

# Project: Make your own Victorian stuffed bird cabinet



Many of you have been making little birds in all sorts of mediums. This is a great way to showcase them.

It is a simple construction. You can leave the top unattached for future arranging or glue it lightly down. The back is fixed.

**Materials:** Ice block sticks (2)

Base. This can be Balsa .

Clear Acetate sheet.

Black card. Blue paper (optional).

Landscape material and small rocks. (Railway model shop!)

## 1. Use ice block sticks 8mm wide.

Make the base. Cut your ice block sticks into two lengths of 3.5cm. Cut another two 4.5cm long. These make up the sides of the base.

2. Cut a balsa wood or MDF base 3.5cm x 4.5 cm.

## 3. Front and side of base.

Paint your front and side pieces black and glue around the base. The front and back overlap the sides. Paint the inside of the base black.

## 4. Assemble scene.

For this you will need some twigs,

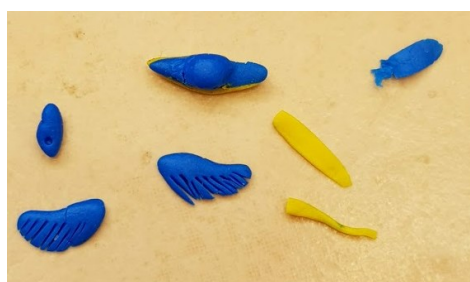
or an upside down dried root of a garden weed or small flower like Elysius. Also some small stones, artificial greenery and a few punched paper leaves if preferred. When the base is dry start assembling your scene. Use an arrangement of fine twigs or your flower roots upside down. The purpose is to make a small bush or tree. When this is glued in place, cover the base with glue and sprinkle tea bag tea over the glue. A few strategically placed rocks and some artificial greenery finish off this part.

Leave the leaves until last.

## 5. Back.

Cut a back out of thick black card 7cm tall and 4.5cm wide. Glue a coloured piece of paper on the front. Blue looks good. Or you could you a vague looking scene.

## 6. Birds.



These are made from Fimo and some are embellished with small real feathers.

Form a head into a ball, from a small piece of Fimo and pinch to form a beak.

Make an oval shape for the body and pinch both ends for neck and tail.

Make two ovals for wings. Flatten them with your fingers and cut feathers on one edge with a sharp blade.

Make a few tail feathers by rolling a thin rod and flattening it. You don't need much Fimo to do these. Make a few extra.

## 7. Assembling bird.

You can press the parts together or bake them separately and glue them into position with Superglue. The wings sit high on the sides and meet slightly across the back. Place or glue the main colour tail feather onto the tail end and then press the contrast feather in underneath it.

Before baking the Fimo bird, push the legs into the body on a slight angle, as below, or glue into the body if prebaked.



When you have a good selection of difference sized and coloured birds arrange them on your twigs. Some tiny butterflies were made from white card coloured with ink pens. These added interest and colour to the scene. You could make tiny bees as well. This is the fun creative part of the project.

**9.** To finish off your display box take a clear piece of acetate: it is better to keep the protective coating on both sides of the sheet if you can, and cut it 6.8cm x 11 cm wide.

From the long side on the left, lightly pencil in a line at the 3.4cm mark and from this line, the 4.2cm mark and then again at the 3.4cm mark. Using a sharp blade, carefully score vertically along these lines. Do not cut through totally. Bend the sides towards you. They should not snap in half.

Put a line of glue around the bottom of the acetate and along the back side edges and position on your base, but inside the front and sides.

Cut a small piece of acetate 4.2cm x 3.5 cm and glue with small spots along the top of the front and sides

of your cabinet. If you wanted you could work this a different way if you wanted future access to your display.

Finish your cabinet off when the glue is totally dry.

**10.** Using thin black card (black all the way through) cut a strip 4mm wide and score down the middle. This is where you fold it. You can make one long length at this stage and cut it into shorter lengths to fit your frame.

Complete the uprights first, by trimming this strip to length and glue it around the corners of your acetate to simulate a wooden frame. Then cut shorter pieces to fit between the front and back.

Now you are finished and can stand back and admire your result.

**A different sort of display using a glass dome.**

You can buy these domes in different sizes. This one in the sample is 35mm across the base.

You can get two or three birds comfortably inside this one.

When you are doing your base, you have to allow for the thickness of the glass so that it seats correctly.



These scenes are tiny but you can get a good little story going. Have fun!

Copyright: Jill Fraser, Miniature Time Traveller.

I am happy for you to use this workshop for your own use. Not for publication.

This workshop and others are also available in the magazine Miniature Time Traveller, a bi-monthly publication that is available on our web site [miniaturetimetraveller.com](http://miniaturetimetraveller.com). Follow us on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/minitraveller](http://www.facebook.com/minitraveller).