

1. Preamble

Hoërskool Roodepoort have a 3-story building with a top floor ceiling void spanning an approximate 1400m². The school plans to demolish the building due to it becoming structurally unsound. A pair of barn owls are reportedly resident in this building for a number of years. The nest of the barn owls appears to be located in the top floor ceiling void above the staircase that communicates with all floors. The school accepts the pair of barn owls and has requested that they simply be moved to a safe location within the premises.

2. Assessment Outcome

A preliminary visit was conducted on 7 May 2021. The site was confirmed, the species was identified by the presence of consistent pellet and feather evidence. No brood or individual young were visible. Considering the natural behaviour and requirements, three suitable sites were identified as alternative nesting locations and will be further assessed on approval of this proposal. These locations are indicated below:



3. Recommendations

Barn owls require sheltered, elevated positions that satisfy their needs for a good vantage point as well as a suitable height to both offer protection for their young and an appropriate platform for them to fledge from. A location against a building but partially under-roof or a location where the owl house can be installed inside the building with an exit to the outdoors is most preferable.

We recommend installing 2 species specific Barn Owl Houses mounted to the exterior of structures indicated above for the following reasons:

- a) Due to the difference in any animals' interpretation of structures and materials and the individual's preference in location, the realistic chance of a new owl taking a house is about 15%. In this instance chances will progressively escalate since we have a long-term resident pair who will be definitively excluded from their first-choice location. If they have young (to be confirmed) that can be relocated to a new house then it almost becomes a certainty.

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- b) It is not unusual for both houses to be used by one pair. Outside of the breeding season (February to May in Gauteng) the pair may roost separately. The female will also leave the nest after the young are 3-4 weeks of age and roost nearby.
- c) Barn owls are known to lay a second clutch within the same season and often do so at a second location.
- d) An optional consideration is expanding the functionality of the boxes by letting us install wi-fi cameras. This could add exceptional scientific and educational value as well as spinoffs for future projects. Since Wild Serve conducts school education programmes, we could easily mentor a student team to manage it.

4. Method

Wild Serve will systematically relocate the nest material to new houses irrelevant of the presence of any young and then exclude the adults from the current nest site. This will be done in the following order:

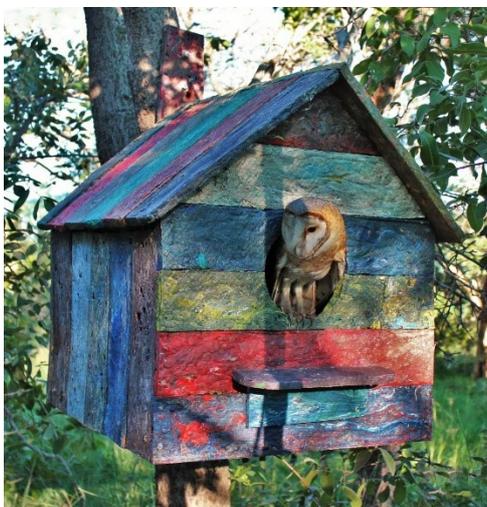
1. Install Barn Owl Houses at two of the locations
2. Thereafter we will trace the actual nest and any young and transfer them along with nest bedding. If there is insufficient material, we will add suitable bedding material.
3. The old nest site will be barricaded to prevent the owls returning
4. The boxes will be monitored through sighting and intermittent sampling of nest box contents.

5. Equipment and Materials

2x Barn Owl Houses, mountings and fixings (from a selection to follow)
 Thermal imaging (supplied – no charge)
 Possibly scaffolding for access (hired)
 Carry boxes (supplied)
 Nest Box Bedding
 Foundation feed (rodents)

Owl House Options: Recycled Plastic @ R1490

The plastic and house are fabricated and supplied by our partner org, Owl Rescue Centre



Premium Bio-Scientific House @ R1890

Designed from the owl up and fabricated with premium materials for functionality and durability by Wild Serve. Endorsed by international scientists.



A detailed quote will follow this proposal.

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About Wild Serve

Wild Serve is a Biodiversity Conservation Non-Profit Organisation (Department of Social Development), Non-Profit Company (Companies and Intellectual Property Commission) and Public Benefit Organisation (South African Revenue Service). The Organisation qualifies as a Level 2 Enterprise, is exempt from tax and is able to issue Section 18A Certificates.

The organisation consists of 3 Divisions:

Wildlife Rescue – Partnered with The South African Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre and Owl Rescue Centre. Permitted by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Threatened and Protected Species.

Urban Environmental Education – Partnering with The Wildlife and Environmental Society of South Africa, conducting National Geographic Projects and Certified by Cornell University, N.Y.

Eco Support – Restore and improve sensitive biodiversity areas throughout Gauteng Province.

Organisation Details:

NPO Reg: 182-293

NPC Reg: 2016/119619/08

PBO Reg: 930054647

Directors:

DJ Engelbrecht (Chairman); MAC Green; MK Schrenk BSc. CEE (Wits)

Permits held:

CPB1 - Capture and Release of Indigenous Wildlife (All Mammals, Birds, Reptiles)

CPB2 – Transportation of Indigenous Wildlife (All Mammals, Birds, Reptiles)

T.O.P.S. - Threatened and Protected Species

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