

# BEES



Unlike wasps, bees are not deemed to be a nuisance and will rarely sting unless threatened. There are over 250 kinds of bees in Britain. The most familiar bumble bees and honey bees (pictured above) live in colonies and belong to a group known as the social bees. The majority of other species do not live in colonies and are solitary bees.

## **Solitary bees**

These are to be found in many gardens during Spring and Summer but go largely unobserved. Common species include the masonry, mining and leaf cutter bees. Solitary bees do not swarm and are unlikely to sting unless they are handled or their nest disturbed

## **Masonry bees**

The female is often seen constructing a tiny tunnel in a wall normally in the pointing between the bricks where she lays a single egg.

There is no treatment, the only answer is to repoint the area after the new adult bee emerges.

## **Honeybees**

They are brown and yellow in colour and smaller than the bumble bee. They are the species kept by man in hives from which honey and wax are made. The numbers can vary in a colony from 40 – 50,000 at the height of the season in July. Those born at the end of summer however survive the winter living on stored honey

## **Swarms**

If a hive is overcrowded, bees may emerge in a dense cloud and headed by the queen, settle on a branch or tree. If left, scout bees will eventually find a sheltered situation and start a new colony.

Bees are not dealt with by the pest control officer but if you do have a problem with a swarm contact us and we will contact a local beekeeper who may be able to take the swarm away.

## **Bumble bees**

Larger and rounder than honey bees and often they produce a deep buzzing sound. Bumble bees build small round grass nests, often under buildings or in holes in the ground. They do not swarm nor do they

sting unless the nest is disturbed. If at all possible, bumble bee nests should be left undisturbed for at the end of the Summer all bees except the queen will die and the nest is abandoned.