

# Make a habitat for ground nesting bees

people's  
trust for  
endangered  
species

**Bees are incredibly important pollinating insects. Using simple, affordable materials, you can attract some of these beautiful and beneficial insects to your garden.**

## Step one - find a suitable structure:

- ▶ A large plant pot, box or wooden frame will do, it just needs to be deep enough to fill with sand and strong enough to weather rain and wind.
- ▶ Place this structure at ground level in a south facing area of your garden. If you can tilt the structure so that it has a slight upward angle then that will allow water to run off its surface.

## Step two - make your nesting material:

- ▶ Sand, gravel and top soil can be used to make a fine substrate.
- ▶ Using a trowel, measure out two portions of sand, one portion of gravel and half a portion of top-soil until you have filled up your container. Ratio = (2:1:0.5)



**We've around 270 species of bee in the UK, the majority of which nest underground**

- ▶ Make sure to mix your substrate as you add each portion of nesting materials.
- ▶ Once all materials are added, take an empty spray bottle and fill it with warm water.
- ▶ Gently spray the surface of your nesting substrate with water, using a flat hard surface such as a tile, to evenly press into the sandy material. This will make the substrate more compact. Repeat this stage several times once you have finished adding the nesting materials.
- ▶ It is advisable to keep spraying the substrate and adding light pressure using a flat surface a few days after finishing your nesting material.

## Step three - make some nesting holes:

- ▶ Take a pencil or a large screwdriver and make nesting holes in your material. Use a variety of holes, between 8 – 13 mm in diameter.
- ▶ By now, the material will be compact enough to not crumble when you add a hole, if it does start to fall apart, add more water and gently pat down the sand until it's hard.
- ▶ Space out your nesting holes, leaving 2 cm between.
- ▶ Push each pencil down as far as it will go, the deeper the hole, the more space for bee larvae.

**Bees don't like spending time digging their own holes as it is time consuming!**



## Step four - add some flowers

- ▶ Position your structure close to some flowering plants, daisies, buttercups, thistles and umbellifers are popular, solitary bees also love fruit trees.
- ▶ Look out for mining and furrow bees, mini-miners, blood bees and a host of predatory nomad bees that are common in grassland habitats and are often found in urban area



**Click here for video instructions**