



NEWSLETTER

Hello!



WELCOME TO THE SBN NEWSLETTER!

A few updates and thoughts from the past few months, and some tips on things to be doing for the future...

EXPERIMENTAL BEE BANK

In the last edition I mentioned the bee bank that I was building – well it's finished and in the garden. This is designed to provide nesting opportunities for ground nesters like the Tawny or Ashy Mining Bees. I have definitely had these in the garden before, so have everything crossed some of them will move in.

Different bees prefer different levels, so this box is designed with three different angles to see if that makes a difference as whether or not they are used.

I'll keep you posted on how it goes, and (if it's successful) will look at designing a smaller version based on the most popular angle.



Bring on the mining bees!

WHAT ABOUT A WORKSHOP?



If I had a hammer...

I also mentioned that I was running a workshop with the amazing guys at Ladybarn Community Hub. The group were amazing – we had such a great time, and everyone came away with a fantastic bee box to put up either in the centre or at home.

The feedback was so great, I have decided to run workshops for groups to attend. These will be either from my workshop in New Mills, or for larger groups, I can travel to them (within a reasonable distance). If you would be interested in knowing more about these workshops do check out the website

OR A BIT OF CITIZEN SCIENCE...

I've also signed up for a Citizen Science project with the Buzz Club, which is looking at which design of bee hotels work best. For the project, I'm trying out another new nest box, which is designed to attract the wonderfully named Hairy Footed Flower Bee amongst others. This is clay-based box, rather than tubes. Again, I'll let you know how it goes.



Please move in!

THINGS TO BE DOING NOW...

If you do have any cocoons from last year, then now is the time to put them out. Many species such as Red Mason Bees are starting to emerge, so they need to be able to fly free.

And it's also time to make sure that those nesting boxes are out – you can find more information on where to site them on the website. Some male Red Mason bees have already been spotted (they emerge first), so the females won't be far behind them, and they will be looking for somewhere to nest!

I've got mine up in my garden, and the ones at New Mills Newtown station and the New Mills Community Orchard will be going up soon.



This years nest box...

PLANTING FOR SUCCESS

You can never have too many plants...



As always, lots of planting is being done. This year I'm going with a companion planting scheme in the allotment, so mixing vegetables and flowering herbs to provide a healthier and more diverse environment for my beloved bees (and hopefully get better crops and a prettier garden!) This obviously meant I had to buy a load more seeds.....

This year I also have lungwort growing, along with my wallflowers, comfrey and flowering currants, which will hopefully help attract the before mentioned Hairy Footed Flower Bee.

I've also got the usual spring plants, plus flowering fruit trees for mining and Red Mason Bees and have planted some forget me not seeds (although nothing has sprouted yet).

And finally, let the dandelions and other early flowering weeds grow! They provide really important early nectar for bees at this time of year.

BEES TO SEE THIS MONTH

As we move through April, keep your eyes out for:

- Tawny mining bee
- Red mason bee
- Orange tailed mining bee
- Early bumble bee
- Hairy footed flower bee
- Red tailed bumble bee (queen)



Hairy Footed Flower Bee

Pic: Martin Cooper Ipswich,
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/m-a-r-t-i-n/>



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Website Updates

I've been doing some work on the website, which hopefully makes it easier to navigate, and easy to book a workshop or order a bee nest box!

I've also updated a lot of the information on there, so do go over and have a look.

DIARY DATES...

I'll have a stall at the Peak Market on 27th April, along with other local makers and artisans.

Do come along to say hello, and have a look at my hand made bee boxes and plastic free seed trays. As well as the usual funky knitted hats of course (although I'm hoping that they are well out of season).



*That's
all folks!*