

Knox Cellars Native Bees Catalog & The Urban Farmer

2005-2006

Volume 13

A NEW LOOK TO THE CATALOG & NEWSLETTER

As you may know, Knox Cellars has been a father-daughter business for more than 13 years. Brian began the business in 1991 and I joined him in 1992. At the end of the 2004 season Brian decided to retire from this craziness and devote himself to other projects. Last year he generously wrote the majority of the *Urban Farmer* one last time; but now it falls on my shoulders to carry on the tradition alone. With some trepidation I now undertake my first solo writing of the *Urban Farmer Newsletter* and 2005-2006 Catalog. It will look different to many of you because I am combining the two together. The newsletter items now run in side columns and the catalog items will fill in the center.

I tend to be a practical, how-to kind of person since I, like all working women, juggle many hats. This new format is my endeavor to share practical information on how to raise pollinating bees successfully and to answer, quickly and clearly, many of the questions I get asked over and over again. I'll also attempt to keep putting in new bits of knowledge for all you established bee folk. I hope that the new style sits well with my established customers and serves to educate all those people who are new to raising Mason bees. Hang with me and feel free to offer feedback. I'll keep on learning and adjusting as I go along.

I always like to include a success story or two...

GREAT SUCCESS WITH CANNED BEES

A while back I got a wonderful note and photo from Charlene Woznicki of Illinois. She says, "...they all laughed at me when I told my neighbors I bought Canned Bees. I was tired of having apple trees with no apples... Enclosed find a picture of apples. This is the first time in seven years any of my trees produced fruit. ... Now my neighbors have stopped laughing as they enjoy the apple crisp and apple pies I make from my apples."

AVOCADO OVERLOAD

This letter arrived from Carl Pearlston of California who bought a fairly large number of Mason bees and *Osmia californica* bees last year. "Lisa, wanted to tell you how pleased we are this year that our avocado tree is full of actual fruit, which I attribute to the many bees ordered last year. They really seem to have done their job." We are still trying to get more of Carl's bees to stick around and nest in his yard, but at least we have the fruit issue settled.

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2005~2006 Catalog

There are a few new items in our Extras section to check out this year. We have newly designed embroidered tote bags, embroidered denim shirts, and wonderful logo wind shirts to take the chill off early spring bee tending. Due to popular demand, our T-shirts now come in both long and short sleeves. We are adding a colored long-sleeved T-shirt line. Check our website for updates and availability.

Our catalog is divided into five sections. Starter Kits, Just Bees, Nesting Material & Shelters, Books, and Extras. The easiest way to get started is to simply pick a package from the Starter Kit section. If you are expanding an existing colony or looking to put together a custom setup, just pick the products from the sections you need. Remember, all our products with the exception of Starter Kits are sold a la carte so you can mix and match to make the perfect setup for your needs. Check

the Extras section for clothing and accessories that will add to the enjoyment of your bee raising experience. When you are done with this catalog, pass it on to a friend and help spread the word. A word about pricing. Costs just keep going up and shipping costs are a significant expense. In an effort to keep prices as reasonable as possible for you we have continued with quantity discounts on many items. If you can combine orders with friends or neighbors, or get the garden club to go together, we can pass along our savings to you in both packing and shipping costs. You will find that larger orders are often surprisingly inexpensive to ship compared to smaller orders. Seems it is expensive to get UPS or US Mail to your door, but they are relatively unworried about how much they have to carry.

catalog continues

Of Predators and Protection

Just when I thought I had heard it all, I got a call from a customer who wanted to know if lizards were a significant predator of Orchard Mason bees. Given that I live in the Maritime Northwest and lizards are not a common critter around here, I had to admit that I had no personal knowledge of lizards eating Mason bees, and had not even heard of the problem from customers, but that I supposed it was possible. My caller decided to sit out in the garden with a camera—and sure enough, a few weeks later I received an email and photo of a small lizard, perched on top of a nesting box waiting for bees to emerge.

I have now added lizards to my expanding list of predators which already included ants, birds, wasps, and squirrels. My mantra is that in nature, everything is somebody's dinner. It is therefore our responsibility to figure out how to protect our beloved bees from ending up as sustenance for something else. Below is a list of preventative measures you can take depending on who is dining in your yard.

Birds, Squirrels, and Lizards

Wire mesh screening is a wonderful deterrent for those critters who are larger than bees. Just get chicken wire or hardware cloth that has a hole dimension of at least ½-inch, but small enough to keep out the pest. Chicken wire works great for squirrels and woodpeckers but provides too large an opening to keep out chickadees. Bend it to form a sort of catcher's mask around your nesting habitat. Be sure to close off the top and bottom of the mask and to bow it out away from the habitat so that it doesn't just become a perch for the predators to sit on while waiting for bees to return. If you are using wooden blocks to raise your bees you can probably find a squirrel cage at your local wild bird store that will cover your block quite well.

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STARTER KITS

Getting Started with Mason Bees. If this is your first time with native bees, or if you want the perfect gift for a fellow gardener, consider these starter sets. Starter sets can be ordered in either Mason Bee or *O. californica*. Please remember *O. cal* can be shipped only west of the Continental Divide. During our bee shipping season (November thru March) the **Gift of Pollination** and **Side Mounted Starter Kits** come with hibernating bees. The rest of the year they come with a coupon which can be mailed back to us and puts you on the shipping list for the first new bees to come in during the upcoming shipping season. If you want this as a gift for someone who will not open it as soon as it arrives in the mail, just specify that you want a coupon and not the live bees. We don't want hibernating bees waking up and finding themselves all decked out in pretty ribbons and bows.

"Canned Bees" Starter Set of Orchard Mason and *Osmia californica*: It is our smallest and simplest way to get started with Mason Bees or *Osmia californica*. This charming starter kit of bees is packaged in system nester tubes contained in a 2"x7" mini Nester. Each Canned Bee nester is a complete, compact, and attractive bee home. It holds nineteen of our system nester tubes. We add 20 bees of either species to the can. Mount the container by inserting it into a waterproof container such as a 2-liter pop bottle to add extra protection from moisture. Hang it on a sunny and protected wall of a building. This is a great way to get started with bees and a perfect gift at a very reasonable price! **Canned Bees, \$29.95.** Please specify Mason Bees or *O. cal.* (*O. cal.* available for western U.S. only.)



The Side-Mounted Starter Set: This starter kit is the perfect solution if you want protection for your bees from a prevailing wind and it is the most inconspicuous setup we offer. The Two Nester box is designed to mount flat with the opening for the bees on the side rather than facing forward. If you paint this cedar box to match your siding, it will blend right in. If left unpainted it shows its charming Knox Cellars stamped logo. This kit contains one Two-Nester box, one System Nester 74, *The Orchard Mason Bee* book, and a starter set of 20 Orchard Mason Bees. Specify species of bee (see description above) and whether you want a bee coupon rather than live bees. **Side Mounted Starter Kit, \$56.95**—kit savings \$15.



The Gift of Pollination Starter Set: A super present for a budding naturalist or your favorite gardener, this is the best starter kit for anyone who wants to begin raising Orchard Mason bees. We have combined our cedar "Three Nester Box," one "System Nester 74," "The Orchard Mason Bee" book and a a starter set of 20 Orchard Mason bees. Just gently pry the front off this box and mount it to a sunny wall. Set up the nester, and set out your bees. Read the book and you're all set. The cedar box is shippable without additional packing and comes with a shipping label already attached. Just add postage and it can be shipped anywhere in the continental U.S. **Gift of Pollination, \$58.95**—kit savings \$15.



The Bumble Bee Starter Kit: For summer squash, raspberries, herbs and many of the other summer-flowering plants in our flower and veggie gardens, you just can't beat the Bumble Bee. These wonderful summer pollinators will be a welcome addition to your garden. The kit contains The Humble Bumble Observation Home and the book "Humblebee Bumblebee." Bees not included. **Bumblebee Starter Kit, \$34.95**—kit savings \$7.



JUST BEES

Orchard Mason Bees in Tubes: These are the natal tubes that the Orchard Mason Bees nested in last spring. Our “System” tubes were set out in bundles and filled by the nesting bees. In fall, the liners (now containing mature hibernating new bees) are slipped out of the guard tubes, counted, slipped into clean guard tubes for protection, and stored awaiting shipment to you. If you are using our “System Nesters” simply remove a few tubes from your “Nester” and replace them with these bee-filled ones. For wooden blocks, use a rubber band to attach the filled tubes to the side of your block. Set it out this spring and the bees will do the rest. Each tube set contains an average of 20 bees, our recommended size for starting a colony. Do not split up the sets as not all bees survive to emerge, not all tubes contain the same number of bees, and it takes the full set to ensure that enough emerge for you to get a good colony going. **Our supply of bees is limited to stock on hand.** We begin shipping bees in November until warm weather or the supply runs out (generally around the end of March for Mason Bees). Bees handle the shipping process much better early in the shipping season so order early and store the bees in your fridge until spring arrives. We count spring as day time temps that reach in to the 50s. **Bees in Tubes, \$20 a set**



Osmia californica in Tubes: If you are looking for a summer replacement for Orchard Mason bees, this is it. *Osmia californica* bees emerge just about the time the Orchard Masons are finished and continue until mid-summer. *O. californica* makes its nest cells in ‘found’ holes and especially likes our System tubes with their paper Liners. There is much to be learned about the pollination potential of this bee. Try it in your garden. We have seen it feeding on pollen from many different flower families. This is a Western bee so we restrict our shipments to west of the Continental Divide. If you thought about this bee last year, but didn’t get around to ordering it, this is your chance. **Osmia californica, \$20 a set**

NESTING MATERIAL & SHELTERS

When we began Knox Cellars in 1991, we used only wooden blocks. We still sell wooden blocks; but we raise all our own in “System” nesting tubes. We have discovered that System tubes with replaceable liners allow us to maintain cleaner colonies with less time and expense than wooden blocks. If you are tired of replacing wooden blocks or having trouble keeping them clean, switch to System Nester tubes. You will be able to raise four times more bees in the same space. As an added benefit, your bees will lay more female eggs in our six-inch long nester tubes than in our wooden blocks. Females do the vast majority of the pollination work; thus more females equal more pollination. “System” Tubes consist of a heavy cardboard guard tube into which we slip a thin paper liner. The liner is held in place by a tiny molded plug which also provides a light-proof concave surface at the back of the hole. When buying System Nester Tubes remember to pick one of the Nesting Box options to set the System Nesters into. We also sell a Wet Country version of these tubes with a Mylar coating on the guard tube to increase resistance to water. *Specify Regular or Wet Country when ordering.*

The System Nester 74: These popular 6-inch long “System” Nesting Tubes come assembled and ready to go. Simply take off the lid and mount the cylindrical container in a spot protected from the rain, but in the full sun. We offer a variety of wooden nesting shelters in which to mount your Nesters or you can build your own. Add a supply of bees and you are set. Each container is loaded with 74 “System” tubes, each with its replaceable paper liner and re-usable plug. The tubes and plugs last for years. You replace the inexpensive paper liners each season. *Available in Regular or Wet Country.*

QUANTITY DISCOUNT

Regular Nester 74: First, \$21.95; buy 6 or more for \$17.95 each

Wet Country Nester: First, \$23.95; buy 6 or more for \$19.95 each



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Ants and other crawly pests

Tanglefoot is the answer here. Tanglefoot and other products of the same type are tar-like paintable liquids that act as a physical barrier by grabbing on to little critters who walk over it. You just paint a strip of goo between where the ants come from and where they are going to.

One word of caution. This stuff never comes off! If you paint a band of it on a post or worse yet, your house, it will remain there forever. Trust me because I speak from experience on this. Save yourself much grief by first putting down a removable layer like butcher paper. Tape that to the house and then paint the Tanglefoot onto the paper. When it has accomplished its mission you can remove the paper, tar and dead ants in one easy step.

Wasps

Our nemesis! Wasps are wonderful for our garden when they are eating crane fly larvae or aphids, but drive us nuts when they turn their attention to our bees. Little flying bugs are hard to control because they use the same entry methods that our beloved bees use. If the wasps are attacking after the Mason bee season is over, then a physical barrier like Remay cloth or an old pair of pantyhose covering the nesting habitat will work. If they are attacking during the nesting season, then you may just have to live with it and rest assured that in most cases Mother Nature has everything worked out and enough bees will survive to keep your colony going.

POPULATION SIZE OR HOW DO I KNOW WHEN ENOUGH IS ENOUGH?

This question is a perennial favorite and comes in two variations. “How many do I need?” and “How many can I have?” The answer is you need fewer than you think and can raise more than you need.

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To start out figure about 250 female Mason bees can pollinate an acre of commercial apple trees. Since at best 1/3 of a population is female that means it takes 750 to 800 bees to pollinate a one-acre garden. That is roughly how many bees can fit into one Nester 74 Can when it is completely filled.

Now, draw a layout of your garden and where you have a building with a nice sunny exposure that you can hang your bees on. Since Mason Bees will only fly about 300 feet and still return home you need to make sure that the nesting site you have located is well within that 300-foot radius. You will need one colony in each of these circles. Most home gardens are less than one acre and smaller than 600 square feet, so one filled Nester 74 will be all you need. A Two Nester Box with one clean Nester 74 each year and space for the filled liner straws from the previous year is all you will ever need.

Now about how many you can have. These bees are not picky eaters, and in fact, do best in mixed gardens with lots of choices for pollen source. I think of them as Grandma gardens. It is quite easy for a 1/2-acre lot with a good planting mix to successfully raise 4 or 5 cans of Mason Bees each year.

At some point however the bees get stressed and predators move in. Mold and mites become bigger issues when pollen source gets limited. When this happens you will see a noticeable drop in the size and health of your colony and I have seen it wipe out colonies completely. Try not to get too greedy.

“Every year I raise more and more bees. How do I control the size of my colony?”

This question usually gets asked by the spouse of the bee raiser and is phrased something like, “enough is enough”. My answer is that you need to learn the word “No.” It doesn’t make you a bad bee parent to decide to limit your bee colony to a healthy manage-

More Quantity Discounts

Bees, Nester Boxes, and System Nester 74s are sold separately.

For complete sets check out the Starter Kits Section.

The System 200: If you are raising lots of Mason Bees, this is the way to buy your System Nesting Tubes—a bulk box of pre-assembled Tubes. 200 each of the liners, guard tubes, and end plugs. You put them into your own water-proof container, tin can, or milk carton and install them on a sunny building wall. The bees do the rest. *Specify Regular or Wet Country.*

Regular System 200: *First, \$41.95;*

buy 6 or more for \$31.95 each

Wet Country System 200: *First, \$43.95;*

buy 6 or more for \$33.95 each

Nester Liners 130 and 400: One of the secrets to the success of The System Nesters is the replaceable white inner Liner. These liners are used in System Tubes and can even be trimmed off and inserted into the holes in our wooden Orchard Mason Bee blocks. Using Liners will reduce mite and fungal infestations in the guard tubes and wooden blocks. A clean healthy colony is the goal. The Liner 130 contains 130 liners ready to go. Due to popular demand we are also selling liners in bulk quantities. Our Nester Liner 400 is just the thing for those with well-established bee colonies.

Nester Liners 130: *\$14.95;*

buy 6 or more for \$11.95 each

Nester Liners 400: *\$32.95;*

buy 6 or more for \$27.95 each

40-Hole Orchard Mason Nesting Blocks: This is the old standby method of raising Mason Bees, Hornfaced Bees, and others that prefer a 5/16" nesting hole. Not quite as efficient as Nesting Tubes, but still valued by many of our customers. Our wooden nesting block has holes drilled with great precision in an excellent grade of Douglas fir. If you keep these dry and use our liners in them they should last you for many years. A heavy roof enhanced with our attractive bee brand makes this a handsome and functional addition to your garden. Holes are approx. 3-1/2" deep.

40 Hole Nesting Block, \$17.95; *buy 6 or more for \$12.95 each*

Aphid Eater Nesting Blocks: What a surprise we had years ago. We put out an experimental nesting block with tiny little holes. Soon it was being filled and the holes plugged with what appeared to be tree resin or pitch. Investigation proved the occupants to be an aphid-hunting solitary wasp. The *Passaloecus* wasp is less than 1/2" long and entirely black. The female hunts for aphids, stings them to paralyze but not to kill, and flies them off to

her nesting hole. She packs about 70 aphids into a cell and lays an egg in among them. You know who eats who in this scenario. The *passaloecus* family is wide spread across the continent and if you breed up a good population your aphid problems may be behind you. Our block is habitat only. Your own local wasps should fill it up. Set it up on a sunny post in the garden near where aphids like to live and give this a try. I set my blocks out by



Nesting Blocks in 3 Sizes

the veggie garden and on rose arbors. It is fascinating and fruitful. *Passaloecus* wasps are non-aggressive, so unless you resemble an aphid they will leave you alone in your garden.

Aphid Eater Nesting Block, \$15.95; buy 6 or more for **\$9.95 each**

Medium-Size Bee Nesting Blocks: After spending the spring watching the busy Mason Bees, it can seem sad to have no bees to watch during the summer. There are many varieties of smaller bees busy during the summer that prefer the holes of our medium bee sized Leaf-cutter Bee Nesting Block. Many of these bees are wonderful pollinators in their own right and you will enjoy a noticeable difference in the diversity of life in your garden. You may have several different species in your garden so set out this block and see whom you can attract.

Medium Sized Bee Nesting Block, \$16.95; buy 6 or more for **\$7.95 ea.**

Bee Nester Boxes (to protect and mount System Nesting Tubes)

Bees, Nester Boxes, and System Nester 74s are sold separately.

Nester Shelter: This is our finest Nester Box for System Nester 74s. Mason bees like it best on a warm building wall out of the wind and rain. This wine-rack-style shelter does it all. It accepts two of our System Nester 74s, (room for about 1300 bees). Made of weather-resistant cedar, this attractive shelter can house your colony for years to come, and since it is expandable with Nester Shelter Extensions, it grows as your colony grows. It can be painted to match your siding or left to weather naturally. **Nester Shelter, \$28**

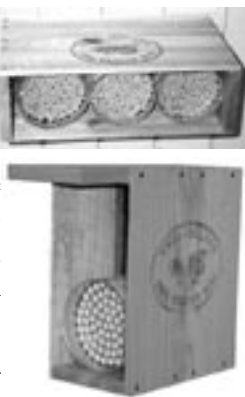
Nester Shelter Extension: Mason bees are prolific breeders. As your colony grows, just add more System Nester 74s and protect them in these Nester Shelter Extensions made to attach to our Shelters. The extensions each hold two additional Nesters. Any number of extensions can be added to the Nester Shelter.

Nester Shelter Extension, \$23

Two Nester and Three Nester Boxes: We were searching for an inexpensive holder for our System Nester 74 cans when it dawned upon us that just a simple cedar box hung on the side of a building would be perfect. With a charming bee logo on the box, we have solved the question of how to protect your nesters. We now offer the Bee Nester Box in two sizes. The **Three Nester Box** holds three Nester 74s, a total of 222 nesting holes or almost 2,000 bees. It mounts to the wall with a couple of screws or can sit on a shelf. As your colony grows just stack one Three Nester Box on top of the other. If you need protection from wind and rain, consider our

Two Nester Box with its roof overhang. The opening for the bees faces the side, parallel to the wall and can be mounted facing left or right. Each Two Nester Box can hold two Nester 74s. **Three Nester Box, \$19.95;** buy 6 or more for **\$15.95 each**
Two Nester Box, \$17.95; buy 6 or more for **\$13.95 each**

The Humble Bumble Observation Home: Each home a charming, stout box of first rate pine. Its chambers contain the proper amount of upholsterers' cotton to provide the nest that bumblebees must have, as well as an eight-page instruction book explaining the life history of the bumblebee, and complete instructions on how to get them started in your Humble Bumble Home. The clear plastic sub-lid allows you to lift the wooden lid and watch the intriguing bumblebee society through the plastic sub-lid. If you choose to use it, the Home includes a bee passage tube and clear instructions on how to install your home indoors, but connect it to the outdoors through a window or wall. This is a must for the garden and a wonderful gift. *You need access to a wood drill to install bee passage tube.* **The Humble Bumble Home, \$29.95**



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able size. In fact, it makes you a better one. When you are just starting out and trying to grow your colony as fast as possible, put out 5 or 6 empty holes for each filled hole from the previous spring. On a good year they will all get filled. When your colony is the size you want to maintain, count the number of filled holes you have and that becomes your magic number. If 100 filled straws gave you great pollination then next spring put out 100 filled straws and 100 empty ones with clean liners. The bees will emerge from the filled straws, mate, and start laying eggs into the clean tubes. When all the clean tubes are filled they will fly off in search of other holes. That is how Mother Nature holds the population steady and it will work for you too. If you find your colony is shrinking over time it is most likely that enough clean holes are not being provided.

"I use wooden blocks to raise my bees. How do I clean them?"

Wooden blocks are tough to clean for two reasons: the bees don't all come out on Tuesday and fly back in on Wednesday; the pollen nectar mix with which the bees provision their nesting cells soaks into the grain of the wood and is a great medium for bacteria.

If you use paper liner straws in your nesting blocks, each winter remove the filled liners and replace with new liners. Follow the directions for replacing liners in System Nesting Tubes. If you don't want to use paper liners in your wooden blocks, then you want to force your bees to move to clean new blocks every spring. There are various methods used to encourage bees to leave and not return to an old block.

Setting the block under a shrub or high under an eave in the shade sometimes works, as does just setting clean blocks up next to the old block and hoping most go to the new block.

But the system I like best is to put the old blocks into a cardboard box. Tape the box closed and then punch a

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single hole into the top of the box with a pencil. Place the box outside on the ground underneath where you hang your new clean blocks. As the bees warm up in the box they begin to emerge and will follow the light coming in through that pencil hole. When they return from foraging they most often will not go back into the cardboard box because it is not the type of habitat they are looking for. They generally go to the new blocks just above them on the wall.

Remember, you are dealing with bees that don't always follow instructions and haven't read this article, so a few will go back into the box. Don't worry about them. I prefer to see this as a survival of the fittest kind of thing and figure enough will do the right thing to keep the population strong.

CARE & CLEANING OF SYSTEM NESTING TUBES

I always tell people it is easier to keep Mason Bee colonies clean and healthy with System Nesting Tubes than it is with blocks, but a review of how to use them and when to switch out liners should help folks decide. It is the single most often asked question that I get.

When you first buy System Nesting Tubes they come in three parts. The heavy cardboard outer tube which we call the guard tube is made of craft paper and is thick enough to keep the ovipositor of predatory wasps from popping through and laying their eggs on the Mason egg. It also blocks out light which creates the good dark hole preferred by female Masons. Inside is a white paper liner straw which acts like clean sheets on the bed. This is the least expensive part of the tube system and it is the piece we replace each year. Holding the white liner straw into the guard tube and blocking the back of the tube is a black plastic plug.

The first spring set out your System tubes in a container on the sunny wall of a building with as much protection from

BOOKS

The Orchard Mason Bee, Second Edition: This amazing little book has launched an industry! This is the second edition, with 125 pages. Double the size of the original book. It contains more illustrations and lots more information about the bees and their propagation in System tubes as well as blocks. With answers to all the most frequently asked questions and some obscure ones too, it tells you in easy-to-read language everything you will need to know about the bee. A must have for all folks interested in raising Mason bees. **QUANTITY DISCOUNT**

The Orchard Mason Bee, \$12; buy 6 or more for \$8 each

Humblebee Bumblebee: Brian Griffin has done it again, The author of *The Orchard Mason Bee* has written another bee classic. *Humblebee Bumblebee* tells the life story of the bumblebees in 112 pages of pleasant and readable prose. The book includes information on how to attract or capture bumblebee colonies for your backyard as well as how to use the Humble Bumble Home. The book also includes a field guide to North American BumbleBees with color plates. **Humblebee Bumblebee, \$12.**

The Bee Genera of North & Central America: This 209-page



8.5"x11" book is the acknowledged resource to identify our native bees, published by Michener, McGinley & Danforth. It is now out of print (photo at left shows original book), but we have made special arrangements with Dr. Ronald McGinley (one of the authors) to sell a spiral bound reprint copy of this classic. Over 500 photos and sketches with keys to identify North America's 167 genera. Great descriptions. A must for anyone wanting to identify bees! **The Bee Genera of North & Central America, \$35.**

How to Manage the Blue Orchard Bee: This book was written by two USDA scientists at the Logan Utah Research Station, Jordi Bosch and William Kemp and is published by a USDA subsidiary. Its 88 pages are packed with valuable information for the Orchard Mason Bee grower and we highly recommend it as an addition to your library and a companion piece to *The Orchard Mason Bee*. Although aimed at bee management practices in commercial orchards, all of its information is equally valuable to the backyard gardener. It contains an excellent chapter on parasites, predators and pathogens, wonderful photos of bees, larvae, nesting cells and much more. **How to Manage the Blue Orchard Bee, \$9.95**



Pollinator Conservation Handbook: Published by the Xerces Society. This is an important book for every gardener, farmer, and naturalist. It will tell you how to create and improve habitat for insect pollinators including what to plant and how to provide nesting and egg laying sites. 180 pages, wonderful photographs. **Pollinator Conservation Handbook, \$23.95**

Orchard Mason Bee Video Tape: We are closing out this little classic. It contains a 27 minute video tour of the interesting garden at Knox Cellars and a fascinating description of the life history of the Orchard Mason Bee. It includes great shots of the bee emerging, mating, nest building, and even egg laying inside the nesting hole. Available in VHS format only. **Video, \$10.**

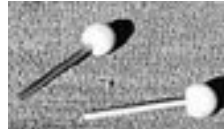


EXTRAS

Knox Cellars Insect Collection Kit: Here is the perfect way to start an inventory of the insects in your yard or just to introduce you or your children to the wonders of bug collection and identification. We have assembled an excellent set of tools with everything you need to get started. The kit contains a collecting net, magnifying oculus, collection jar, anesthetizing solution, mounting box with mounting pins, and a screened box to insert in your mounting box with a moth ball to keep your insect collection from deteriorating. Use of the anesthetizing agent should be supervised by an adult. **Collection Kit \$49.95**



The Liner Pusher: If you remove as many liners from System nesting tubes as we do, you'll love this Liner Pusher. It fits perfectly into a System guard tube and gently pushes out the liner straw filled with hibernating bees. No more poking and prodding with finger nails and pliers. This pusher is made of brass with a handsome hardwood knob attached. This makes a wonderful gift for bee raising friends. **Liner Pusher \$8.50**



Bring Back the Bees Clothing: All our clothing items carry the wonderful original artwork of our North American Bumblebees or Orchard Mason Bees and proclaim "Bring Back the Bees." A wonderful way to help spread the news about the importance of pollinators. Due to customer feedback we have added long-sleeved T-shirts to our clothing line, as well as beautiful denim shirts with our embroidered logo. High-quality, fleece-lined Wind Shirts with an embroidered logo have replaced our old sweatshirts; and the Tote Bags now have an embroidered logo and contrasting spruce green handles. (We have some colored T-shirts, but only at our website due to small order quantities.) Please check the website to see what additional clothing items are currently available.



Orchard Mason Bee



Bumblebee

Wind Shirts adult M,L, or XL \$51.95

Short Sleeved T-Shirts, adult M, L, XL \$19.95

Long Sleeved T-Shirts, adult M, L, XL \$24.95

Long Sleeved Denim Shirts, adult M, L, XL \$36.95

Hats are adjustable and will fit most heads. \$18.95

Embroidered Tote bag is 13w x 13.5t x 5d \$18.95

Hat Designs include
Orchard Mason,
Bombus californica,
Bombus occidentalis, and
Bombus rufocinctus.
Specify which of our four
bee designs you are ordering.



news continues

wind and rain as possible. Set out your brood stock of bees and let nature take its course until fall. When leaves begin to drop and it feels like fall, remove your bees from the wall and put them into their winter storage location. For some people that means just put them a little higher on the wall for better rain protection. For folks with mild winters, place the bees on the shelf of the garage or other shady location for a month and then put them into the fridge set at about 38. For people in nice cold climates the bees can go into the woodshed or any other unheated outbuilding. Be sure to place them away from a window that might warm up artificially on a sunny winter day. Also put them into a container that will keep out mice if they are an issue in your area.

Next, sometime between when you brought your bees in and when you expect to put them back out in the spring, remove the black plugs from the back of the tubes. Pull or push all the white liners out of the guard tubes using our Liner Pusher or similar item. Place all these filled liners into a container you are willing to throw away. I use cut off half-gallon milk cartons. Make sure you keep the front end facing forward as these bees can't go in reverse and will need to go forward to escape next spring. Now put the container with filled liners back into its winter storage location. Mine go back into the fridge.

Now you can put new clean liners into the old guard tubes. Replace the black plugs, and reload the Nester 74 cans with the cleaned and reassembled tubes.

In the spring when daytime temperatures get up around 50°F with some regularity (don't worry about frost dates, it's daytime highs we are watching here), put the clean Nester 74 can out in your shelter. Put the milk carton with the bee-filled liners in on top. When most of the bees appear to be out of the old liners take that carton full of gross old liners and dead bees and toss it into the garbage.

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