



Bee Smart beekeeping project presents: Beneficial Bees

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Honey Bee

Genus: Apis
Species: 7

In the U.S. we mostly have the Western Honey bee AKA *Apis mellifera* and roughly have about 7 of the 46 sub-species here as most common.

Honey bees are not considered native to North America but have been imported from other parts of the world.

Honey bees are very efficient pollinators of over 100 crops/plants as they forage for food.

Honey bees are social insects living in a colony made up of 3 "Castes" of individual bees, a reproductive female Queen, reproductive male Drones and non-reproductive female Workers. There are anywhere from 10 to 60 thousand bees in a colony on average.

Honey bees provide us with pollination, honey and beeswax that we can use.

Honey bees are not predatory and do not "attack" other creatures but will defend their nests with varying degrees of aggressiveness.



Bumblebee

Genus: Bombus
Species: 46

There are currently 46 species of Bumbles in North America that have been identified. Bumblebees are native to North America.

Bumblebees are social insects. There may be anywhere from 25 to 350 bees in a nest depending on the species and the area. There is a founding reproductive female Queen that starts a colony on her own. Non-reproductive female Workers that do the work of the colony and reproductive male Drones in a Bumblebee colony.

They are extremely effective pollinators when out foraging for food. Bumblebees are often used in greenhouse plant growing such as for Tomatoes and similar plants.

Bumblebees are not predatory, like Honey bees and they do not instigate "Attacks" but will defend their nests with varying levels of aggressiveness.

Bumblebees are not "kept" the same ways as honey bees. They generally do not produce surplus honey and wax that people can use.



Mason Bee

Genus: Osmia
Species: >300

"Mason" bees are named as such because of how they use mud to build walls between cells in tubes or holes where they lay their eggs.

Mason bees are native to North America and have some imported from other areas, notably in the Great Plains region is *Osmia cornifrons* or "Hornfaced bee" which is originally native to Japan.

Mason bees are solitary bees that do not live in colonies. Each female is a reproductive and starts her own nesting areas, usually in holes in wood surfaces. They pack mud in between the male and female eggs they lay in the tubes or holes to create cells or chambers in between them.

Mason bees are very effective pollinators of many early season blooming trees and plants.

Mason bees are not predatory and do not "attack" other creatures. They are not known as aggressive nest defenders.

Mason bees are very colorful bees ranging from browns and reds to metallic greens and blues.