

# Setup Guide

## Congratulations on the purchase of your new Camera kit!

The Gardenature range of nest box camera systems is, in our opinion, the best available on the market today!



Our unique nest box is designed to attract the widest range of garden birds.

We use high quality Western Red Cedar (from renewable sources) so the box requires no treatment with preservatives or chemicals as the natural oils in the wood will protect it against the harshest weather conditions. The camera is safely housed inside a sliding drawer within the roof of the nest box and offers fantastic views of the inside of the nest box.

## Getting Started....

Follow the guide below to help ensure the best possible chance of attracting any number of different birds in front of your GARDENATURE WILDLIFE CAMERA.

### 1. Before venturing outside....

Unpack your new purchase and check for any shipping damage. It is also advisable to check that the camera is functioning correctly (has not been damaged in transit).

Slide out the drawer in the roof of the nest box to reveal the mini video camera



mounted on the quick release bracket inside. Note how the cable connections are tucked neatly inside the sliding drawer too. Turn over the camera drawer to reveal the camera lens protruding through the plastic. Carefully remove the lens cap by gently pulling. **DO NOT TWIST!**

The camera is pre-focused to approx 50mm from the base of the nest box to allow for the height of the nest, so when you look at the empty nest box on screen for the first time it may appear very slightly out of focus. THIS IS FINE! Do not be tempted to adjust the focus to get a crisp image of the base of the nest box. If you do it is highly probable that the images of the nesting birds will be out of focus. However, if you think you have adjusted the focus by mistake (when taking the lens cap off for example) simply place a small item inside the nest box (approx 50-70mm from the base) and readjust the focus manually by gently turning the camera lens left or right .

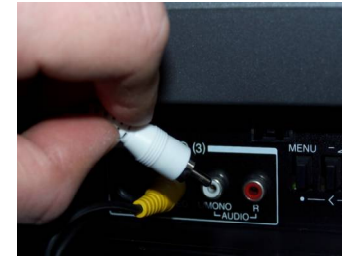
The angle of the camera can be slightly adjusted to ensure view is centralised too.



Looking either side of the lens you will find a row of IR LEDs (Infrared Light Emitting Diodes). These are used to illuminate the inside of the nest box at night with invisible infrared light. These will be present even if your camera DOES NOT have IR nightvision activated (they will not work as the electronics inside the camera is not fitted). If you find that the IR LEDs bleach out the colour of your image slightly try covering one or more of the LEDs with a small piece of black insulating tape.

The camera also has a built in microphone so you can hear as well as see what's going on!

Now connect the colour-coded connectors on the end of the cable (yellow = video, white = Audio) to a spare AV socket on your TV or video/DVD recorder (use supplied scart adaptor if required) and the black socket to the supplied 12v mains adaptor. Select the appropriate AV channel using your remote control. You will normally find a button on your remote that is labelled AV, INPUT or AUX. Each time you press this button the TV will cycle through the available AV channels. Keep pressing the button until images from inside the nest box appear on screen. If you are planning to record images via your video/DVD Recorder then make sure you select the correct channel on the video/DVD recorder too.



**Please Note:** Make sure the yellow, white and black camera /cable connections are placed inside the sliding drawer of the nest box as these are not waterproof connections. Always switch off power at the mains before swapping cameras between boxes to eliminate any potential electrical shock hazard!

Colour camera kits are designed to use ambient daylight to illuminate the inside of the box to minimise disturbance to the birds. Colour images will be obtained in bright daylight. If your colour camera has built in infra red illumination (option at additional cost) B&W images will be obtained when insufficient light enters the nest box such as on very dull days and at night.

**Experiment with positioning of the nest box to obtain best results.**

This camera system can be connected to a PC, laptop or interactive whiteboard using an appropriate capture/TV card or one of our VIDEO TO USB ADAPTORS. Once connected your Gardenature camera will appear as any other live video source (just like a webcam for example) and as such can be used with most webcam software or any other software that can accept a live video input. If you wish to have motion detection capabilities we recommend **icatcher wildlife** available on our website [www.gardenature.co.uk](http://www.gardenature.co.uk).

### STEP 2. Where to site the nest box

It doesn't really matter in which direction you position the entrance to your nest box. What is important is that you do not face the hole towards the prevailing wind as this will almost certainly mean that rain will get into the box during wet and windy weather. Traditionally, this means boxes are positioned facing between north and east. Try and avoid direct or prolonged exposure to

sunlight on your box since overheating inside the box can sometimes result in heat stress to the young birds inside. Nest boxes fitted with a colour camera have a small plastic window in the roof. This is allow just enough light inside the box to give you good colour images. Experiment with the position of the nest box to give you the best results. Remember to allow for excessive leaf cover later if you are erecting the nest box during the winter.

Placing a nest box in close proximity to a feeding device or feeding station may well put off birds from nesting in the box. Remember that most nesting birds are highly territorial and do not like intruders in their territory. Either remove feeders just before and during the breeding season or place the nest box well away from the feeding station.

If squirrels or woodpeckers are a particular problem in your garden why not try fitting a metal hole protector plate (supplied as standard on high resolution kits only).



### STEP 3. Fixing the nest box

If you wish to attract Blue Tits, Great Tits etc to nest, ideally your nest box should be fixed two to five metres up a tree or wall to prevent predators such as cats from reaching them. If you wish to attract Robins, remove the front panel (containing the round entrance hole) and position the nest box one to two metres above ground level in or very close to light undergrowth/foliage.

There are several methods for attaching the nest box to a tree. If using a nail try to make sure it is aluminium as this does least damage to the tree. Alternatively boxes can be attached with wire around the trunk or branch. Use a piece of garden hose or similar around the wire to prevent damage to the tree.

**Safety Note: Many activities concerned with nestboxes are potentially hazardous. Remember – Be familiar with the safe working practices of any tools you use. Wear safety glasses where appropriate. Ensure ladders are secure before you climb them, particularly if the ladder has been placed against a thin tree, or a branch protruding from the main trunk.**

Run the cable from the nest box using the safest route possible. To prevent any tripping hazards you can either fasten the cable along a wall or fence or bury it underground. Where possible we advise you to place the cable inside a conduit or hose pipe to help prevent damage from squirrels, rats or the occasional spade! Although advisable this is not essential as the system runs on low voltage DC so poses very little hazard. However, as with any electrical equipment used outside we advise you to connect your system to the mains via an RCD breaker.

There are a number of options for getting the cable into your house. Either drill a hole through the wall or run the cable through the corner of a door or window frame.

### STEP 4. Connecting the Camera

To connect your camera to a TV, video/DVD recorder or PC just follow the same instructions as in step 1.

You should now be set up and ready to view the secret lives of the birds in your garden!

### Quick Care / Maintenance Guide

The nest box is made from high quality Western Red Cedar and should require no treatment for some time. However, if you do wish to treat it to prolong it's life even further we recommend using a water based wood preservative but only on the outside so as not to harm the nesting birds. Boxes are best treated in late summer or autumn when the birds are not using it. In winter, especially during cold spells, birds such as tits and wrens often use nest boxes as roosting sites, and by March many species of tit are already prospecting for nesting sites.

Old nests should be removed from your nest box. The best time to do this is soon after the breeding season and before the onset of winter. The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 permits the cleaning out of nests containing abandoned eggs between 1 August and 31 January. The eggs must be destroyed promptly and cannot be kept or sold. Nests often harbour fleas and an old nest left in a box over winter provides a warm home. If, however, you do forget to remove an old nest make sure you clear it out before the end of January.

Put old nests into a plastic bag and seal it straight away. This will keep the fleas contained within the bag rather than jumping all over you! Wear protective gloves or wash your hands thoroughly when you have finished.

**If the camera is to be left outside in very cold weather conditions it should always be left switched on. This will generate a very small amount of heat inside the camera to prevent the electronics from freezing.**

Should you require any help or advice when installing your Gardenature Cam nest box, contact us using one of the methods below.

**Tel: 0844 35 10 987**

Email: [customerservices@gardenature.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@gardenature.co.uk)

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