
Mason Bees...

- ...can double or triple fruit yields for plants that bloom from mid-March through May.
- ...are one of 4,000 species of bees native to North America and one of 860 native bees in Oregon.
- ...have coevolved to pollinate our native spring bloomers, but these generalists are happy to pollinate fruit trees and berries as well.
- ...are solitary tunnel nesters. Tunnels at least 6 inches long are best. Shorter holes result in mostly male offspring and males don't pollinate!
- ...are an excellent alternative or addition to honey bees.

Easy, Safe & Super-pollinating Bees



We are recruiting Bee Buddies!

The Bee Buddy Program is designed to care for and increase the population of native mason bees in Benton County. We loan nesting kits to gardeners and fruit growers who want to boost fruit yields and support native pollinators and their natural habitats. We make sure the bees are properly maintained during their life cycle, so Bee Buddies can reap the rewards without worrying about the details.

We're here to help!

We are here to answer your questions and would be happy to arrange presentations for your neighbors.

Contact Us!

If you would like to be a Bee Buddy and host a nesting box in your orchard or garden, we'd like to hear from you!

Visit

www.bentonswcd.org/activities/landowners/bee-buddies/

Call us

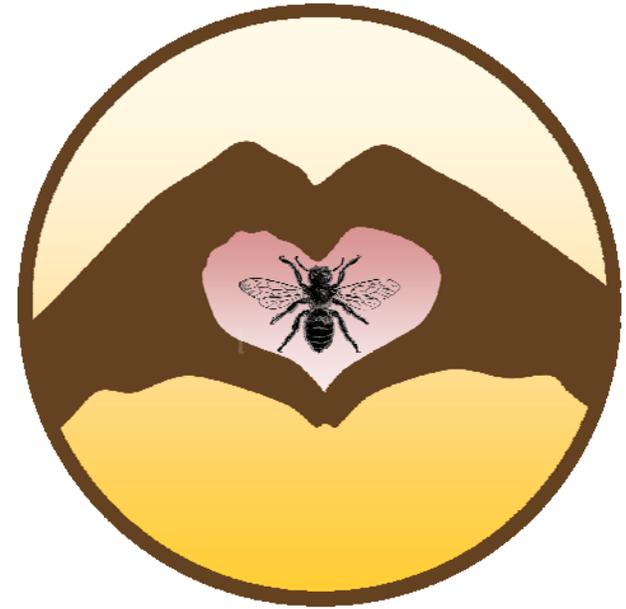
(541) 753-7208

Stop by the office

Benton Soil & Water Conservation District
456 SW Monroe Ave., Suite 110
Corvallis, Oregon 97333

www.bentonswcd.org

Bee Buddies



Let us do the work so you can benefit from native, gentle, solitary bees.



Bee Buddies partner with Benton SWCD to support mason bees with habitat and are rewarded with increased fruit production.

Easy, gentle, super-pollinating mason bees can double or triple fruit yields.



The Life Cycle

March - May: Bees emerge. Females lay eggs on pollen balls in nest box.

Summer: Eggs hatch. Larvae feed on pollen and metamorphosize.

October - March: Bees hibernate as adults in cocoons.

Gentle-Natured

These bees are great for adults and kids alike. Male bees do not have stingers. Female bees are not aggressive because they are too busy gathering pollen. In the unlikely event of a sting, it would feel like a mosquito bite.

Generalists

Mason bees are generalist pollinators, which means they are not picky about the flowers they visit. They will gather pollen from anything that is blooming within 300 feet of their nesting sites.

Highly Effective

Mason bees are an effective stand-alone pollinator: one female mason bee is equivalent to 100 honey bees! Mason bees can also increase honey bee activity!

Who Can Be a Bee Buddy?

Public or private landowners in Benton County can participate. Bee Buddies is only open to people who use organic, pesticide-free practices. You may qualify to be a Bee Buddy if you have fruit trees, blueberries, or early blooming native plants, such as Oregon grape. To help cover the cost of materials, we charge a \$30 participation fee.

Everyone can help insect pollinators by taking these simple steps:

- Avoid pesticides.
- Provide nest sites.
- Grow host plants like milkweed.
- Incorporate pollen and nectar plants.
- Tell others about these important creatures.

How it Works

1. **Submit an application.** We will determine if your property meets a few minimum requirements, arrange a site visit, and size your nesting box accordingly.
2. **Receive a nesting box.** We will install a bee box at an approved location. The box will have a sign affixed with information about the project so that you can help educate the visitors to your garden.
3. **The bees pollinate.** Your bees will pollinate your crops mid-March through May and potentially double or triple crop yields!
4. **We harvest cocoons.** In June, BSWCD will collect your bee boxes, harvest, clean, and store the cocoons until the next active season, when you may reapply.