



March at the Apiary

Spring is (almost) here, and the River District bees are slowly increasing their activity. March is a critical month as hives transition from winter to spring. After surviving the cold, many bees have depleted their resources and have smaller populations. Warmer days encourage the queen to lay more eggs, but sudden cold snaps can make it tough for the hive to keep larvae warm and fed. Beekeepers provide extra food and insulation to help them through these fluctuations until temperatures consistently rise above 10°C.

Despite winter challenges—high mite loads, storms, and freezing temperatures—the River District bees have fared well, with only a few hive losses. Now, they're enjoying nectar and pollen from crocuses, willow, snowdrops, and other early blooms. To keep them cozy, hives will retain their rain covers and insulation through early April.





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Beyond the apiary, queen bumblebees are emerging from hibernation, warming up their flight muscles, and starting new nests. These large, fuzzy pollinators—like the yellow-headed and orange-rumped bumblebees—are essential for native plants. Supporting them means planting pollen-rich flowers and preserving undisturbed nesting areas.

As temperatures rise and daylight increases, honeybee colonies will grow rapidly. With the help of supplemental pollen and sugar, some hives can double in size within a month.

Here's a peek inside a River District hive—those white sugar blocks provide emergency food and absorb excess moisture.

On your next sunny walk, keep an eye out for honeybees and bumblebees hard at work in the flowers!

