



GIVE A BEE A HOME

Thank you for your interest in helping Native Bees and other Pollinators.

It is well known that bees are declining in numbers because of disease, loss of habitat, and the over use of pesticides. They need our help, and we need their help because 1 in 3 bites of food we eat depends on pollination by bees.

Beekeepers give honey bees a special hive to call home. However, Native Bees need YOUR help to provide them a safe home, free of pesticides, where they can find food, shelter, a place to raise their young.

You will learn how easy it is to do a few small things in your yard that will make a BIG difference in these tiny Native Bees' life.

The links under Give A Bee A Home on the Chesterfield Township web site will give you access to a great deal of valuable and informative literature including:

- how to identify the many different Native Bees in our area,
- plants that provide food and shelter for Native Bees,
- how to provide these solitary Bees a safe home to raise their young,
- A list of useful websites to explore, and
- how to make bamboo nesting tube bundles.

Native Bees are docile, very small, and so busy gathering pollen and nectar for their young that they ignore you. They do not sting unless you step on them. The majority of Native Bee species are solitary, which means that they live and work alone. You have to really pay attention to even notice they are around. They are only active for 5 to 6 weeks a year and each type of Bee has their own season. Sometimes, it will take several years to build up the population, so it is noticeable. Don't get discouraged if you don't see them right away. Be patient and they will come.

When buying plants and seeds, always look for the “BEE” on the label. This means that plant’s flowers provide food for the Native Bees.

If you want to make your own nesting tube bundles, you don’t have to buy materials. You can grow them. There are many flowering plants and ornamental grasses that have hollow stems or soft centers that you can use. For example, sunflower stems are hard on the outside, but soft in the middle. You don’t have to poke out the soft centers, the bees will chew out an opening that is just right for them. Always use many different size holes for the many different size Native Bees. If you make a lot of bundles, paint or tape them different colors, so the Native Bees can find their home easier.

If you still have questions, you can call your county’s Rutgers Cooperative Extension office or Master Gardeners. They are always happy to help. Find them at <https://njaes.rutgers.edu>.

Please tell your family, friends and neighbors to join you in helping to Give A Bee A Home.

Remember, that even if all you do is have a flowerpot that blooms all summer, you are making a BIG difference for these Native Bees.

Thank you.