

World Bee Day



Celebrate the Bee on 20th May!

Did you know that the UN declared May 20th World Bee Day in 2017 - after years of lobbying by the Slovenian Beekeeping Association. (One in every 200 Slovene keeps bees).

How can you celebrate and help the bees and other pollinators!

Make may a **NO MOW** Month- let the lawn grow – the clover, daisies and dandelions grow and flower. (Dead head the dandelion when it has finished flowering to stop it going to seed)

Plant pollinator friendly flowers, trees and fruits

Make nesting sites for solitary bees – a mound of loose soil or sand in a quiet corner of the garden will be great. You could use some old tins – drill some holes in the tin – about the size of a pencil fill them with soil and turn them upside down or just fill them with sand and lie them on their side in an old wooden box. Or frame. Any loose soil or sand will do as long as it is free draining.

Let some pieces of wood in a corner so that they can nest in the decaying wood.

Leave an area of the garden alone for wildlife and native species to grow!

If you are making a garden try and plant flowers and trees which will provide the bees with pollen all year round.

As a bee keeper – I enjoy my bees. For me the best sound in the world is the gentle hum of a busy hive when you open it. The pure honey I get from them, which can vary in taste according to where they have been collecting the



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The most exciting time of the year for me – is watching them in spring – as they start to venture out, foraging for the early pollen as the temperatures start to rise – (hopefully). Standing under a big old willow tree, where my hive is, listening to the tree hum with the sound of the bees collecting the pollen from the catkins.

Why do I keep bees? – I have always been fascinated with bees- so I took an opportunity, about 5 years ago and did a beginners evening course with FIBKA. At the time I didn't have a hive- but I started planting my garden with bee friendly plants which would carry them through the year. 2 years later I got my first hive having built a top bar hive out of scrap wood (- well my husband did). I now use this as my incubator hive and transfer new bees into the main hive which is in a more traditional style but made of polystyrene. I find this keeps the bees warmer in winter.

Keeping Bees is a hobby where time passes quickly. Managing the bees –keeping the hive clean- feeding them during the winter – with the reward of collecting a frame of honey in season! I generally pop up to the hive for 20 minutes just to check them and come back a couple of hours later. I find bees have a calming effect – if I am calm and relaxed – then they are relaxed as well.

Bees are a very industrious and fascinating species.



For more information on the native solitary bee species in Ireland please visit the national Biodiversity website at www.biodiversityireland.ie/the-secret-life-of-solitary-bees.