

# The three most common issues that affect the Blue Orchard Mason Bee

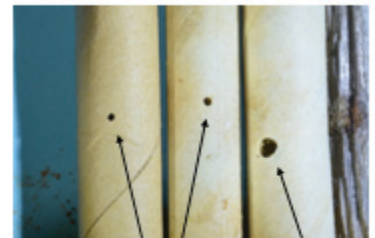
1. **Mites are the most common issue.** They are a white, almost translucent looking insect; the yellow material is their shed skins. They will eat all the food starving the young bees. With thousands of them present, **they can attach themselves to the hatched mason bee making it too heavy to fly.**



2. **Chalkbrood is a fungus** that can be ingested by the larva of a mason bee. **The fungus kills the larva. The mason bee never develops beyond the larval stage.** Do not break open the dry larva as this may further spread the fungus if present. Chalkbrood is the primary reason a bleach wash is recommended when harvesting the cocoons.

3. **A parasitic wasp - "Mono"** is the third most common threat to the mason bee cocoon. Minimize this threat by taking the tubes and blocks filled with cocoons inside on June 1st. Place your tubes and/or blocks in a paper bag that has been folded over and stapled shut. Put the paper bag with the tubes and blocks in your garage until October - early November when you will harvest the cocoons. These wasps are tiny, so you are unlikely to see them. You may however see the holes they have drilled into the cocoon.

## Parasitic Wasps & Entry Holes



Wasp holes

Dermestid beetle hole



Wasp holes in cocoons



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