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BEE COURTEOUS, BEE SAFE

You may attract more than butterflies to your garden — other pollinators, such as bees, may also appreciate your efforts.

The Montréal Insectarium publishes an excellent pamphlet called *Don't Get Stung*, which features information on how to appreciate, recognize and protect oneself from wasps and bees. Visit the website at http://www2.ville.montreal.qc.ca/insectarium/gareaudard/site_en/index.html to download a copy, or call the Service des publications de l'Hôpital Sainte-Justine at (514) 345-4671 to order copies. This pamphlet includes detailed information, such as:

- why wasps and bees sting;
- different types of bees and wasps;
- what to do if wasps are bothering you;
- what to do if you find a wasp or bumble bee nest; and
- what to do if you get stung.

Here are some useful tips from this publication:

- Bees and wasps tend to sting because they are defending themselves or their nests. Some bees and wasps are social insects that live in colonies in nests. If they spot you making noise or making wild gestures, they can interpret this as a threat and sting you!
- Don't make sudden moves if a wasp is bothering you. Let it leave or gently shoo it away.
- Wear long-sleeved tops and long pants outdoors, with hair tied back.
- Don't walk with bare feet; some nests are underground.
- Don't bother bees or wasps or other biting insects. Stay away from wasp or bee nests. If you see a swarm, contact local authorities.
- Follow your school's procedures on what to do when a student is stung by stinging insects. One point to keep in mind is that redness, itching and swelling around the site of a sting are often normal, but a reaction in an area other than the sting site is not. Reactions such as a rash, a swollen face, a changed voice, difficulty swallowing or breathing, weakness, persistent vomiting, or shock may require immediate medical attention.