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Men's Shed scores first big job building bird boxes for Katherine Bird Festival



 **FIRST PROJECT:** Men's Shed founding member Bryan Walter and Bruce Smith have been working together this week to build 30 bird boxes.

The fledgling Men's Shed is starting to spread its wings – building bird nests for the Katherine Bird Festival.


Simple to make, but time consuming, 30 bird nests are about ready to be decorated as part of Mick Jerram's school nesting bird project.

They will then feature as an attraction for the [famous Gouldian finch](#), which brings thousands of bird watchers to the region every year – most hoping to catch just a glimpse of the spectacularly coloured Australian bird.

One of the Men's Shed founding members Bryan Walters, along with a crew of two others, have been working non-stop this week to finish the wooden boxes.

Past president of the Rotary Club, and long-time Katherine resident, Mr Walters said the project so far has been one of mate-ship and team work.



 RARELY SEEN: It is sometimes difficult for bird watchers to catch a glimpse of the Gouldian finch in the wild.

He said he is hoping to get more people involved in the [Men's Shed](#) when the site is completed.

“We definitely saw a need for the Men's Shed in Katherine. It can be a very productive environment and if we can impart some of the knowledge we have accumulated over our vast lives, then that would be great,” Mr Walters said.

Bruce Smith and Cameron Smith have also been enjoying working on the project.

Bruce Smith, new to town, joined the Men's Shed to extend his range of mates.

“We are working shoulder to shoulder, that is what the Men's Shed is really about,” Mr Smith said.



 **NEW TO TOWN:** For Bruce Smith, joining the Men's Shed has provided opportunities work on projects with friends.

“Between the pair of us we have been able to pass on life skills, it is the community aspect that really drew me in,” he said.

With just some basic tools and a vast amount of building and creative experience behind the group, the bird nests are coming along nicely.

“They are pretty simple to make, we are just using basic equipment like a circular saw, drills and general skills,” Mr Smith said.

Once completed, hollow branches of Salmon Gum, an evergreen tree native to Western Australia, will be fixed to the entrance of the bird nest.

The hope is to entice the endangered finch to a natural setting for careful observers to admire.

The Katherine Bird Festival is running from Thursday, September 27 to Sunday, September 30 at Nitmiluk Gorge Campground.