

Pollinator Patch with Juliet from Hive Helpers

Farnham Bee Trail!

Farnham now has its first ever Bee Trail! We have worked in partnership with Farnham Town Council on this project, beginning last year identifying bee 'hotspots' throughout the town during the summer months. We were delighted in the many and varied locations hosting so many of our native pollinators. You will find our Bee Trail posts throughout the town, from Brightwells Living Walls to West Street Cemetery, from Gostrey Meadow to Farnham Park, and many points in between, including a few hidden bee havens! All you have to do is pick up a booklet from one of the hotspots (including Farnham Town Council Offices, Farnham Library, the Maltings and the Museum of Farnham) and follow the Trail on the map inside. You can do the whole Trail or just bits of it. You can pull out the centre pages and mark off each hotspot you visit using the bee rubbing plate which you will find on top of each post. Completed pages can be dropped off at the Council Offices and will go into a prize draw!

Erica, our beekeeper, will be leading a Bee Safari which takes in the whole trail, as part of the Farnham Walking Festival, on Thursday 29 May, 2-5pm, meeting at Gostrey Meadow bandstand. Further details at: <https://www.farnham.gov.uk/events/categories/walking-festival> We will also be offering free Bee Safaris during the summer holidays especially for families, thanks to funding from Farnham Town Council.

Bee of the month – Wool carder bee

The wool carder bee (*Anthidium manicatum*) is a solitary bee, meaning that she does not live in a colony like honey bees and bumblebees, but builds a nest and lays her eggs singly which she provisions with nectar and pollen, to emerge as adult bees the following spring. Wool carder bees are so called because the females collect the tiny hairs on plant leaves and stems, roll them up into woolly balls, and line their nests with them. Like all solitary bees, they don't carry their pollen in baskets like honey bees and bumblebees, but all over their bodies which makes them very efficient pollinators. They are dark bees with yellow markings up the sides of the abdomen.



Wool carder bee on *Stachys* by Alex Potts

Pollinator plant of the month – Lamb's ears

Lamb's ears (*Stachys byzantine*) are very attractive to wool carder bees as they have soft, furry grey-green leaves, hence the common name. They have silvery flower spikes with small pink flowers. They prefer full sun but are pretty tough and cope with most conditions.

For a comprehensive list of plants for pollinators, visit <https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators> and download the garden plants list.