

WiBee: THE WISCONSIN WILD BEE APP

A Quick Guide to Collecting Data for No Mow May

How the App Works: We designed the WiBee mobile app to be easy to use with just a little preparation. This guide describes a simple protocol to collect high quality data on the wild bee community in your area. With the app, you will observe a 3 x 3 foot area containing flowers and record the number of flower visits that you observe over a 5 minute period. A single bee that visits multiple flowers will be counted multiple times!

How to Get Started:

1. Download the WiBee app to your phone (Google Play or Apple's App Store)
2. Create your user profile
3. Learn the survey protocol below and the five bee morphogroups
4. Start surveying bees!



Photo: Anne Readel

STEP 1: PREPARE TO SURVEY

- » Determine which part of your lawn to use for your No Mow May WiBee surveys. Half will be mowed as usual and half will remain unmowed through May. These areas should be immediately adjacent to each other (e.g., mow half of your front lawn).
- » The designated "mowed" area should be mowed at least once before you conduct any surveys.
- » To gather the best data about wild bee activity, plan to complete a minimum of 3 surveys per day on 3 different days for both the mowed and unmowed portions of the lawn (18 surveys total).

STEP 2: SELECT A 3 X 3 FOOT AREA TO OBSERVE

- » Survey only when bees are active. The weather should be sunny or bright (you should see your shadow), ~60 degrees F or warmer, and not too windy.
- » Select a 3 by 3 foot area to complete a survey. Ideally, there should be at least one blooming flower in your survey area, so choose the location based on the presence of blooming flowers, not based on the presence of bees. The bees will come to the flowers! If you can't find any flowers, indicate this on the first page of the WiBee survey.
- » If possible, choose different locations in your lawn to conduct your 3 surveys (but if you are limited by flowers, you can observe the same spot each time).

STEP 3: COMPLETE A 5-MINUTE BEE SURVEY

- » Use the app to record EVERY TIME A POLLINATOR VISITS A FLOWER. Tap the appropriate category each time a pollinator (bee or non-bee) lands on the center of a flower.
- » A single bee will often visit multiple flowers in your observation area. For example, if one bumble bee visits 5 flowers in your observation area, record 5 bumble bee flower visits in the app.
- » It's okay if you don't observe any bees during the 5 minute survey. It's important for us to record zero-visit data as well.

