

SWEAT BEE

(*Lasioglossum* spp.)

Bug of the Month



***Lasioglossum* is the largest genus of bees, with over 1,800 species worldwide.** Around 280 species can be found in North America and 72 of these have been found in Pennsylvania. Part of the Halictid family, known as the sweat bees, their color can range from black to brown to blues or greens.

Lasioglossum bees can often be missed or mistaken because of their small size, ranging from 0.1 to 0.4 inches (3-10mm) long. Because of

their small size, they have often been overlooked as pollinators. However, they have been shown to be just as efficient as larger bodied bees due to their high abundance, the time they spend on flowers, and some species' ability to buzz pollinate, just like bumble bees. When foraging, these bees carry dry pollen on scopa on their hind legs. Scopa (Latin for "broom") is a dense collection of hairs designed to hold pollen.

Most *Lasioglossum* species are

ground nesters, but some nest in rotten logs. Species in this genus exhibit a range of social behaviors, including solitary, communal, and sometimes social habits.

Lasioglossum bees are active from early spring to summer, with some species active into the fall. So, keep an eye out this summer for these lovely little pollinators!

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