

Raking out and repointing areas of affected mortar is therefore recommended. The joint should be raked out to a depth of 15 mm and repointed with a sand and cement mortar that is not too strong for the bricks, but hard enough to discourage the bees (4:1 sand/cement is a typical industry standard). This work should, if possible, be carried out in late summer after the bees have ceased their activities, but before frost becomes a problem.



Honey Bees - these are kept by bee keepers but can also live in the wild. They resemble wasps, being of similar size, but are mainly black, sometimes with tan banding.

They always live in colonies and will survive over winter.

Honey bees are often seen in the garden collecting pollen and nectar. They are also often seen around wet areas in the garden because they do need to drink. In most instances they will not attack humans but will sting if you get too close to their hive.

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Colonies can contain up to 20,000 bees and they can and do swarm. The noise of a bee swarm can be frightening but the danger is not great. The swarm will often cluster on a tree branch and may sometimes be collected by a bee keeper (see <http://www.swarms.net/> for details of bee keepers in your area who may be able to help. Please note that bee keepers may levy a charge for this service).

Although the more aggressive of the three species, honey bees are valuable as pollinators of flowers and crops and destruction of a colony should only be considered as a last resort.



If you need this information in your language, please contact us using one of the methods below.

“जे तमारे आ मांडितोनी तमारी पोतानी भाषामां जरर होय, तो नीचेनी पदमिळोमांची अंकनी उपयोग करीने काउन्सिलची संपर्क साधी.”

如果您需要您自己语言的此信息，请通过以下方法之一与委员会联系。

“ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਸਿੱਧੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਤਹੀਬ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।”

آگر آپ نے معلومات چاہیں، تو اپنی زبان میں اس معلومات کے لیے ہمیں اپنے مقامی زبان میں سے کسی ایک طریقہ استعمال کر کے ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

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Bees



Honey bees, bumble bees and solitary bees are all found in British gardens. All three species are useful pollinators and make an important contribution to agriculture, horticulture and wild plants. In the U.K. it is estimated that the benefit from bee pollination is between £120m and £200m per year (Defra 2008) for commercially exploited crops alone.



Because of their beneficial role every effort should be made to avoid disturbing the nests. Treatment with insecticides should only be considered as a last resort.

In addition to the loss of pollinators, treatment of feral honey bee colonies may cause economic loss for bee keepers and contaminate honey intended for food use. This is due to the tendency for foraging non-target bees carrying contaminated honey away from a treated nest to their own hive. Treatment of honey bees is, therefore, particularly difficult and best left to professional pest control firms.

The following information may be useful to distinguish between the species normally encountered:

Bumble Bees have round furry bodies with black and orange markings and have a characteristic bumbling flight which makes them easy to identify. Bumble bees do not produce large amounts of honey and are therefore not kept in hives.

Each colony consists of a queen, female worker bee and small male (drone) bees. Only the queen and worker bees have a sting.

A bumble bee colony is small, never more than a few hundred individuals and does not swarm. During late summer, early autumn the females mate and then find a place to hibernate over winter before establishing new nests the following year.

Bumble bees are relatively harmless and will not sting unless their life is under threat. Further information on this fascinating insect is available
<http://hercules.users.netlink.co.uk/Bee.html>.



Solitary Bees - these resemble honey bees but do not live in colonies. They construct cells usually in sandy soil where they lay a single egg. When they hatch they consume the pollen the mother has left for them within the cell and pupate emerging as an adult bee the following year.

Solitary bees are quite harmless, do not swarm and are useful pollinators in the garden.

Masonry bees, also called miner bees or mortar bees, are a type of solitary bee which occasionally will nest in mortar joints, soft bricks and stone. These bees are generally smaller than the honey bee, but of similar appearance.

The true masonry bees (*Colletes* spp, *Halictus* spp, *Andrena* spp and *Anthophora* spp) burrow into areas of soft material to make their nests. The mason bees (*Osmia* spp) make their nests in pre-existing holes often using keyholes in garages, outhouses etc, hence its common name the keyhole bee.

The true masonry bee *Colletes*, constructs a burrow between 2 to 10 cm long lined with a smooth varnish like material produced by the bees' salivary glands. The bee collects pollen and nectar and fills about 1cm of the burrow with a mixture (often called bee bread). A single egg is then laid. The process is repeated until the burrow is full.

The eggs hatch and the larvae feed on the bee bread until fully grown. They then overwinter until spring when they pupate to emerge in early summer.

The Building Research Establishment have carried out research into the issue of mortar bees and conclude that:-

“The only effective treatment for masonry bees is for the mortar joints in the affected area to be raked out and repointed with hard mortar of a cement and sand (not lime) mix”. It should be emphasised that the bees cannot damage good mortar, but only attack old, perished or poorly maintained mortar. In addition it would be noted that the bees are not aggressive and will only sting under extreme provocation.