



Mason Bee Lab

Harvesting Your Cocoons

Why Should I Harvest

- What's in your yard?
 - Good
 - Bad
 - Ugly
- What do you want in your yard next year?
- Count + or -
 - Fostering
 - Give away
 - Different locations

What You Should Have

- Paper for keeping it clean
- Container for cocoons
- Disposal container for debris
- Cutting tool (tubes)
- Scraper (wood inserts)
- A plan for cleaning
- A plan and place for storage (or setting out)

Observation is Key

- For straws
 - Holes in sides
 - Empty tubes
- Plug ends
 - Different types
 - Holes or broken mud
 - Different colors
- No plug-could have cocoons



Getting Down to Business

- **Tear apart tubes/Straws**
 - Look down the hole
 - Put aside empties
- Carefully cut crease
- Peel straw/tear apart tube
- Reeds and other tubes
- **OBSERVE**
- **Wooden Inserts**
 - Remove band
 - Save cardboard backing
 - Start with top layer
 - Cocoons could be on top or bottom of layer
 - Use “scraper” to gently remove cocoons
 - **OBSERVE**



What Do You See?

- Plug – color, texture
- Vestibule – air pocket
- Mud Dividers
- Cocoons
 - Type
 - Boys in front – girls in back
 - Poop (that's the black stuff)
- Other Stuff
 - Parasites
 - Different dividers
 - Chalk brood
 - Quandaries



Some of What We Found



Undesirables

- Parasitic Wasps
- Blossom mites
- Chalk Brood
 - Special handling
 - Can contaminate
- Houdini Fly
- Others?



Cleaning

- Why we do it
 - Remove undesirables
 - Prepare for storage
- How we do it
 - Sand method
 - Clorox and water
- Live bees inside the cocoons
- Lucky you – you have a handout

Storage

- Why store
 - Controlled environment
 - Release when needed (until last of April)
 - Safe from predators
- When should you store
- Where do you store
- How to store
- Lucky you...you have a handout

Information and Questions

- For more information and lots of videos, go to Crown Bees at www.crownbees.com
- For answers to your questions, contact the Cowlitz Co. Extension Service at **360-577-3014**
- For what's going on in SW Washington and NW Oregon, and answers to your questions, go to www.fernandrosemary.com