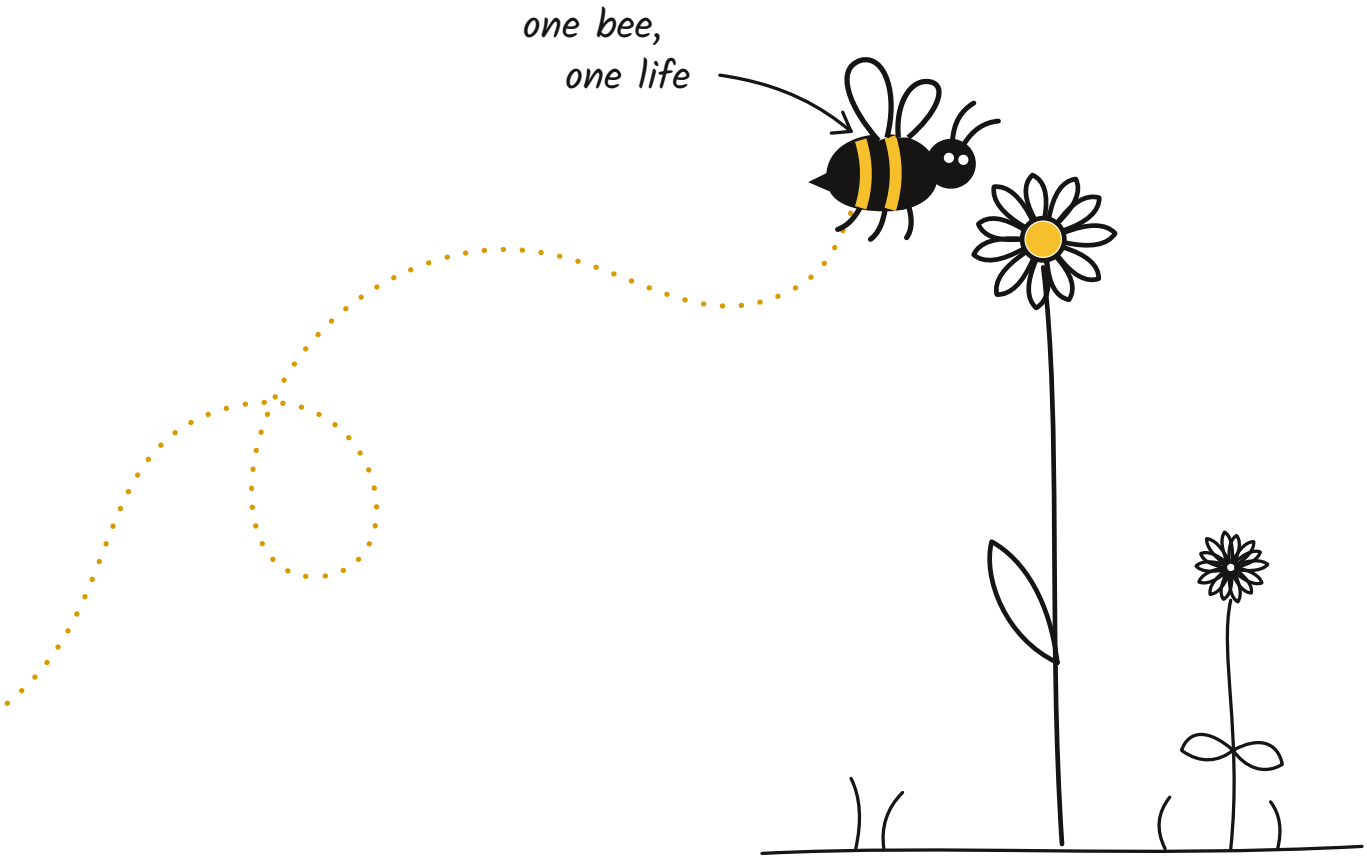
a small guide to keep

The Bee Guide

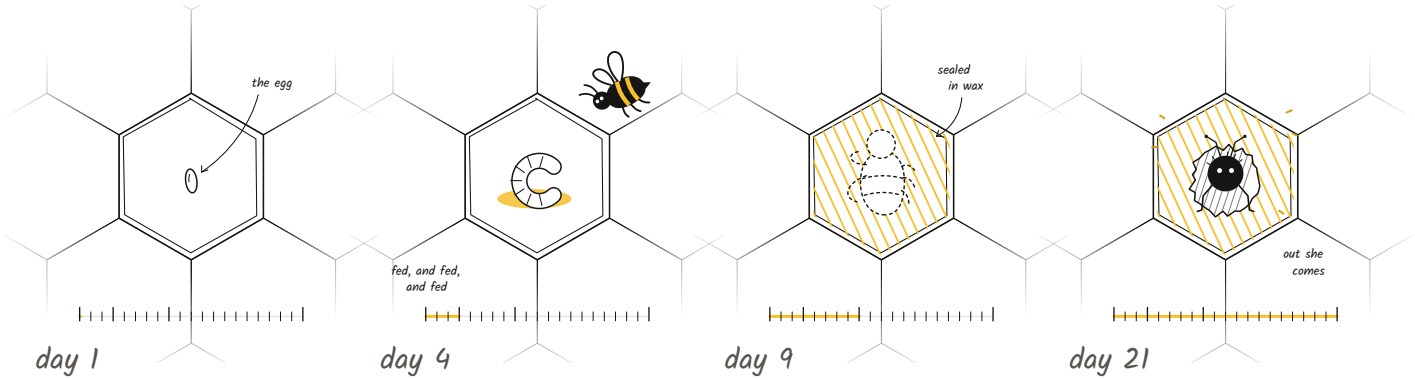
Her life from egg to forager, what to plant through the year, and six small things you can do for bees this weekend.



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twenty-one days, then about six weeks

Her life



day 1
An egg
Laid by the queen at the bottom of a wax cell. Smaller than a grain of rice.

day 4
A larva
Hatches into a white grub. Nurse bees feed her again and again.

day 9
Sealed in
The cell is capped with wax. Inside, legs, wings and eyes take shape.

day 21
Out she comes
She chews through the lid, fully grown, and starts work straight away.

Her jobs, in order

About three weeks inside the hive, then the rest of her life outside.



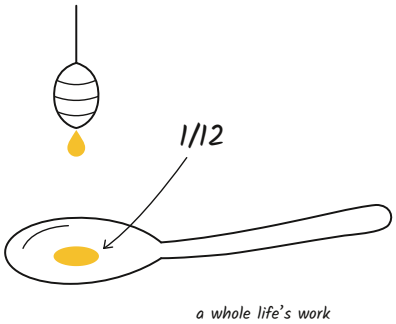
first
Cleaner

next
Nurse

then
Builder

then
Guard

last
Forager



a whole life's work

A twelfth of a teaspoon

That is roughly how much honey one worker makes in her whole life. A single jar holds the life's work of hundreds of bees.

food from February to January

Plant for every season

Bees fly whenever it is mild enough, so the gaps matter as much as the summer. Pick one or two from each row and nothing goes hungry.

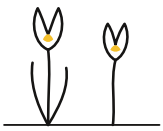
Late winter *February to March*	Snowdrop, crocus, hellebore, pussy willow
Spring *April to May*	Fruit blossom, dandelion, flowering currant, red dead-nettle
Early summer *June*	Foxglove, chives, borage, comfrey
High summer *July to August*	Lavender, marjoram, bramble, knapweed
Autumn *September to October*	Ivy, Michaelmas daisy, sedum, single dahlias
Winter *November to January*	Mahonia, winter-flowering honeysuckle, winter heather

Choose single flowers over doubles. Frilly double flowers often hide their nectar and pollen where bees can't reach.



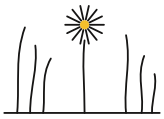
stick this on the fridge

Six small things

- [ ] 

Plant for every season

Something in flower from early spring to late autumn means food all year.

- [ ] 

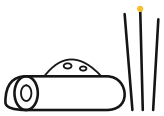
Let the grass grow

Mow less and leave a patch long for dandelions and clover.

- [ ] 

Put down the spray

Skip pesticides and weedkillers, in the garden and on the patio.

- [ ] 

Leave a little mess

Bare soil, hollow stems and a log pile for solitary bees.

- [ ] 

Set out water

A shallow dish with a few stones to stand on.

- [ ] 

Keep old trees standing

A hollow trunk might be a wild colony's home.

why it matters

In October 2025 the IUCN listed wild honeybee colonies in the European Union as Endangered. Across Europe, 172 of 1,928 wild bee species assessed are now threatened, nearly one in ten. Britain has around 270 kinds of bee, and most of them are wild.

IUCN, "Mounting risks threaten survival of wild European pollinators", 11th October 2025. https://iucn.org/press-release/202510/mounting-risks-threaten-survival-wild-european-pollinators-iucn-red-list

The Conversation, "Wild honeybees now officially listed as endangered in the EU", October 2025. https://theconversation.com/wild-honeybees-now-officially-listed-as-endangered-in-the-eu-267239

National Bee Unit, "Wild bees in the UK" fact sheet. https://www.nationalbeeunit.com/assets/PDFs/3_Resources_for_beekeepers/Fact_Sheets/Fact_08_Wildbees.pdf

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