.redberrylake.ca/exploreus/hikingtrailstips.php>

