



Pests, Small Predators of Mason Bee

Parasitic wasp: *Monodontomerus*

(more likely to attack mason bees)

- *What it is:* Also known as "mono", monodontomerus is a small black parasitic wasp. It looks about the size of a gnat (3/16" or 4mm) and hovers at nesting holes. It is attracted to the smell of mason bee cocoons.
- *What it does:* Mono lays its eggs within developing bee larva. Mono females typically deposit their eggs through the side of a thin-walled nesting material, but has been known to get through back ends of wood trays as well. They are able to insert their ovipositor through mud or other thinner material. The bee larva spins its cocoon, and then is consumed from the inside out. Unfortunately, the mono larva are now nicely encased in a mason bee cocoon, which is tough to discern apart from normal cocoons. The wasp's development time is very short and they chew out through the muddy mason bee chamber and attack other uncontaminated larva elsewhere in your nesting material.
- *What to do:* Check your BeeGuard Bag periodically. If you find that mono emerged, you can easily kill them through the bag to prevent further damage from this pest. An alternative is to "candle" your cocoons one by one - a mass of small bodies may be mono larvae.

Carpet Beetle Larva

(Attacks mason bees)

- *What it is:* Carpet beetle larvae are hairy and look like caterpillars.
- *What it does:* The carpet beetle larva eat mason bee cocoons. Mud plugs or divisions don't concern them. They are known to be scavengers and may just follow after another insect has ravaged your tube or reed.
- *What to do:* Take the nesting material down after the mason bees are finished for the season. Store the holes upright in a BeeGuard Bag in a shed or garage. During harvest, as you sort through the nesting material and find this pest, eliminate them.

