How does BEEvesting help?

BEEvesting is raising awareness of pollinators' importance to our health and making the information and tools for pollinator conservation available to all.

We use grant funding to provide free rentals of native mason bees and their nesting boxes to local farms, which improves pollination of local crops, expands native bee populations, and supports another local business: **Rent Mason Bees**. Rent Mason Bees cleans and cares for the returned bee cocoons, reducing the risk of disease and death of the newly laid bee larvae.

The best part? **Mason bees don't sting**, so they are an easy, native, worry-free pollinator for any location, not just farms. Through our partner network, we provide expert local resources for members of the community to develop a pollinator conservation habitat for their unique area. Schools, businesses, farms, homes, public parks and roadsides can all benefit from pollinator-friendly practices and the presence of native pollinators.

Who are the pollinators?

Pollinators are organisms that carry pollen from one flower to another so that plants can exchange genetic information. Plant reproduction results in seeds, fruits, and vegetables. North American pollinators include bees, wasps, flies, moths, beetles, butterflies, and birds.

What's endangering pollinators?

Habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation; urban development; industrial agricultural practices such as monocrops, genetically-modified organisms, and use of pesticides; non-native species competition and disease among both insects and plants; and of course climate change.

What's at stake?

Pollinators are responsible for 1 of every 3 bites of food we eat. The food crops that pollinators make possible are also the healthiest: fruits, vegetables, berries, and seeds high in essential vitamins and minerals. Pollinators facilitate the reproduction of a vast array of plant species, from tiny weeds to cotton plants to massive maple trees, keeping our natural world diverse and healthy. Even milk and meat rely on insect pollination: alfalfa and clover are two nutritionally important crops for grazing livestock.

BEEvesting

Creating community and supporting local agriculture by promoting pollinator health

Why should you BEEvesting in the community?

You may have heard we should "save the bees." Maybe you've heard of Colony Collapse Disorder and the mysterious decline of honeybees around the world. But did you know that *all* pollinators are under threat? BEEvesting is here to help!

BEEvesting is an all-volunteer collaboration between **21 Acres**, **Coastal Bank**, **Sammamish Valley Alliance**, and **Sammamish Valley Grange**. We are getting the word out about the threats to pollinators, what's at stake, and how we can all do our part to help ourselves by helping pollinators.

Everyone can support pollinators by taking four simple steps:

1. Plant pollinator-friendly flowers
2. Provide nesting areas
3. Avoid pesticides
4. Spread the word

Read on to learn more!

1 Plant Pollinator-Friendly Flowers

Diversify

The key to pollinator conservation is a diversity of species, both among the pollinators and among plants. There are over 150 species of native bees in the coastal Pacific Northwest, all of which are adapted to what grows here naturally.

Rethink Weeds

Many weeds are important to pollinators and wild areas adjacent to crops & other flowers increases the likelihood of bees visiting the crops. You can instantly feed the bees by learning to embrace **clover** and **dandelions** in your lawn and letting weeds like **fireweed** grow freely.

Native Plants for Native Bees

If you don't have natural greenspace or you prefer a less unkempt appearance, you can landscape with native plants like Douglas Aster, Oregon Grape, Evergreen Huckleberry, or Common Camas.

Plant an Herb Garden

If you're challenged for space, a container herb garden is the answer. Bees love the tiny flowers of most herbs and you'll love the fresh spices for your kitchen, such as:

Lavender	Sage	Hyssop
Chives	Oregano	Marjoram
Borage	Thyme	Basil
Mint	Rosemary	Beebalm

2 Provide Nesting Areas

Speaking of the Birds & the Bees...

Pollinators need safe places to rest, lay eggs, and overwinter. For many insect pollinators this means **exposed, undisturbed dirt**.

Up to 70% of native bees nest in the ground.

Mulch Carefully

Some of the smallest bees nest in holes in bare earth and could not penetrate even an inch of woody mulch. If you must mulch, consider **leaf litter** instead of chipped wood.

Leave plants with hollow stems (raspberries, black berries, elderberries, hydrangeas) when they die for the season so their stems can provide nests for cavity-nesting bees.

Plant a Log

Cavity-nesting bees also like beetle holes or woodpecker holes in wood. None of that handy? Pick up a large piece of **driftwood** from the beach and drill quarter-inch holes into it before setting it out in your yard.

3 Avoid Pesticides

Pesticides don't distinguish between good bugs and bad bugs. Pesticides also persisting in the environment. That means they don't stay where they are applied, and they get into the soil and water supply, endangering human health.

But there is good news...

Many insects have natural predators, some of which are pollinators themselves! For instance, **ladybugs** eat aphids. Providing pollinator-friendly plants will draw in these natural predators. If all else fails, some organic applications, such as neem oil, if applied correctly, can spare pollinators while treating for pests.

4 Spread the Word

Tell your friends and neighbors about what you're doing and why.

Follow BEEvesting on Facebook, Instagram, or sign up for our email newsletter to learn more ways you can BEEvest in your local pollinators:

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