

Quick & Easy

# NESTING SHELF

Feed or house robins, swallows and sparrows

**D**esigned as a house for birds that prefer open nesting sites, this structure can also be used as a bird feeder. You can attach it under the eaves of your house, garage or shed, nail it to a tree or mount it to a pole.

If you plan to paint the nesting shelf, you can build it out of any wood. If you don't want to paint it, make it out of cedar or redwood. Start by ripping  $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. stock to width (see drawing for dimensions). Then cut the 45-degree bevel in the top edge of the stock for the side pieces. Enlarge the side pattern to full size and trace it onto the stock (remember to flip it so the two sides are mirror images); then cut the sides to shape using a band saw, scroll saw or coping saw.

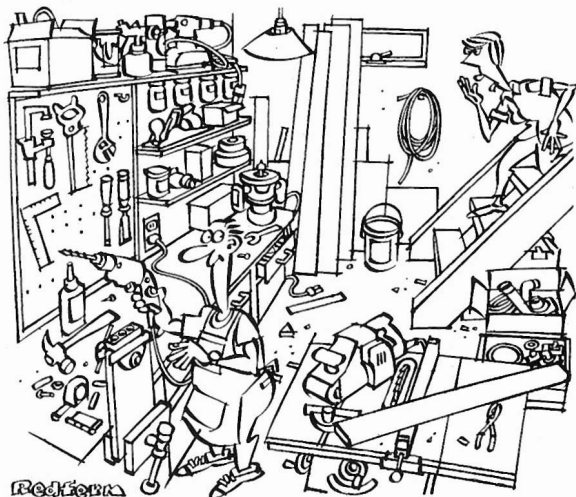
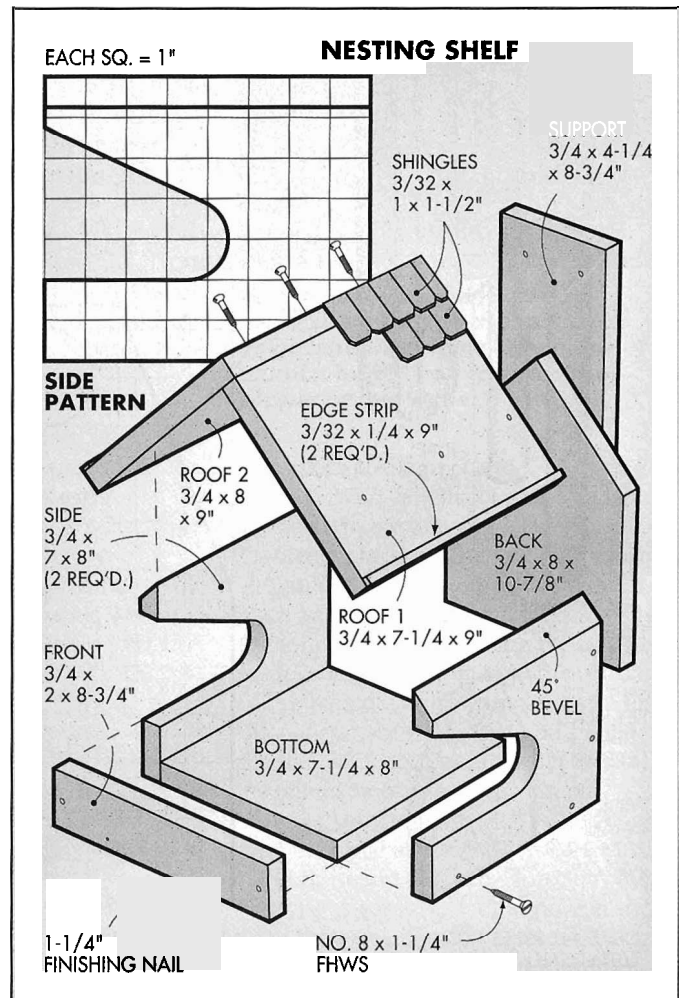
Next, cut the rest of the pieces to length. Attach the sides to the bottom with no. 8 x  $1\frac{1}{4}$ -in. flathead wood screws. Screw roof 1 to roof 2; then trace the inside angle of the roof assembly onto the back and cut the angle. Attach the back, roof and front with screws.

Using a band saw or scroll saw, cut about 90 shingles from 1-in. rough-cedar stock (or buy ready-made dollhouse shingles). You can mass-produce shingles by ganging strips of the stock together and cutting them at once. Keep the strips together with masking tape while you cut them. To make the tapers on the ends, stack a handful of the shingles and briefly touch them against a belt or disc sander. Attach the shingles to the roof with water-resistant glue (Titebond II). Glue on the edge strips; then screw the support to the back. Apply paint or water repellent; then scout out the best location for your shelf. If you intend it to be a birdhouse, mount it at the proper height (see caption, above right). — *Bob Marquis*



Photo, Lawrence F. Okrend

Depending on how high you mount it, the nesting shelf is an attractive home for robins, barn swallows, phoebes and song sparrows. Barn swallows and phoebes prefer a height of 8 to 12 ft., song sparrows 1 to 3 ft. and robins 6 to 15 ft. The shelf doubles as a bird feeder.



"The limousine from the hardware store is here."