



Bird Bottles

Ceramic or clay bird bottles were popular in colonial times as a way to attract native songbirds like wrens and swallows for their insect eating abilities.

Wrens are prolific and persistent vocalists with a passion for song that is tough to match even among species known as "songbirds"! When first you see a wren in full song it is difficult to reconcile the size of the bird to the music you hear. It must be seen to be believed! **Price about \$24.**

Links to purchase bird bottles:

- ♦ <http://www.birdhouseofcapemay.com/birdhouses/williamsburg.htm> or Toll Free: 877.362.9200.
- ♦ <http://www.gardeners.com/> Search on "bird bottle".

Bee Houses



Bee houses are rather simple to build or they can be purchased through the mail. Bees are nature's tireless workers that gardeners admire for their ability to pollinate and assist plants in providing fruits, vegetables and seeds for next year's crops.

Of the more than 5,000 species of native bees, two of the most common are the blue orchard bee and the horn-faced bee. One-half to two-thirds the size of a honey bee, these passive bees live only six to eight weeks but will lay eggs in these houses. The eggs remain dormant through the fall and winter, and offspring emerge in the spring to pollinate our plants. **Prices from \$12-\$50.**

For links to purchasing bee houses:

- <http://www.earthlypursuits.com/LadyBug.htm>
- <http://www.backyardbirdsdiscoverycenter.com/products.php?cat=250>
- <http://www.beediverse.com/>

Toad Houses



If you would like to keep your garden pest free the natural way, place a toad house in your landscaping. Like ladybugs, praying mantises, and lacewings, toads provide excellent pest control without using chemicals. Toads eat up to 50 to 100 slugs, flies, cutworms, and grasshoppers per night, and up to 15,000 insects each season. During the day, toads need a dark and humid resting area away from the sun. A toad house is an excellent way to provide such an environment for your amphibious friend. In return, he will help keep your garden healthy and balanced. **Prices from \$20-\$50.**

For links to purchasing toad houses:

http://www.bestnest.com/bestnest/toad_houses.asp

<http://www.exterior-accents.com/frogtoadhouse.html>

<http://www.butterfly-gifts.com/toad-houses.html>

<http://www.onlinediscountmart.com/toad-houses.html>

Praying Mantis

These helpful insects work to keep your garden free of pests. Praying mantis will devour small flies, aphids, beetles, moths, and cutworms. The female praying mantis will lay groups of 12-400 eggs in a frothy liquid that turns to a hard protective case. Each case contains approx. 50-200 eggs. (This is how these insects survive the winter.)

Tie egg cases on low tree limbs and let these hungry critters go! Baby mantises emerge from the egg mass in the spring and often their first meal is a sibling. It takes an entire summer or growing season for a mantis to mature to adulthood and there is only one generation per year. One case treats up to a quarter of an acre and they are fascinating to watch! **Egg case prices from \$6-\$15.**



For links on purchasing praying mantis egg cases:

http://www.abetterplant.com/praying_mantis_page.htm