

NATIVE BEE FACT SHEET

Importance of Native Bees

There are over 2,000 native bee species in Australia, and more than 800 of these are found here in Western Australia. Many of our WA native bee species are not found anywhere else in the world. Native bees collect nectar and pollen from flowers and play a vital role in pollinating many native plants. Some of these plants can only be pollinated by native bees—so if the native bees disappear, the plants will disappear too.

Types of Native Bees



Blue-banded bees
Amegilla species pollinate plants using buzz pollination, they hold onto the flower and shake their head up to 350 times in 1 second!



Sweat bees
Lasioglossum species is one of the largest bee families. They are attracted to human sweat due to the salt content.



Reed bees
Exoneura and *Braunsapis* species are slender bees that nest in pithy stems. Some are semi-social and share nests.



Resin bees
Megachile species use plant resin to build and seal their nests. They nest in crevices and are often found in bee hotels.



Leafcutter bees
Megachile species use circular pieces of leaves and petals to make tubes for their nests in hollows. They are often found in bee hotels.



Cuckoo bees
Coelioxys and *Thyreus* species are distinct looking with bright colours and patterns. They lay their eggs in the nests of other native bees.



Plasterer bees
Leioproctus and *Trichocolletes* species build nests in sandy soils and line their nest cells with a cellophane-like secretion.



Masked bees
Hylaeus species are small, sleek bees with distinctive facial markings. They carry pollen internally rather than on their legs.

Photos by Mel Logozzo

SUPPORTING NATIVE BEES

Ways you can support WA's native bee species, include:

- ✿ **Growing bee-friendly plants**—whether it's in your garden or pots on a balcony, native bees rely on flowers for both nectar and pollen, so it's important to have something blooming for them throughout the year. Plants from the Myrtaceae family, like Eucalyptus, Melaleucas, and Bottlebrushes, are favourites. Their abundant flowers offer a rich and reliable food source for these vital pollinators.
- ✿ **Bare earth** - Leave unmulched areas of soil in your garden for groundburrowing bees to nest.
- ✿ **Avoid pesticides** - our native bees can be very susceptible.
- ✿ **Install a bee hotel** - support cavity-nesting native bees by creating a simple bee hotel using untreated wood with drilled holes that mimic natural nesting sites. WA's native species typically prefer hole diameters of 2 to 8mm and depths of at least 120mm.



BEE HOTEL TIPS

- ✿ Position the hotel to catch morning sunlight.
- ✿ Mount it no higher than 2 m off the ground.
- ✿ Protect from rain by hanging under the eaves of a house or give the hotel a roof

Please Note: While native bees aren't aggressive, female bees can sting if physically handled.

Native Bee Attracting Plants

SHRUBS

- Native daisies (*Waitzia sp*, *Brachyscome multifida*, *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*)
- Native pea plants (*Jacksonia*, *Daviesia*)
- Rice flower (*Pimelea ferruginea*, *Pimelea rosea*)
- Astartea fascicularis*
- Dianellas* (*Dianella revoluta*, *Dianella caerulea*)
- Snake bush (*Hemianandra pungens*)
- Native rosemary (*Westringia dampieri*)
- Feather flowers (*Verticordia*)
- Scholtzia involucrata*
- Regelia ciliata*
- Thryptomene Saxicola*
- Fringe lily (*Thysanotus tuberosus*)
- Conostylis species
- Dasypogon* species
- Boronia* species
- Eremophila* species
- Leucopogon* species
- Leschenaultia* species



TREES/LARGE SHRUBS

- Grasstrees (*Xanthorrhoea* species)
- Bottlebrushes (*Callistemon* species)
- Eucalypts (*Eucalyptus marginata*, *Eucalyptus camaldulensis*, *Eucalyptus wandoo*)
- Flowering gums (*Corymbia calophylla*, *Corymbia ficifolia*)
- Tea trees (*Leptospermum* species)
- Wattles (*Acacia* species)
- Grevilleas (*Grevillea preissii*, *Grevillea endlicheriana*, *Grevillea crithmifolia*)
- Banksia (*Banksia menziesii*, *Banksia grandis*)
- Hakea species
- Melaleuca (*Melaleuca seriata*, *Melaleuca huegelii*, *Melaleuca pulchella*)

GROUNDERCOVERS/CLIMBERS

- Snake vine (*Hibbertia*)
- Native wisteria (*Hardenbergia comptoniana*)
- Fan flowers (*Scaevola* species)

Photos courtesy of Native Spirit Nursery