

## Bees – useful and worth protecting

Worth protecting because:

- They secure and preserve ecosystems
- They preserve biological diversity
- They play an important role in our food supply
- They make products like honey and wax

Threatened by:

- Introduced parasites
- Increased use of pesticides
- Poorly structured agricultural landscapes
- Deforestation of old trees, which serve as nesting holes for wild bees

What you can do for the bees?

- Plant native tree and shrub species rich in blossoms
- Avoid using pesticides, biocides and fertilizers in the garden and on the balcony  
Alternatives include mulch or plants growing on the ground
- Mow meadows only twice a year to leave enough nutrition for the bees
- Set up watering places for insects as a source of drinking water
- Set up insect hotels



Photo credits: Marian Engel





## Action Programme for Insect Conservation

The German Cabinet approved the "Insect Conservation Action Program", a proposal put forward by the Federal Environment Ministry. This is the German government's most comprehensive package of measures to protect insects and their diversity to date. With specific measures in nine fields of action, the program addresses all the main causes of insect mortality, including significantly stricter rules on the use of pesticides.

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**A house for bees**  
Participatory cultural project  
to preserve ecological  
diversity

German Environment Agency

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## Ambassador for biological diversity

As a farm animal, the bee has been an important ally of humans since ancient times. However honeybees as well as their relatives, the wild bees and bumblebees, have it hard today: Pesticides have devastating impact as well as the intensification of agriculture and poorly structured agricultural landscapes affect the habitat of bees and other insects. And yet, bees produce more than just honey and wax: through their diligence, they ensure the continued existence of the diverse flora and fauna and make a crucial contribution to our food supply.

Around 80 percent of crops and wild plants depend on the work of bees. The economic value that insects generate by pollinating plants is estimated at more than two billion euros per year - above all the wild bee is the protagonist of biological diversity.



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## Teamwork with the bees

Insect protection is a task for the entire society. Many public institutions are setting an example for the preservation of insects and are involved in beekeeping on a part-time and collaborative basis.

The UBA also practices team-work with bees and started a participatory project within its series "Art and Environment". With two bee colonies moving into the outdoor facilities of UBA's Dessau headquarters, beekeeping workshops were organized for interested members of the public and employees. The project has a high degree of identification for those involved and offers a variety of opportunities for networking and exchange, e.g. with local beekeepers associations and other institutions and initiatives already engaged in beekeeping or dedicated to biodiversity conservation.

## Insect protection as a joint task

Insects need diversity. The project is also intended to make UBA's outdoor facilities more bee-friendly. In cooperation with the association "Ur-bane Farm Dessau", two raised beds for insect-friendly plants and herbs were built and cultivated by UBA employees.

There is a lot to do and observe when going through the bee year. The UBA beekeeping group is supported by a beekeeper from Dessau. Public lectures by external experts form further components of the project, for example on the effects of pesticides on the behavior and health of bees or on the referendum "Save the bees!" in Bavaria. In this way, UBA would like to contribute to ensuring that the fields and meadows continue to hum and buzz in the future!



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