

Pollinators On Your Farms!

Strawberry Project

Hello Growers!

As Team Strawberry continues the second year of our project, we wanted to show you the different species of bees that we've seen visiting your strawberry crops! Some of the highlights include a variety of wild bees that are native in New York State!

European Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*)

Activity: March to November



The honey bee is easily spotted with its yellow and black striped back and its noticeably larger size to other wild bees. These bees can both be found in the wild and is a part of commercialized livestock for honey and bee's wax production. Honey bees love pollinating a variety of different plants, including crops, production foods, dandelions, and much more.

Nesting and Behavior: Colony hives in hollowed out spaces, and the behavior is eusocial. Wild honey bees will look for a large hollow space to build hives, like the sizes of commercialized honey bees hives. These colonies can contain upwards of tens of thousands of bees.

The bumble bee is one of the target species for our project and some of your farms have our placed bumble bee colonies! They are one of the larger bees that we will be working with and are distinct with their cute fuzzy bodies. However, the queens can about 2 to 3 times the size of the workers! They are known to pollinate strawberries and tomatoes quite well!

Nesting and Behavior: Bumble bees also look for hollowed out areas to build nests. They are social bees, but their hives are much small then honey bees, going upwards of around 50 individuals.

Bumble Bee

(*Bombus impatiens*, *Bombus spp.*)

Activity: Late May to Late November



Small Mining Bee

(*Andrena nasonii*)

Activity: May to July

The small mining bee is a wild bee that is smaller than a honey bee. They have black bodies with fine, light-

yellow stripes. The stripes on the back of their abdomen are not complete lines, as seen in the top picture to the right. If you look closely, you can also see that they have small hair lines on their faces near their eyes (the lines are known formally as “fovea”).

Nesting and Behavior: Small mining bees are solitary ground nesting.



Sweat bees are similar sized to the small mining bee. They are about the same size but can have a metallic green thorax and head. However, sometimes these bees are duller and look dark blue. This is where they can truly get mistaken for the small mining bee. The biggest difference between these sweat bees and the small mining bee are 1: the lack of “fovea,” and 2: the lines on the back of a sweat bee’s abdomen are complete.

Nesting and Behavior: Primary solitary ground nesting, but sometimes will nest in rotting wood.

Sweat Bee

(*Halictus confusus*)

Activity: May to November



Green Sweat Bee

(*Augochlorella aurata*)

Activity: April to November

The green sweat bee is a beautiful little bee, and smaller than the small mining bee. Green sweat bees have a shiny bright lime-green, gem-like exoskeleton. They can have colors which range from duller metallic greens to bright greens as well.

Nesting and Behavior: Primary solitary ground nesting, but sometimes will nest in rotting wood.



Small Carpenter Bee

(*Ceratina calcarata*)

Activity: March to November

The small carpenter bee is a small, ant-sized wild bee with a dark, almost midnight blue color to them. They have a round-smoothness to their body shape and are very curvy.

Nesting and Behavior: Primary solitary ground nesting, but sometimes will nest in rotting wood.



Small Sweat Bee

(*Lasioglossum spp.*)

Activity: May to November



Small sweat bees are small, ant-sized bees which are angler and dark in color. These little bees can look a lot like small carpenter bees, but the small carpenter bees are more roundish in shape (especially the head) while the small sweat bees have a more angular-shaped head. Small sweat bees also have very subtle greyish stipes on their abdomen.

Nesting and Behavior: Primary solitary ground nesting, but sometimes will nest in rotting wood, and in small groups.

It's a fly on a flower! But it looks like a bee!

These flies can mimic the look of different bees, especially honey bees (and these flies about the right size for honey bees too).

What differentiates these guys from the real bees is the distinct "fly-look" with their giant eyes. Also, all bees have 4 wings while flies will only have 2 wings.

Flower Fly (multiple spp.)

