

York University “Bee Condos”



Located on the upper roof of the Carrot Green Roof is a small, maintenance-free bee "condo", a part of the larger research project by PhD student Scott MacIvor from York University. This condo will serve to examine the effects of urban land use and planning on the diversity and foraging of wild, cavity-nesting, solitary bees. Despite cities reputation of lacking biodiversity, bees are very abundant, and therefore represent a great model for investigating the ecology of urban spaces.

These bee condos have been set up at 210 locations across the city, including over 30 other green roofs. They are made of small paper tubes inside of a protective casing, and they attract cavity-nesting bees; approximately 20% of the bees found in the GTA. The bees produce larva in these cavities, which remain until the following year. The condos will be collected and opened in October to identify the different bees and the larvae are kept in growth chambers that mimic natural conditions. At their natural emergence times the following spring, the fully developed bees will be identified and released. The condos will be re-setup in the same location each year. The purpose of this project is to better integrate biodiversity-ecosystem functional relationships into the planning and design aspects of all scales of garden, green roof, and city initiatives.