

Mason Bee Calendar



Female



Male

For the Willamette Valley- check with your extension office for dates in your area.

January- June	Provide water, MUD and early flowering plants. Mason Bees prefer blooming native shrubs, trees, and flowers.
Mid to late Feb	Depending on the weather, Mason bees nesting houses, blocks and tubes can be put out in mid or late February. <u>Don't put your cocoons out yet</u> , Local Mason bees might be out early looking for "holes" to place their eggs.
Late March -April	When using an emergence tube or container, try to do 3 cocoon releases. Put out a minimum of 20-25 cocoons in each release. (2 releases if you don't have enough cocoons). Don't fill the emergence tube more than half full. Before you put your cocoons out, look for blooms on plants and trees. Bees need continuous sources of pollen & nectar. No food = No cocoons. Bees will emerge from the cocoons more quickly if temps are over 50-55° for several days in a row. With climate change, these factors may not happen until April. If the cocoons are in your refrigerator, where they should be, they will be okay there while you wait. Be patient. Sign up for Bee Notes: www.LinnMasterGardeners.com to get recommendations and helpful information.
June 1st Check <i>Bee Notes</i> for when to take your BOB houses down	The takedown date could change with weather changes. We will use <i>Bee Notes</i> to tell you when to do your takedown. Place the capped end of tubes and blocks upright in a paper bag. Fold over the top and staple the bag shut. The upright position might help keep a larva on top of the pollen ball. The bag helps protect cocoons from parasitoid wasps as well as other pests. Place in a warm, but not hot , location in a garage or shed (not top shelf or a hot closet). Cocoons need summer warmth for the bees to finish developing but avoid high temperatures or bees may die.
October	Harvest cocoons from blocks and tubes. Clean cocoons. The survival rates and health of the bees significantly increase by following best practices. Store in your refrigerator until next Spring. Find more information about cocoon harvesting on our website. Registration opens in mid-September for October Cocoon Harvesting Workshops. Class size is limited. Register and find locations/times at www.LinnMasterGardeners.com or call Linn Extension 541-967-3871
November-December-January	If you forgot to harvest and clean your cocoons, it is not too late. Do it <u>now</u> to help the bees conserve their energy. This helps eliminate chalkbrood and reduce mite problems .
October -March	Store cocoons in the veggie bin of your refrigerator. Cocoons should be placed in container along with damp paper towel in smaller container (like a medicine bottle cap) to help maintain humidity. Make a few small holes in top of the larger container for ventilation. Maintaining a cool, constant temperature helps the bees conserve energy until you release them in the spring.
Upcoming Classes/Events	Linn-County Master Gardeners will be offering events focused on ways you can support pollinators in your gardens. Please stay tuned for announcements.

To learn more about Mason Bees (and other pollinators) SIGN UP FOR BEE NOTES.

Bee Notes is a free, periodic e-mail reminder with information to help pollinators.

Look for gardening & pollinator classes at www.LinnMasterGardeners.com 1-15-26



female- lives 6-8 weeks
lives 2 weeks to mate.



male (white whiskers on face)

Blue Orchard Mason Bees are sometimes called BOB.

Native pollinators	Prefer native plants	Mason bees (BOB) are more effective pollinators than honeybees for many fruit trees.
They very rarely sting	Do not make honey	One BOB can pollinate as much as 75-120 honeybees for some plants. They can increase yield & crop quality.
No worker bees	They are solitary	Females build and tend their own nests.
They don't travel long distances from their nest – 100 yard range from their nesting site.		BOBs are active mid-March- June
Female Mason Bee cocoons are laid in the holes first. Male cocoons closer to the outer opening. Female Mason Bee cocoons are usually located 3 inches or deeper in the holes.		
They need early blooming plants, trees and shrubs (mid Feb-June), water and MUD!		
Plants that bloom every season help all pollinators. Hybrids may not produce much nectar or pollen. Double flowering plants don't allow easy access to nectar or pollen. Native plants, trees and shrubs are great choices! Bees especially like white, yellow, purple, and blue flowers.		

Mason Bee House Placement:

- 🐝 **Optimum height of bee house from ground is about 3-6 feet. Yes, it can be higher.**
- 🐝 **It should be high enough to be above the splash zone, but don't install it too high – you and your kids will want to watch these gentle bees in action!**
- 🐝 **The bee house should face the morning sun. South-East**
- 🐝 **You do not want the nesting box to be in direct sun in the afternoon. It will get too hot for the bees and may kill them.**
- 🐝 **The opening of the bee house should face away from prevailing winds and rain as much as possible. This helps keep the holes and liners dry (less mold issues).**
- 🐝 **A covered porch, next to a building or fence or in the shade of a tree can offer some rain and wind protection as well as shade from the afternoon sun.**
- 🐝 **Don't place the bee house over a pond or water source. Your bees haven't taken swimming lessons, and many could drown.**
- 🐝 **Place the bee house away from your bird feeder, bees make tasty morsels. A wire mesh with 3/4-1-inch openings placed about 4 inches from the "holes" allow the bees to fly freely through and can help keeps birds out.**
- 🐝 **Have water and a source of mud that has lots of clay nearby. Mason bees need mud to enclose their cocoons.**



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