

THE NESTBOX COMPANY LTD

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Nesting boxes thoughtfully designed for their inhabitants!

THE BUMBLEBEE BOX

Before use your bumblebee box it is a good idea to cover the whole floor with corrugated paper to absorb moisture, and the larger inner room should contain the nesting wool provided. Put a little honey in a container such as a small plastic lid in the small outer room.

SITING THE BOX. Place it in a sheltered area facing South where it is not too sunny. To make it look more natural some grass, leaves etc can be put round the entrance hole taking care not to block it. A bright-coloured object can be put near the entrance so the bees can locate the box easily.

A queen may well scent the honey that you have put in the box and go in herself, in which case should you find one in there it is best to shut her in for a day or two so that she gets used to the surroundings. However make sure she has enough honey to feed on!

Should you decide to catch a queen yourself you will most likely find them on a warm spring day flying close to the ground and exploring for nesting sites. Their most popular hunting grounds are woods sides, hedgerows, spring flowers and compost heaps. But do not catch a queen with pollen on her legs. She is probably already established!

You will need a net and a screw-topped jar to trap your queen. Handle her carefully and once caught place her in the jar in your fridge. This will calm her down whilst you transfer her to your box which you should have already placed in position.

Block up the outer hole for two days as mentioned before and make sure she has some food.

MANAGEMENT. After you are certain the queen has established herself you can remove the feeding saucer from the box.

Your box has a sliding transparent cover which allows you to see what is happening inside without releasing the bees. To inspect gently remove the outer lid early in the morning or late evening when the bees are quiet. Similarly if you wish to move the box do it gently in the morning or evening, but make sure that you block up the entrance hole before moving it.

During the season it may be necessary to replace the cardboard in the outer chamber.

WINTER CLEANING. After the bees have gone in the late autumn the box should be cleaned out. Remove the old nest but keep some of the floor and nest for next year because it will smell attractive to the bees next spring. Wash your box out with hot, soapy water. Do not use disinfectant as the bees will not like the smell. Dry the box and then store it somewhere dry in the winter. For next spring you will need new nesting material and some new cardboard.



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