

### ***Conservation Technology for Megachilid bee Pollinators***

The megachilid bees (Hymenoptera; Megachilidae: >4000 spp.) are wild solitary bees that make their nests in hollow cavities in dead wood, cut ends in soft pith plant stems, cracks, crevices and tunnels in walls and in soils.. Megachilid bees are established and excellent pollinators in several crops and are contributing significantly in increasing crop yields and maintaining biodiversity. For sustaining their populations in any habitat, besides floral resources for food (pollen and nectar), these bees require suitable nesting shelters. More than 500 species of megachilid bees are known to occur in our country; however their populations are not maintained to desired levels for optimum pollination services. Reduction in nesting shelters and other resources in natural habitats due to agriculture intensification and injudicious use of pesticides are the key factors for declining pollinator populations, thus affecting pollination services by native bees. For supplementing pollination services to obtain higher crop yields and to reduce pressure on domesticated hive bees, conservation of wild native bees is essential.

#### **Advantages:**

- The devised nesting shelters are eco-friendly and can easily be placed in farming landscapes to conserve and augment populations of native megachilid bee pollinators for assured pollination.
- Devised nesting shelters are perennial, long lasting and easy to maintain.
- Installation of artificial nesting devices would help in creating awareness and concern among general people and farmers to conserve native insect pollinators.