

# Set up Guide

## Thank you for purchasing a Gardenature camera kit

Gardenature nest box camera systems have won many awards and are one of 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). Cedar has its own natural oils and does not require treatment, but if you wish to coat it in a water based preservative then this will help to protect it against the harshest weather conditions over the longer term. The camera is safely housed inside a sliding drawer within the roof of the nest box; this will provide excellent top-down views of the nesting chamber.

## 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 camera.



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

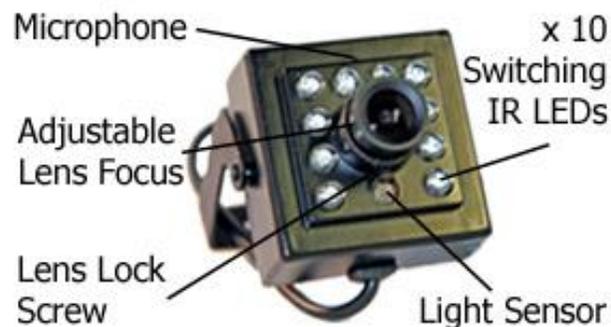
It is advisable to connect the kit up and check that you understand how everything works before installing; Cables are not covered under warranty once they have been installed!

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, exiting to the right side. 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 need to adjust the focus at any time simply place a small item inside the nest box (approx 50-70mm from the base) then with a small screw driver you can release the lens by turning the lock screw anticlockwise. You will then be able to turn the lens and re-adjust the focus manually by gently turning the camera lens left or right, re-tighten the lock screw.

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



This Sony Effio Camera is fitted with a light sensor which will turn on the IR (infrared) LED's when there is insufficient natural light. This may occur if you are testing the camera indoors and so the image that you see may be in black & white, this is quite normal.

There are windows in the side of the nest box, these will let in sufficient light to provide a good colour image outdoors. It is important that you keep these windows from being covered by plants otherwise the IR's will try to compensate for loss of light on dull days; this will cause loss of image colour.

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

Note: **This camera is NOT waterproof** so always keep it sheltered in the supplied nest box or feeding device.

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 TV remote control. You will normally find a button on your remote that is labelled AV, INPUT or AUX. Or you may need to go into the TV menu to find the available AV channels. Keep surfing through until images from inside the nest box appear on screen. If you are planning to record images via your video/DVD recorder then you will need to connect through that equipment, then select the auxiliary channel input on the video/DVD recorder to view the camera on your TV.



**Please Note:** Make sure the yellow, white and black cable connectors 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 electrical surge or shock hazards!

This camera system can be connected to a PC, laptop or interactive whiteboard using an appropriate capture/TV card. If you do not have this type of connection you can purchase one of our 'Video - USB Adaptors' available from the Gardenature website. Once connected your Gardenature camera will appear as any other live video source (just like a web cam for example) and as such can be used with most web cam software or any other software that can accept a live video input. Please visit our website and click on the **PC Connectivity** section in the menu for further product accessory details.

### 2. Where to site the nest box

When choosing a position for your nest box it is important 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 to avoid direct or prolonged exposure to sunlight on the box since over-heating can sometimes result in heat stress to the young birds inside. Nest boxes fitted with a colour camera have small plastic windows in the sides to allow just enough light into the box for 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 put birds off 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 (approx. 10 metres).

If squirrels or woodpeckers are a particular problem in your garden try fitting a metal hole protector plate. We supply 28 & 32mm with our High Resolution kits.



### 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/Wrens etc, 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/foilage.

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. . You can easily drill holes in the rear of the roof panels to thread wire through.

**Safety Note: Many activities concerned with nest boxes are potentially hazardous. 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 hosepipe 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. Drill a 20mm hole through the wall, door or window frame, or maybe you have an airbrick/vent you could adapt to take the cable. Visit the **Advice** tab on our website for further help.

### 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, 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 product please refer to our website **FAQ** and **Advice** sections.

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