

SECTION C - WETLANDS and ADJACENT UPLANDS

Mallard

Plan 20 (page 54)

The Mallard nest cylinder (Plan 20) can be used to encourage Mallards to nest in safer locations.

Approximately 35 percent of this type nest, are used annually at the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area. Nearly 90 percent of the nests used result in successful hatches. In farm ponds where cattle have access to the shoreline, use of this nesting structure has approached 100 percent.

It is recommended that the nest be placed over water no less than three feet above the highest water level expected during the spring season. Also position the nest perpendicular to the prevailing winds in your

area. This prevents nesting material from being blown out of the nest, but more importantly, it prevents the hen's scent from being spread over a large area, possibly attracting a predator to the nest. A predator guard can be placed on the post.

The nesting material should be replaced annually, and it is best done in February while ice conditions permit easy access. The nest can be turned around at this time, and if the hay is thin, some can be pushed in between the wire by use of a thick board. Usually by the third year all the hay in the nest will need to be replaced.



Mallard

Mergansers

Plan 15 (page 49)

Both Hooded and Common Mergansers will nest in tree cavities. These species are found more commonly in northern Pennsylvania. They prefer larger streams, rivers, lakes, beaver ponds and swamps.

The beautiful Hooded Merganser will use a wood duck box. Heights above 20 to 25 feet seem to be preferred. Boxes should be placed above water, or if on land, the entrance should face water.

The Common Merganser sometimes nests in tree cavities. Boxes successful in attracting this species were placed 15 to 17 feet high in

aspen trees on land adjacent to water. This species will nest in a wood duck box if the entrance is enlarged to 5 inches in diameter.

As with Wood Ducks, nest boxes can be liabilities for these species if no effort is made to predator-proof the boxes. If raccoons are numerous, boxes should not be placed along the water's edge, where chances of predation are highest. Either place boxes over water or at least 30 feet from the water's edge on land. Boxes along the water's edge must be predator proofed.



Hooded Merganser

SIDELINGER