

Make native bee blocks

ACTIVITY: Make your own blocks (or 'bee hotels') for native bees to nest and rest in.

This style of mud block is popular with the blue banded bees - yes, bees with blue stripes!

Materials

- sand
- clay
- water (for mixing and some for cleaning up)
- containers to fill with mud (seedling tray, pot, other)
- A bucket or tub for mixing in
- * Work outdoors - the clay will wash off your hands, clothes or a table but can be a bit messy as you work.

Instructions

1. Mix

Combine 4 parts sand, 1 part clay + water to make mud

If you mix all the sand and clay in this kit at once, add about 700ml to 1 litre of water. It helps to break the clay into smaller pieces and rub them into the sand (like when cooking!). Aim for chocolate mousse consistency when the clay and sand are combined. If it is too wet it will run out of your containers or may take a long time to dry.

2. Fill

Fill your containers with mud

Push the mud in so there are no gaps. Use the blunt end of a pen or pencil to make some 2cm deep 'starter' holes - the bees will dig deeper from here. Just a few will do (or one per seedling cell in the trays).

3. Dry

Allow a few days for the blocks to dry

4. Place

Place your blocks

If possible, locate with some cover from rain but some sunshine in the morning. Under eaves or on a window sill, or make a roof for them in the garden. Between knee height and shoulder height is good, too.

5. Watch

Keep a look out for BBBs or other insects using your bee blocks!



**MUD
BLOCKS FOR
NATIVE
BEES TO
REST &
NEST IN**



A few more tips and tricks



Work with your containers upright, so the mud stays put. When dry, locate them with the holes horizontal (the bees prefer this!)



If placing in an exposed spot, consider adding a roof!



You might mix media for your bee hotel – see the factsheet for the materials that other bees also like to nest and rest in.

A masked bee face >



Blue banded bee bums ^



Mud block sitting on my bedroom window sill. I can watch the bees from inside or outside!