

A Universal external Swift box

While we would always prefer internal nest boxes for Swifts, our next choice would be boxes that fit under eaves, out of the way of rain and sun. However, there are cases, where the only opportunity is an external site, exposed to sun and rain. We here offer a design, that can be made by anyone with simple carpentry tools, which we think would be suitable.

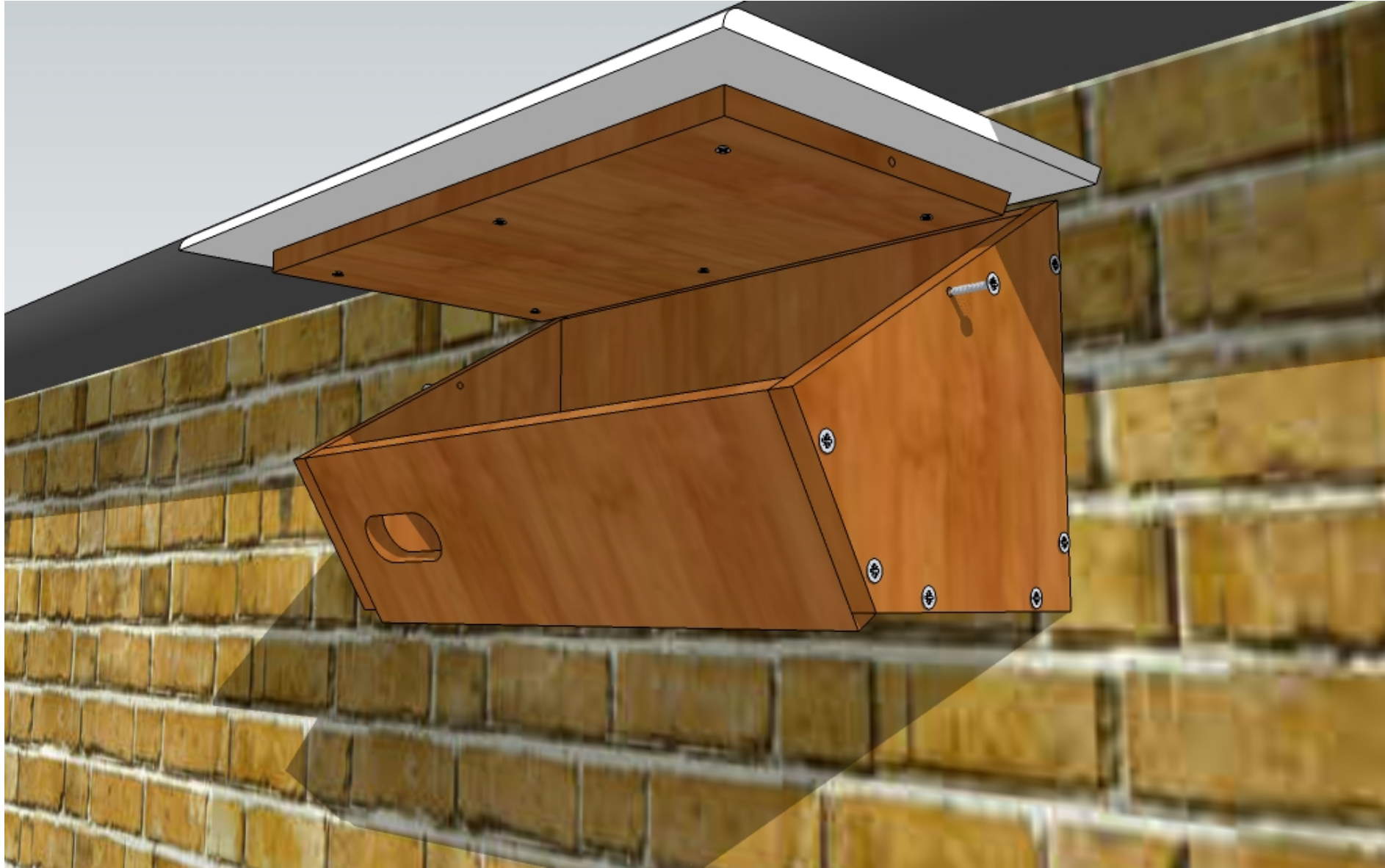
One of the more popular nest box designs is the Zeist box. If made of plywood, it is essential that such a box should not be exposed to the elements. In the sun, it may overheat and in the rain, it will deteriorate. Further it has a flat top, so unless installed flush with the eaves, it acts as a suitable perch for a predator, such as Starlings, Sparrowhawks or Little Owls.

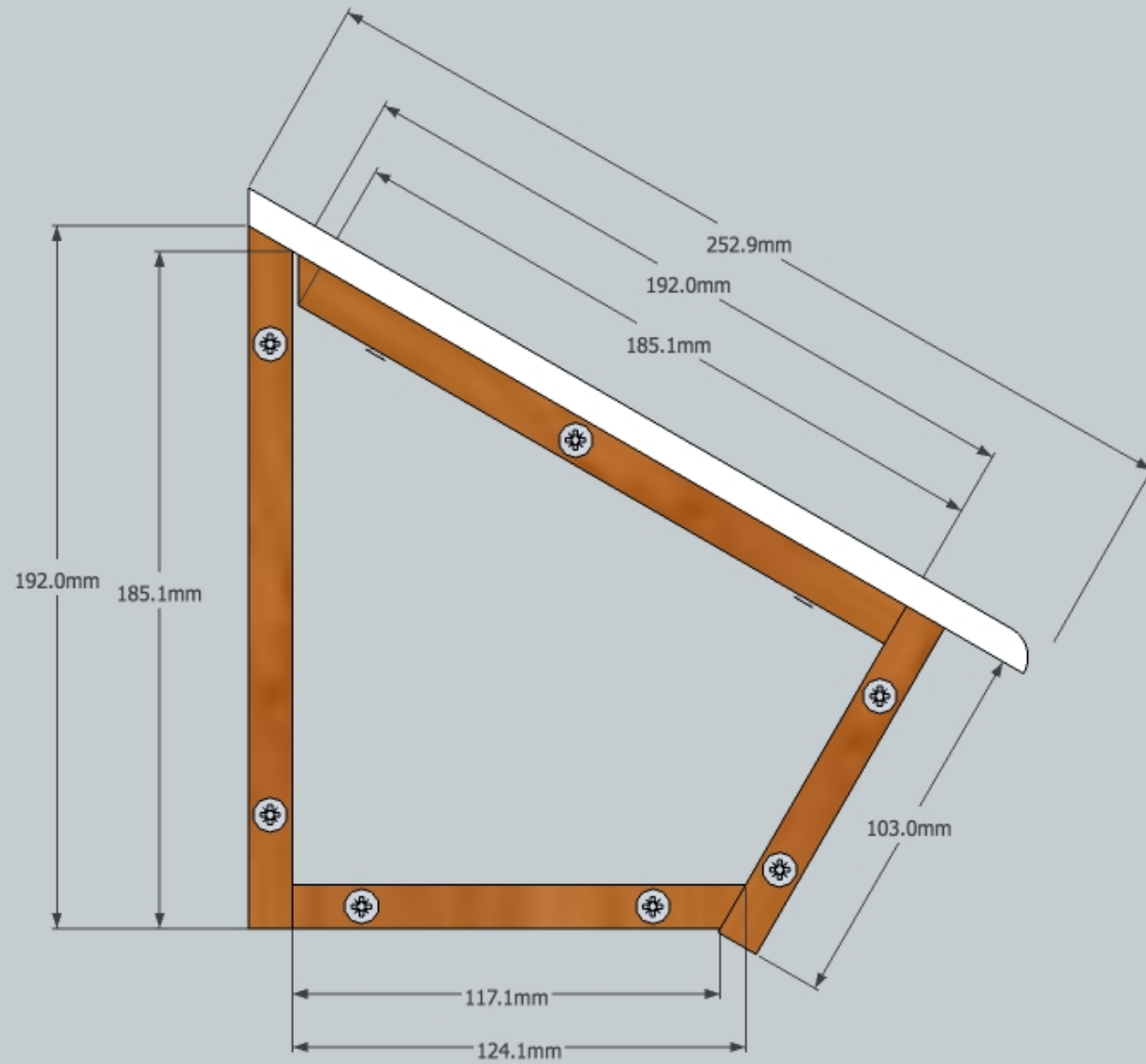
We know from experiments that nest boxes made of thicker wood, especially the roof, painted white are sufficient to maintain the temperature within acceptable bounds. Further, if the roof is truly waterproof, then such a box should last indefinitely.

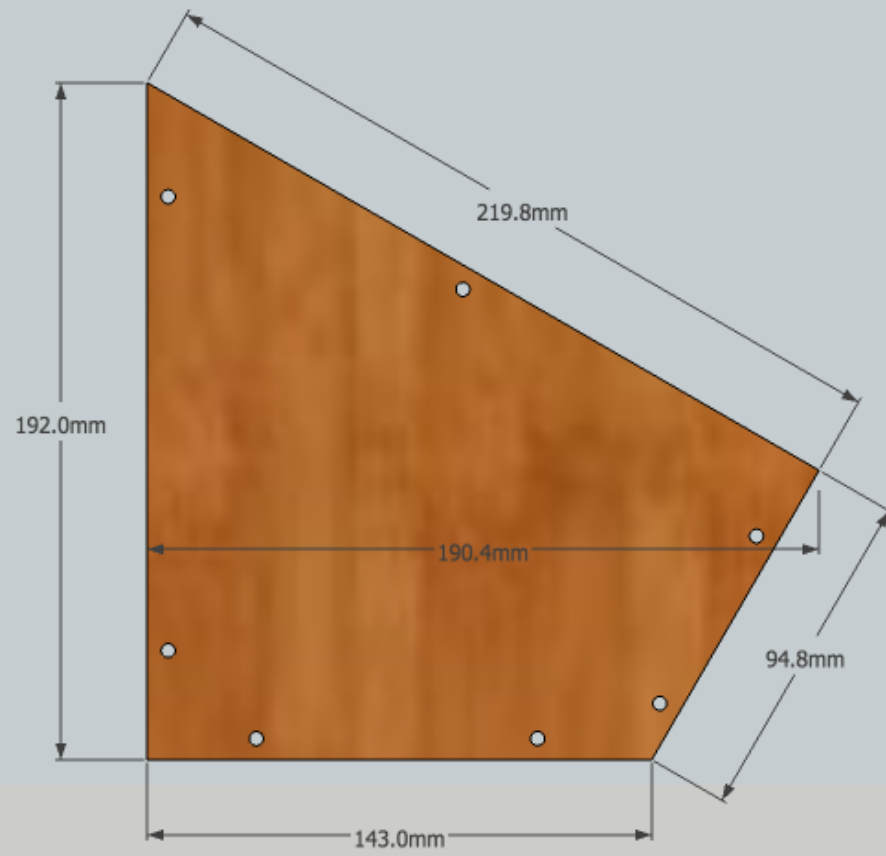
We here offer a design, based upon the Zeist design, with a double thickness roof made of plywood and uPVC. uPVC is a lightweight material, easy to cut and with good thermal insulation properties. uPVC is used for fascia boards, so it is a material designed to resist all weathers. It comes in white sheets, 250mm wide, so is ideal for reflecting the sun's rays. uPVC is also quite slippery, which would make it difficult for predators.

The pictures below give details of the design.











Cutting plan for 6 boxes: 12mm weather proof plywood 1220mm x 1220mm

(2 pairs of ends need to come from another sheet)

Dimensions do not include saw cut widths

Dotted lines are saw cuts bevelled at 30°

(a 2mm saw blade will take 2.3mm at 30°)

