

# MASON BEE

*Osmia* sp.

## Fun Facts:

- They got their name because they use mud as part of their nest building
- Solitary, cavity-nesting pollinators (they don't live in colonies)
- Very, very gentle
- Important pollinators, pollinating 95% of the flowers they visit
- Nest in hollow stems and tubes
- They have one generation per year
- When temperatures are a consistent 55 degrees, they emerge, mate, males die, and the female begins nest building within 3-4 days.
- They are active for about 4-6 weeks, then spend the rest of the year in their nesting holes as next generation Mason Bees.



## Mason Bees Lifecycle

Life Cycle Image Source: <https://fff.hort.purdue.edu/article/mason-bees-for-fun-and-fruit-pollination-anyone/>

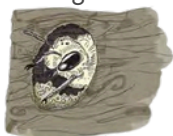
Late March  
Emergence/Mate

April/May  
Pollinate and Build Nests

May/June/July  
Eggs hatch, develop and spin cocoons

July/August  
Prepupae, Pupa, Adult

September-March  
Overwinter as an adult



## Mason Bees and Agriculture

- Mason bees are used by some farmers as fruit tree pollinators.
- Mason bees can pollinate plants grown in greenhouses.
- Mason bees readily visit trees such as almond, plum, cherry, prune, apple and pear, and shrubs such as blackberries and raspberries.
- It takes 360 honeybees to pollinate an orchard. Mason bees are so efficient the same orchard can be pollinated by just 6 Mason bees!

