



NatureScaping of SW WA
Wildlife Botanical Gardens

Blue Orchard Mason Bee Calendar

January-February

Inventory and clean your Mason Bee supplies. Plant seeds of early spring-blooming plants.

Mid to Early March

Install your Mason Bee houses and nesting cavities (not the cocoons). 'Local' population of Mason Bees may be looking for a home!

Late March to Mid-April

Check the weather forecast. When daytime temperatures reach 50–55°F for 3-5 days and flowers are blooming, it is time to release the cocoons. With these two conditions met, install your cocoon hatchery with cocoons into your house. All cocoons should be out by mid-April. Do not fill the cocoon hatchery more than ½ full. You may stagger the emergence by placing ½-1/3 of the cocoons over 1-3 weeks. Check fridge for emerging bees if you are staggering emergence!

April-May

Hardware cloth with 3/4" openings can be placed over the front of the nesting house to keep probing bird beaks and curious squirrel paws out! 🐿️ 🐦 🐝 Add more tubes if ½ are capped with mud.

Early June

Cover house opening with mesh material or gently place tubes into mesh bag. Store in shaded, protected, and well-ventilated location. Mud-capped end up! Ensure that the nesting cavities will not be exposed to excessive heat or direct sunlight. Check your mesh bag weekly for Houdini flies that emerge in the summer in addition to protecting from earwigs, ants, and birds.

October to November

Harvest and Clean Cocoons. Store cocoons in fridge (34-38°). Place cocoons in a ventilated container. Add a damp cotton ball in a small, separate container to help maintain humidity. Keeping cocoons at a steady, cool temperature with slight humidity helps the developing bees conserve their food reserves until they emerge in spring. Plant early spring-blooming flowers, shrubs, and trees to support bees when they emerge.

November to March

Check cocoons monthly & re-moisten the cotton ball.