



IDENTIFY:

PROVIDE NESTING PLACES FOR WILD BEES

Creating good nesting habitat for wild bees is simple and inexpensive. For more tips and advice on providing nesting places for wild bees, see <https://pollinators.ie/sports-clubs/>

Provide Safe Nesting Sites for Bumblebees

Bumblebees nest in long or tussocky grass.

- Leave long grass along the base of hedgerows uncut from March until October
- Bumblebee colonies die off in October/ November (while mated queens go into hibernation for winter), so it is okay to cut or manage these areas in late autumn/winter.
- Leave at least a 1.5-2m grass border at the base of hedgerows (that is not sprayed). This longer grass will provide nesting habitat for bumblebees, as well as allowing wildflowers to grow to provide additional food.



Provide Safe Nesting Sites for Cavity-Nesting Solitary bees

Our 15 species of cavity-nesting solitary bees make their nests in existing cavities in south-facing wood, stone walls, masonry or commercially available bee nest boxes.

- Drill small holes in south or east-facing wooden fences or concrete structures.
- Alternatively, create your own bee box by drilling holes in untreated wooden blocks and attaching them to an outdoor structure.
- Installing a number of small boxes at various points around the grounds is better than one large one because it minimises the risk of disease and predation.
- Holes should be 10cm in depth and 4-8mm in diameter, and should be placed at a height of at least 1.5-2 metres. It is important to have holes of different sizes for different bee species





Provide Safe Nesting Sites for Mining Solitary Bees

Our 62 species of mining solitary bees nest by making tiny burrows in bare earth (soil, sand, clay and peat). They will nest in flat well-drained areas, but generally prefer south/east-facing sheltered banks.

- Where there is south or east-facing exposed bare earth, allow these areas to remain, and remove vegetation that appears in future.

Keep a Corner of Nettles for Butterflies

A patch of nettles could be allowed to grow in safe corners of sports grounds to provide a habitat for breeding butterflies. The common nettle is the food plant for caterpillars of the Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral, Comma and Peacock Butterfly

Maintain Pollinator-Friendly Flowers, Trees & Shrubs

Maintaining and planting pollinator-friendly native plants and trees close to nesting sites can be of great benefit to wild bees. The image belows shows the foraging distance of some of Ireland's wild bees.

See <https://pollinators.ie/sports-clubs> for more tips, advice and examples.

Bumblebees commonly forage within 1km of their nest.

Solitary bees commonly forage within 300m of their nest.

Studies have shown that an increase in 150m between nesting site and food plants can reduce the number of viable offspring by more than 70%

Solitary bees

