



# INSECTS in the GARDEN



*Apis mellifera* or European honey bee is a social insect that lives in a hive. You probably see lots of honey bees collecting nectar and pollen spring through fall. They turn flower nectar into honey so that they have food to eat in the winter to keep them from freezing. You may not expect to find honey bees working on a sunny winter day. But if the temperature climbs into the 50's, then look for them on winter blooming flowers.

Bees are excellent pollinators. As they collect nectar, pollen grains attach to their bodies and they carry these grains to other flowers. Female honey bees store pollen to carry back to the hive in a hind leg basket or corbicula (see the bee pictured above). The pollen provides bees with protein.

- European honey bee on:
1. camellia in January
  2. crocus in February
  3. snowdrop in January