

NZ Bumblebee Conservation Trust

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NEWSLETTER Spring 2024

Planting Flowers to support Bumblebees

Bumblebee nests run entirely on flower power! The queen and her offspring need a constant supply of pollen and nectar throughout the nest's lifecycle, from early spring until autumn. If they are unable to find enough food at any point, the nest might die before it can produce new queens or males.

The best thing you can do to help bumblebees nest near you is to grow bee friendly plants which flower across the different seasons. Here's a few suggestions:

Spring flowers: Crocus, Primroses, Aquilegia, Fruit tree blossoms, Linaria, Calendula, Alyssum

Summer flowers: Iris, Borage, Lavender, Campanula, Poppies, Sweet peas, Tansy, Daisies

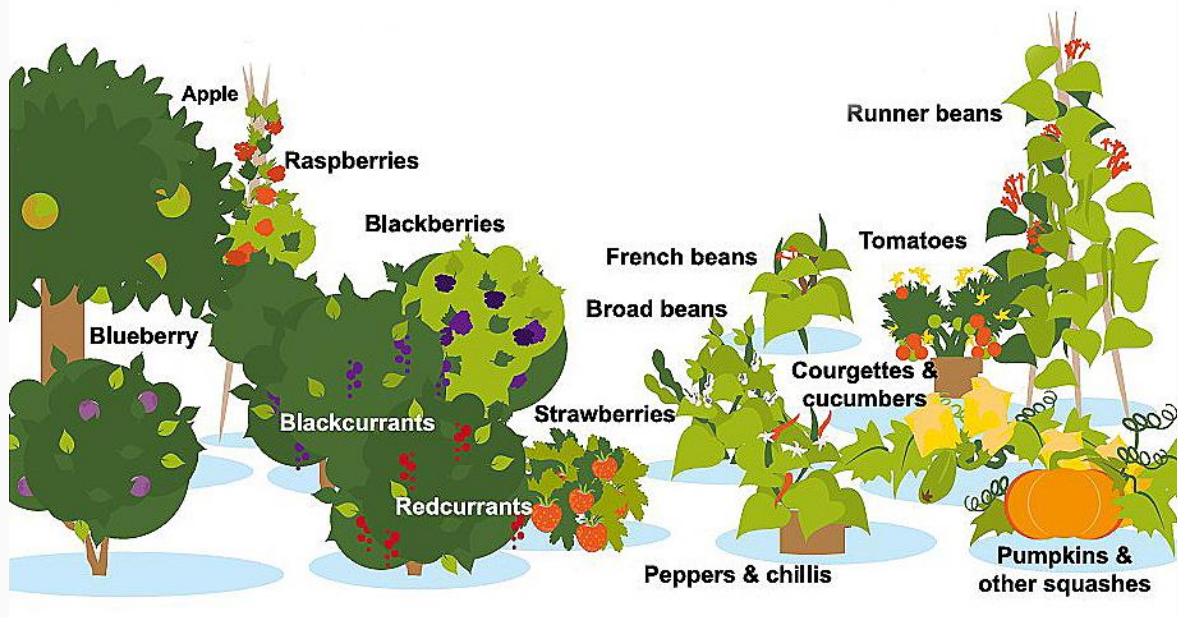
Late summer/Autumn flowers: Verbena, Cornflower, Echinacea, Salvia, Sunflowers, Marjoram

A wildflower mix makes it easy, as they flower for extended periods and are full of nectar and pollen producing flowers. Avoid hybridized plants such as petunias, begonias and pansies - they will not provide any food for the bees. Our Bee Friendly Seed Mix can be purchased right [here](#)



Best Edibles for You and Bumblebees

'Growing your own' can provide delicious and nutritious food and the flowers can provide important forage for bumblebees and other pollinators. Some plants, for example beans and blackcurrants, are nearly always bee-pollinated, and can easily be grown in pots, bags or directly into the ground amongst other flowering plants. They needn't take up too much space although some may need support. Dwarf fruit trees can also be grown in pots and bumblebees and other pollinators will just love their spring blossom.



How One Family Made their own Bumblebee Nest

A couple of years ago the Watson family from Christchurch built a wooden bumblebee box, put old dacron (a synthetic polyester fibre) inside it and placed it in a shady part of their garden. Nothing seemed to happen, so they forgot all about it until recently they found it and looked inside. Bumblebees had come and built a nest and had now died off. How exciting is that! It is usually very hard to get a queen bumblebee to set up a nest in a man-made structure, so this is great news.

Here are some pictures the family sent us of their nest and their daughter resetting it again for this year. Let's hope they are successful again.



Here is a link to [GardenersWorld](https://www.gardenersworld.com) where there is information on setting up a clay pot to attract a queen bee.

The NZBCT will be starting a project soon to build a collapsable wooden box that will house a Home Garden Hive Box. The box can then be reset to hopefully attract a new queen to setup a nest. We will keep you updated.

BOP Garden & Art Festival

Our Bumblebee Trust will be participating in this year's Garden & Art Festival in November. Geoff & Liz Brunsdon are opening their garden, The Owlery, for the first time and will be running twice daily talks on the incredible world of bumblebees. There will be a live perspex hive on view and merchandise for sale.

More information is on their website Bay of Plenty Garden & Art Festival - 14-17 November 2024- (gardenandartfestival.co.nz)



Bumblebee 2025 Calendar

NZ Bumblebee Trust has created a 2025 calendar with gorgeous graphics. Each month the calendar depicts a wonderful picture with information on what is happening to bumblebees at that time of year. In addition, each month has a fun and interesting message. This is suitable for both for kids and adults to follow the year in the life of bumblebees. We are very grateful to Joanne Ostler who has created all the graphics especially for the Trust. The cost is just \$20 and you can buy them on our website right [here](#)



Help Support our Bumblebees

The future of bees in NZ is under threat. Bees are dealing with disease, battling changing environments, reduced green space and increasing use of toxic pesticide sprays.



JOIN

Become a member



YOU CAN HELP - Click on the bee and become a member today.

A small donation will go towards our education and conservation programmes.

www.nzbct.org.nz

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14 Freeburn Road, Tauranga

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