

Zoo Atlanta uses several different styles of nest box, each with a tree knot attached over the entrance hole. All nest boxes are around the same size of 6"x6"x8". Disguising or surrounding the nest boxes with greenery (artificial) has proven beneficial. It has been noted that birds in the past have used smaller nest boxes. Nesting material consisted of long grasses, raffia, green leaves from ficus trees, and bamboo leaves.





Denver zoo has been successful with two types of nest boxes. These boxes were basically stacked upon each other, separated by a 12" gap between them. The nest box entrances did not face the front of the enclosure. The female alternated clutches between the two nest boxes during one breeding season. One box measures 6"x6"x7". The other is roughly 7"x7"x10". Nesting material consisted of green moss, silk or artificial green leaves, coconut fiber, small green mulberry leaves, and chopped lettuce from their diet. The mulberry leaves were gathered by keepers and scattered on floor of enclosure.



At Brookfield Zoo, one of the pairs nested inside a Prevue brand parakeet-sized wooden nest box with a natural tree knot attached to the front of the box. Nesting material consisted of green moss, coconut fiber, fine pieces of hardwood mulch, green ficus leaves and crimped cardboard "shavings" that is used as a substrate in the flight enclosure. A visual baffle was placed several feet away from nest box for added seclusion.





Sedgwick County Zoo uses the below nest box that measures approximately 6"x6"x8". Their birds have used a variety of nesting material, such as; aspen shavings, coconut fiber, pine straw and elephant poop. The birds will pick the hay and straw from the elephant poop and use it as nesting material. Generally, the elephant poop is placed in an outdoor flight on tray on the ground.



Honolulu Zoo's pair used this box which measures approximately 6"x7"x7". Unlike the rest of the boxes listed on this document, this is the only one with an overhang. Nesting material used consisted of bamboo leaves, small sticks and dried grasses.





At North Carolina Zoo, their pair started nesting this year and used the below nest box. Their style of nest box appears to be taller than it is wide/deep, and has a natural tree knot attached to the front of the box. Their birds used moss, small sticks and green leaves as nesting material.



The final breeding set-up is from Aurelio Padron at La Finca Aviaries in northern Florida. The violet-backed starlings are housed in a mixed exhibit, including Emerald Starlings. Several natural nest logs are placed in close proximity along a structure support pole, and both starling species utilize these boxes. The logs were hollowed out by hand, and entrance holes were made within natural tree knots.

