Garden and Lawn Landscaping for Native Pollinator Nesting and Overwintering Habitat



Brush Piles
Provide habitat for multiple animals, and insects species including butterflies and ground nesting bees.



Rock Walls and **Piles**
These features provide important habitat for a diversity of beneficial insects and other wildlife, including cavity nesting bees.



Water Access
Bees need clean sources of water, preferably near nests. Some species even pack water to use in nest building. Provide a shallow basin with perching stones that is cleaned periodically. Organic matter in the water provides minerals not found in pollen.



Patches of Dirt
The majority of native bee species nest in the ground. Whether large or small, partially covered or bare, these areas of undisturbed soil provide essential habitat for native pollinators.

Leaves and **Mulch**
To provide ground nesting bees with safe access to nesting sites avoid wood chips, fabric, and treated wood. Instead use thin layers of leaves or plant debris.



Woody Stems
Many hollow or pithy plant stems and branches of varied lengths provide excellent places for cavity-nesting insects to call home.



Decomposing Woody Material
Beetles and other burrowing insects create homes for cavity nesting bees such as mason bees, in logs, old wood piles, and snags.



Shuksan Conservancy

Pollinators are a key component of intact ecosystems, Habitat loss and degradation when combined with other stressors such as disease and commercial competition threatens native pollinator survival. Shuksan Conservancy volunteers work with tribal, state and federal governments to protect and restore habitat essential for native pollinator success. Current projects include Heather Meadows and marine shore headlands restoration, and pollinator inventories in Bellingham and on Lummi I. Our outreach team also provides educational information to the public.

To participate in Shuksan Conservancy projects visit our website at:
https://shuksanconservancy.org/projects/pollinators/



Install a Sign
Influence your neighbors, educate your community,



Acknowledgments

The content for this brochure is condensed from the Xerces Society Brochure – Nesting & Overwintering Habitat for Pollinators and Other Beneficial Insects. Authors: Sarah Foltz Jordan, Jennifer Hopwood, and Sara Morris of The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation.

Pollinator Nesting and Overwintering Habitat

They Need More Than Flowers

While flowering plants provide pollinators with food, insects also require suitable shelter for nesting and overwintering. Most bees and wasps create small nests beneath the soil or within dead plant stems or cavities in wood. Other beneficial insects such as butterflies, wasps, moths, fireflies, lady beetles, and ground beetles seek shelter in places that offer protection from predators and the elements, such as leaf litter and brush piles.

Landscaping for Pollinators

Traditional landscaping practices rarely leave enough natural resources to support pollinators and other wildlife. Pollinators and other insects shelter in stems and branches of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers; leaf litter; undisturbed ground; bare ground; dead wood; brush piles; and rock piles. Retaining and incorporating as many of these features as possible into your landscape (rather than "cleaning" them away) will help attract and support a diversity of bees and other beneficial insects.

Natural Nesting Benefits

Compared to artificial nesting options such as bee blocks and bee hotels, the natural nesting habitat features found in this brochure often better mimic the natural nest site density of insects, and also break down naturally with time, limiting disease and parasite issues. Natural nesting features often povide multiple conservation benefits including overwintering habitat for butterflies and abundant food for songbirds. This guide focuses on a variety of natural nesting habitat features that can be readily incorporated into most landscapes.