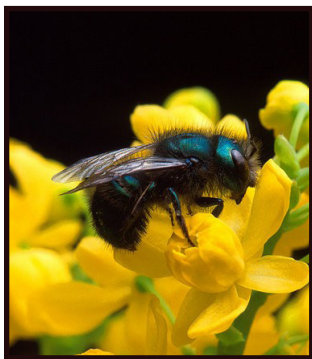




### **Information about Mason Bees**

The female will mate and look for a suitable nesting site such as a hole in a tree left by a woodpecker. An ideal nest size is 5/16" in diameter and 4" to 6" in length. Once she finds a suitable nest site she will gather mud and begin making a cell in the deepest part of the hole. She will then gather pollen and nectar from the spring flowers such as apple blossoms. An egg will be laid on top of the pollen and nectar and then she will seal that space off with a mud wall and then repeat this process over and over until she has filled the hole with 6-10 cells. After completing this important task, she will die. The eggs will exist for 1-3 weeks before hatching. Larvae will then hatch and feed for up to 10 days on the pollen and nectar left for them by their mother. This larva will change into a pupa and remain in hibernation through the winter. In the spring, when the weather warms up, the males will begin to emerge by chewing their way out of the cocoons and through the mud plugs. The females, which are almost always in the inner cells of the tunnel, emerge several days later. Within a few days, they will begin to gather pollen and begin the whole process all over again.

Besides orchard bees, you may have other solitary bees take up residence in your elegant bee condo. You might discover leafcutter bees setting up household in your beehive. They are also important pollinators native to Colorado. Not to worry, they are not aggressive and only sting when handled.



Mason Bee