



NEWSLETTER



WELCOME TO THE SECOND SBN NEWSLETTER!

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

PLANTING FOR SUCCESS

As we approach Autumn, it's a great time to think about planting for next year (and what is more fun than spending a cold, wet day than thinking about planting....).

As many of the questions I get are around planting, I'm delighted to have a new blog on my website by my good friend and professional gardener, David Tattersall, who has focused specifically on planting for Red Mason Bees, the ones you are most likely to get in your bee box. You can check it out at:

<https://www.solitarybeenursery.co.uk/blogs-and-newsletters/>.

I'm so grateful to Dave for writing this for me - here's an excerpt:

"Sowing wildflower seeds, especially early flowering species, and leaving some weeds alone, are great ways to help the Red Mason bee. Wildflowers tend to thrive with plenty of sun, in poor quality, free draining soil. Rich, water retentive garden soil encourages too much competition from grasses and less useful plants.

Finding a place where we can achieve this wildflower 'style' of planting can therefore be tricky in some gardens. However, there are some traditional garden plants that can help support Red Mason bees during their active period. While not an exhaustive list, the plants included here are easy to find in garden centres and nurseries.

Depending on the weather, the Red Mason bee's active period ranges from late March to June, therefore early flowering plants are essential for this bee. Extra early flowering plants like crocus and hellebore are included here to ensure overlap in case of an early Spring.

Finally, the plants listed here also suit the Red Mason bee's short-tongued anatomy."

SOLITARY BEES OF THE MONTH...

Whilst the Red Masons aren't likely to still be around, there are a number of Solitary Bees that you may still be able to spot. The wonderfully named Pantaloone Bee (has large, feathery legs), Ivy Bees, Carder Bees and Red-Tailed Bumbles.

*Pantaloone
Bee (image
by Charles
J Sharpe)*



NESTING UPDATE

Sadly, the nest boxes I put up at Newtown Station and the Orchard didn't have any takers this year, but the ones in my garden were more successful, so hopefully I'll be able to release some cocoons in those sites early next year.

If your boxes were successful, and you want me to overwinter your precious cocoons, then now is the time to send them to me!

Just pop your inner nesting tubes into a jiffy bag, and include a note to give me your name, email address and postcode.

Hang on to the outer tubes – they will have pheromones on the outside, which will encourage future bees to use them!

Send the tubes to:
Louise Holloway
16a Buxton Road,
New Mills,
High Peak, SK22 3JS



*Nesting
Time!*

MORE ON PLANTING...

I'm getting a bit obsessed with having the right plants in the garden and have noticed that I have a bit of a fallow patch between May/ June in terms of nectar filled plants. Again, the weather probably hasn't helped with this. So, now is the time to start planning for next year, and I'm collecting together seeds ready to plant in Autumn, in the hope that they will be ready to flower early next year.

Red Mason bees in particular emerge early in the season, so having that nectar supply is really important. Orchards are a good place to start, so hopefully we'll have more boxes up there next year, but for those of us who don't have space for trees, we need to think about other early flowering plants. This year I've started growing Comfrey, Thrift (*Armeria Splendens*), Forget Me Nots, and Self Heal (*Prunella Vulgaris*) which should all flower in March/ April to add to the early bulbs and other early bloomers that I already have, so hopefully will have more colour in the garden right through the season next year.



Comfrey

DIARY DATES...

I'm so excited to have a stall at the New Mills Festival, at which I'll be selling some rather natty knitted hats (my mum's talent, not mine) and also some bee boxes. All profits will go towards the project, and help us to grow the Nursery into the future. We have both adult and children's hats, so something for everyone.

I'll be at the Antiques, Vintage, Collectables and Craft Fair, in the New Mills Leisure Centre from 9.30am until 3pm, so hope to see you there!



Coollest
Hats!