

## **Trapping Mason Bees**

It is fairly easy to trap mason bees in the wild. You can either buy or make your nesting units to trap mason bees.

Individual and stackable fourteen-hole Sampler Binderboards from Pollinator Paradise ([www.pollinatorparadise.com](http://www.pollinatorparadise.com)) may be purchased to trap your mason bees. They are easy to transport, and hang near your source of mason bees.

Or, make your own trap nests. Drill 5/16<sup>th</sup> inch holes with a sharp brad point drill bit to make starter blocks in which to trap mason bees. Mason bees prefer a nice, clean hole. A brad point drilled hole accomplishes this. Center nesting holes ½ inch apart. Use untreated wood, such as fir, in 2 x 4 or 4 x 4-inch dimensions. Keep the starter blocks small for easy transport and hanging, or attaching near the site of nesting mason bees. Make a cube starter block that is 4 x 4 x 4 inches, for example, or a short length 2 x 4 that is 4 to 6-inches long.

Trapping mason bees may be accomplished in either the city or country.

A friend or neighbor who raises mason bees is a good place to set out trap nests.

Always ask permission to set out trap nests. Wildlife, including mason bees, are subject to local, state and federal land use regulations.

Buildings with cedar siding or shingles is an excellent source to find nesting mason bees. Spacing between cedar siding and shingles is approximately 5/16<sup>th</sup> inch, creating ideal nesting conditions for mason bees.

Locate nesting traps in the wild on dead trees or fence posts; near homestead or free growing fruit trees, and wildflowers. Short and long term blossoms are needed for nectar and pollen. Nearby streams, creeks, and ponds will provide wet soil needed to build nesting hole mud caps.

Face trap nest nesting holes east/southeast to catch the early morning sun. Provide a covered roof, or a small shelter, to protect the trap nest from wind and rain. Check trapping nests periodically.

Put trap nests out in early March before the nesting season begins. Remove after mid September when adult mason bees are hibernating in their cocoons. Store trap nests in a dry, unheated building over the winter. Set trap nests out in the spring next to new, clean mason bee nesting units. Make sure adequate nesting is provided, as mason bees multiply five-fold each year.