

## Mason/Leafcutter Bees Fact Sheet



Thanks for making an Air Bee and Bee with us.

### Fun facts about the Bees that may want to live in this home:

Mason and Leafcutter bees are both **solitary** bees (this means they live alone.) Since they do not have a queen to protect, they almost never sting. The home you have made is for female bees. These bees collect nectar and pollen from plants in a very small area around their home. While gathering the pollen for themselves, they are also helping the plants by pollinating the flowers! Leafcutters will only travel around 400 yards (3  $\frac{1}{3}$  football fields) and Mason bees will only travel about 300 yards (2.5 football fields.) They begin building their nursery at the back of a tunnel. First they put in some pollen and nectar (larva snacks), next they lay an egg, last they build a wall (Mason bees use mud, Leafcutters use leaves.) They will continue to do this for about one month for Mason bees and 2 months for Leafcutters, when their life cycle ends. The eggs hatch to larvae, and the larvae feed on the nectar and pollen. The larvae change to pupae and overwinter in a cocoon, in the tunnel. When the temperature is warm enough (around 55 degrees for Mason bees and a consistent 70 degrees for Leafcutters) the now adult bees chew their way out of the cocoon and tunnel to start the process again.

### How to care for your Air Bee and Bee:

When looking for the right place to hang your project remember there are 2 more things your bees will need to live. The first is access to food. Try to place it within a short flying distance to different kinds of flowering plants. The second thing they need is water. If you can't place it near a water source, you could fill a small dish but be sure to change the water twice per week. You will also need to do some housekeeping starting year two. After your bees hatch, change out the used tubes to keep it clean for the next generation.

For more craft ideas and information on protecting native pollinators visit us at

[www.appalachianforestnha.org/pollinator-initiative](http://www.appalachianforestnha.org/pollinator-initiative)



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