

Lyis: *Spring Bee Pots* For Orchard Bees and Other Early Pollinators

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 LyisForestry

1 Why These Pots Matter

Early spring is a critical time for orchard bees, especially mason bees (*Osmia* spp.). As temperatures warm, the adults emerge from their cocoons, mate, and begin searching for flowers. The female must gather pollen and nectar, build nest chambers, and lay the next generation, all within a short adult life.

That means a gap in bloom can become a gap in reproduction.

These pots are planted with spring bulbs that bloom in sequence, helping bridge the hungry weeks between first emergence and the arrival of heavier dandelion and orchard bloom.

2 The Bee Life Cycle in Spring

1. Emergence

When spring weather becomes mild enough, adult bees chew out of their cocoons. At this stage they need immediate access to flowers for energy.

2. Feeding and Mating

Fresh nectar gives flying energy. Pollen provides protein. The female must build up strength quickly.

3. Nesting

After mating, the female begins laying eggs in holes or tubes. Each egg chamber is packed with a pollen-and-nectar provision for the larva.

4. Provisioning the Next Generation

This is why pollen matters so much. Nectar fuels the adult. Pollen feeds the young. A flower that gives both is more valuable than one that is mostly nectar.

3 What Is in These Pots

Crocus chrysanthus — Snow Crocus

One of the first major spring flowers in these pots. Excellent early pollen source, with nectar as well. This is especially useful just after bee emergence.

Crocus tommasinianus — Tommie Crocus

Another early crocus that helps extend the crocus window. It keeps food available after the first snow crocuses begin and before later spring flowers take over.

***Scilla forbesii* / *Chionodoxa* — Glory of the Snow**

Bridges the crocus season into the next wave. Useful as a nectar-rich transition flower.

***Muscari armeniacum* — Grape Hyacinth**

Blooms later and lasts well. Helps carry pollinators further through spring while nesting continues.

4 Why Crocus Is Especially Valuable

Not all early bulbs are equal.

Crocuses are especially useful because they provide real pollen as well as nectar. That makes them better matched to the stage when orchard bees are emerging, feeding, mating, and provisioning nests.

By contrast, flowers such as snowdrops and Siberian squill can still be useful, but crocus is often more important as an early pollen source.

5 Expected Bloom Sequence

- **Early spring:** *Crocus chrysanthus*
- **Following soon after:** *Crocus tommasinianus*
- **Next bridge:** Glory of the Snow
- **Later spring:** *Muscari armeniacum*
- **Then:** dandelions, fruit trees, and the broader spring landscape

Local weather, exposure, and pot warmth can shift the exact order and timing.

6 Please Leave the Dandelions

Once dandelions begin flowering, they become one of the major food sources of mid-spring.

If lawns are cut too early, a large part of the bee food supply disappears just when many females are actively nesting.

Best practice:

- let the dandelions flower for a while,
- allow bees to use them,
- then mow later.

7 What You Are Buying

Spring Starter Pots

Single-species pots for a simple splash of spring colour.

Pot of Spring

A mixed pot with a sequence of bloom over several weeks.

Glorious Pot of Spring

Our deluxe layered pot, designed to carry pollinators through more of the spring season.

8 After Flowering

- Keep leaves until they yellow naturally.
- The leaves recharge the bulb for next year.
- Plant the bulbs in the ground after the season if desired.
- Over time, they can help build a more pollinator-friendly landscape.