



## Backyard Pollinator

You have purchased a BACKYARD POLLINATOR and your package has arrived in the mail.

What steps should be taken to ensure the bees will hatch, fly and thrive?

### THINK & PLAN

Before unpacking the Backyard Pollinator, some careful thought will go a long way. Place **the nesting block in a refrigerator** and make a **good plan** before you begin.

Watch the video <https://youtu.be/IRjJBuQdqy4> - which explains the dual purpose of the box and demonstrates several ways to hang the unit.

**\*\*Sufficient temperatures and blossoming flowers must coincide with the hatching of your Leafcutter Bees.\*\*** Read below for advice on how to achieve this happy medium.

### SUFFICIENT TEMPERATURES

As outdoor temperatures increase and flower buds on plants begin to form (go looking for the tiny buds), place the nesting block in a warm environment to begin the hatching process.

Leafcutter bees may be hatched indoors or outside. **It is recommended to hatch the bees inside your home** where it's dry and warm 24/7. Any temperature above 15C will initiate metamorphosis. The warmer the better (26C would be ideal) but direct sunlight (outside or through a window) causes the bees to get too hot.

Male leaf cutter bees will hatch first. They have small, green eyes and dots on their rear-end. When the very first male bees begin to hatch it is time to place your BACKYARD POLLINATOR outside (if incubated indoors). The females should emerge within a week, depending on the outside temperature.

The outside temperature must be above 15C everyday and above 10C at night before you place the Backyard Pollinator outside. Consistent temperatures of +20C is better, +25C to +30C is ideal. Above +40C most plants tend to drop flowers, so pollen and nectar are not as readily available for leafcutter bees.

### BLOSSOMING FLOWERS

The range of leafcutter bees is approximately 100 metres. Ensure there are flowers within this distance of the placement of your Backyard Pollinator, otherwise the bees will stray.

Expect to find circular shaped cut-outs in nearby plants once leafcutter bees begin to work and pollinate. Rose bushes and pansy plants are special favorites for their nesting material.

Check us out!



## WHERE LEAFCUTTERS NEED TO BEE

Having success with leafcutter bees is similar to selling prime real estate..... **LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!**

1. Leafcutter bees need a shady spot. Direct sun will kill their larvae if they get too hot. Leafcutter bees are intelligent and will find a new place to nest if the Backyard Pollinator is placed in full sun.
2. The nesting block must be sheltered and kept **dry** from all rainfall and all water (ie. sprinklers). The box is cardboard and wet cocoons get moldy very quickly. Leafcutter bees know this as well and will relocate.
3. Place the Backyard Pollinator where you and others can **easily view** and observe the leafcutter bees for the length of their flying life (approximately 5-8 weeks for each generation).
4. The nesting block should be at least 10 feet from regular foot traffic.
5. Watch from a distance of two feet and stay very still.
6. Try to synchronize your **adult emergence** with **sufficient local blooms** to give your new friends flowers to forage on.
7. Waterproofing the cardboard box will make it last longer. Decorating it will make it appear more attractive to humans.
8. **Please post some Facebook pictures of your adventure. We would love to see where our babies end up in the world, and what their homes look like!**

## THE “GO TO” PLACES

- Under your **widest eave** or in an outdoor **covered area** (ie. a gazebo, pergola, veranda or porch).
- Higher is better = more shade, less water.
- Against a **window where it is shaded and dry** so the bees may be observed from inside. People who are nervous about bugs will still receive enjoyment from the experience.
- Close to where you relax outside and drink your morning cup of coffee.

## WHAT TO EXPECT THIS SEASON

Adult **emergence** will normally take 30 - 40 days (in hot weather maybe less, if it's cold maybe longer).

Don't expect flying action until the dew has dried off in the morning or in the 2 hours before sundown. Leafcutter bees will stay inside their nesting block on cool or rainy days.

Bees are solar powered and love **warm, sunny weather**.

A **large portion** of the value of your Backyard Pollinator will come from your observations and interactions with the leafcutter bees. Be sure to spend some time with them and take a friend along too. Curious children will be fascinated and inspired!

***You are in for a treat this summer. Please plan, decorate, waterproof and then take some time out with your bees.***



### **HATCH AND RELEASE LOOSE CELL COCOONS**

The leafcutter bee cocoons may be hatched indoors or outside. It is recommended to hatch the bees inside your home where it's dry and warm 24/7. Any temperature above 15C will initiate metamorphosis. The warmer the better (26C would be ideal) but direct sunlight (outside or through a window) causes the bees to get too hot.

Male leaf cutter bees will hatch first. They have small, green eyes and dots on their rear-end. When the very first male bees begin to hatch it is time to place your loose cell cocoons outside (if incubated indoors). The females should emerge within a week, depending on the outside temperature.

The outside temperature must be above 15C every day and above 10C at night before you place the newly hatched and remaining loose cell cocoons outside. Consistent temperatures of +20C is better, +25C to +30C is ideal. Above +40C most plants tend to drop flowers, so pollen and nectar are not as readily available for leafcutter bees.