



BENEFICIAL
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Instructions for Mason Bee Nesting Tubes

The “system” nesting habitat for native bees was developed by a prominent entomologist. It was designed to accomplish several very important things that ensure the health and productivity of your bee colony.

1. The heavy craft paper guard tube is of a thickness that the monodontomerus wasp cannot penetrate with her ovipositor. This prevents the wasp from laying its egg on the larva of the bee. Without this protection the wasp larvae eat and destroy the bee larvae.
2. A clean nesting habitat is provided each season by simply discarding the white inner liner when the bees have emerged in the spring and replacing it with a new liner. This prevents fungal and bacteria problems resulting from the moist nectar in the food provision.
3. The hole diameter is perfect for the Orchard Mason Bee and several other valuable North American pollinators.
4. The six inch hole depth has proven to be the depth at which the Orchard Mason Bee achieves the optimum female/male ratio of 1/3” females. A shallower hole results in more males.

Knox Cellars has improved on the entomologist’s design by providing the small black plastic plug which not only seals the back of the hole with a slightly concave surface but grasps the inner liner and presses it against the inside walls of the guard tube keeping the two tubes locked together.

The guard tube and the plastic plug are re-useable many times. The white inner liner must be replaced each spring upon bee emergence.

Insert the assembled tubes into a waterproof container of some sort. We suggest using a large tin can commonly used for soup. It is seven inches deep and four inches wide and will hold 74 “System” tubes. Put the tubes into the can, stretch a couple of rubber bands around the can, holding the can upside down over a table so that the tubes protrude, slip the rubber bands off the can and onto the tubes. You will find that the rubber bands provide enough friction against the side of the can that the bundle of tubes will not fall out.

Mount the can on the sunny wall of a building under an eave to keep the rain out of the can. You may wish to purchase one of our cedar nester shelters that accept two nesting cans. As the colony grows you can add our shelter extensions which add another two cans with each extension.

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