

Pollinator Nests - materials

The **simplest nest** is a bundle of hollow and pithy stems. Cut them to about 200 mm long, wire them together at each end, and hang them in a tree or on a fence. These may attract reed bees and masked bees.

The Host - can harvest long canes of bamboo, lantana, or other hollow or pithy stemmed weeds with the help or guidance from your local bushcare group. Then invite participants to BYO secateurs, gloves, wire



and pliers to make simple nests. Or... you can harvest the canes and pre-cut them all to reduce the need for secateurs. Depending on the age of the participants. You can also get participants to BYO prunings from home. As long as they are hollow or have a pithy centre.

The **hardwood nesting block** is drilled with a variety of different sized holes, between 3 and 8 mm in diameter. The longer you can drill the holes the better, but try to drill them to a depth of at least 100 mm. For the largest holes (6-8 mm) it is recommended that you use an 'auger' bit when working with hardwood. The block should then have a hole drilled through the top-back corner, to insert some wire and hang it from a tree or decking. It can also be free-standing, but not on the ground. These may attract reed bees, masked bees, resin bees, leafcutter bees, solitary wasps and ants.

The Host - will need to obtain pieces of wood - hardwood or untreated pine (pine just won't last as long). They can be old rotting wood or newly acquired. Small tree limbs can be cut and drilled and incorporated into the 'mixed' materials nest, described below. Sleepers are VERY hard so you'll need a good electric drill and auger bits. Auger bits can be quite expensive so don't give them to the yobbo of the group ;o)

Get participants to BYO cordless drills and bits. Sand paper to make them less splintery. Wire to make hangers. Gloves



The most complex nest is made up of a container filled with a **mix of materials**. First find or make a small box, at least 100 mm deep. Put a back on it made of plywood or fine mesh, to stop materials falling through. For each box, cut 1-3 blocks of wood (not treated) to a length of 100 mm and drill with a variety of holes (as above). Cut hollow and/or pithy stems to fit the depth of the box. Bundle with wire or elastic bands for ease of handling. Add layers of bark, an open pine cone, rotten wood. Pack the box tightly with the materials, so the openings are facing out (for easy access and it looks good). Close the front of the box using wire mesh, with a gauge no smaller than 10 mm (to allow insects to enter), using a staple gun or tacks. Hang the nest with hooks and wire or keep it as a free-standing nest, not on the ground. These may attract reed bees, masked bees, resin bees, leafcutter bees, solitary wasps, ants, ladybeetles, lace bugs and other pollinators.

The Host – needs to decide if they want to pre-prepare the boxes or get the participants to help with this. Boxes only need to be 150 - 200 mm wide. Ideally, boxes should be **at least** 100mm deep. If you are going to assemble the boxes during the event, all wood should be pre-cut. Also, pre-cut the plywood or fine mesh to back each box.

Other material to provide or get participants to BYO: gum nuts, sheets of bark, bamboo, pithy stems, pre-cut pieces of wood. You can drill them before or during the event.

Equipment to BYO: secateurs, pliers, gloves, staple gun, hacksaw, sandpaper to finish the entrances.

The host will need to provide a couple of long tables (depending on the number of participants), wire, wire mesh (pre-cut to fit boxes),

