

公众号: Weetart

LEVEL  
2

## National Geographic Readers: Bees

By: Laura Marsh

What's that buzzing around? It's a busy bee! Find out what makes bees so busy.

**6-8**

Age Range

**15-30 mins**

Length

**580L**

Lexile<sup>®</sup> Measure

**3.3**

AR Level

# Bees

Laura Marsh

 NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

Washington, D.C.

## Dear Parents,

Children are naturally curious about the world around them, and curiosity is a powerful motivation for reading. Studies show that informational reading is critical to success in school. National Geographic Kids Readers allow you to feed your children's interests and create readers who not only can read, but also want to read!

To sustain children's excitement about reading, we have created a special program called **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS SUPER READERS**. As kids read each National Geographic Kids Reader, they cross off its picture on a free National Geographic Kids Super Readers poster that parents can download from [kids.nationalgeographic.com/superreaders](http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/superreaders).

Throughout the process, kids and parents go to the website and download specially designated prizes that reward their effort. Kids can have even more reading fun online, with lively book-related activities, quizzes and games, fascinating excerpts, and sneak previews of upcoming books.

The National Geographic Kids Super Readers program appeals to kids' love of accomplishment while providing them with incentives to keep reading. When the reading experience is fun, children learn more and achieve more. What could be better than that?

Sincerely,

Mariam Jean Dreher  
Professor of Reading Education  
University of Maryland, College Park

# Table of Contents

Buzzzzz!	4
Helpful Bees	6
Pollen Power	8
7 Cool Facts About Bees	12
A Bee or Not a Bee?	14
A World of Bees	16
Home Sweet Home	20
Busy as a Bee	24
Keeping Bees	28
Quiz Whiz	30
Glossary	32



# Buzzzz!

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Q

What kind of bee is hard to understand?

A mumblebee!

A

Outside the sun is shining.  
The flowers are blooming.  
And the bees  
are buzzing.

When some people see bees, they run. Others might not notice the bees. But let's stop and take a closer look. Bees are helpful. Our world needs bees!



# Helpful Bees

公众号: Wecancan

Bees help both people and plants. Honeybees make honey and beeswax. People use these things in lots of ways.



A bee sits on the flower of a strawberry plant.



Beeswax is used to make candles and cleaning supplies.

Honey is sweet and delicious.

All kinds of bees help plants make seeds. Seeds can grow into new plants. Some of those plants give us fruits and vegetables. We can thank bees for strawberries, apples, almonds, tomatoes, and many other foods.



# Pollen Power

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When a bee lands on a flower, the flower's pollen rubs off on the bee. Pollen sticks to tiny hairs on the bee's body.

## Buzz Word



**POLLEN:** A sticky, yellow powder made by flowers

This bee has pollen all over its body.



When the bee travels to another flower, pollen from the bee brushes off onto the new flower. This is called pollination (pol-uh-NAY-shun). Now the new flower can start to make seeds.

A bee's leg has special hairs that form a basket. The bee brushes pollen into the basket. Then it flies back to the nest. This pollen is used as food for baby bees.



tongue on a bumblebee

Bees collect nectar from flowers too. They drink nectar with their tongues. Some bees make honey out of nectar. These bees are called honeybees.



These pollen baskets are filled with pollen. Only female bees have them.

empty pollen basket

**Buzz Word**   
**NECTAR:** A sweet, sugary juice that flowers make

# 7 COOL FACTS About Bees

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4



Bees can see colors. They are most likely to land on flowers that are blue, purple, or yellow.

1



The garden bumblebee has a tongue that is as long as its body.

5



Farmers often hire beekeepers to bring bees to their fields. The bees pollinate the farmers' crops.

2



Humans collected honey from bees as early as 6000 B.C.

6



Honeybees do a dance called "the waggle." Scientists think that the dance shows other bees in the hive where the best nectar is.

3



Bees have four wings—two large wings and two small wings.

7



About one-third of the food on our planet grows because of bees' pollination.

# A Bee or Not a Bee?

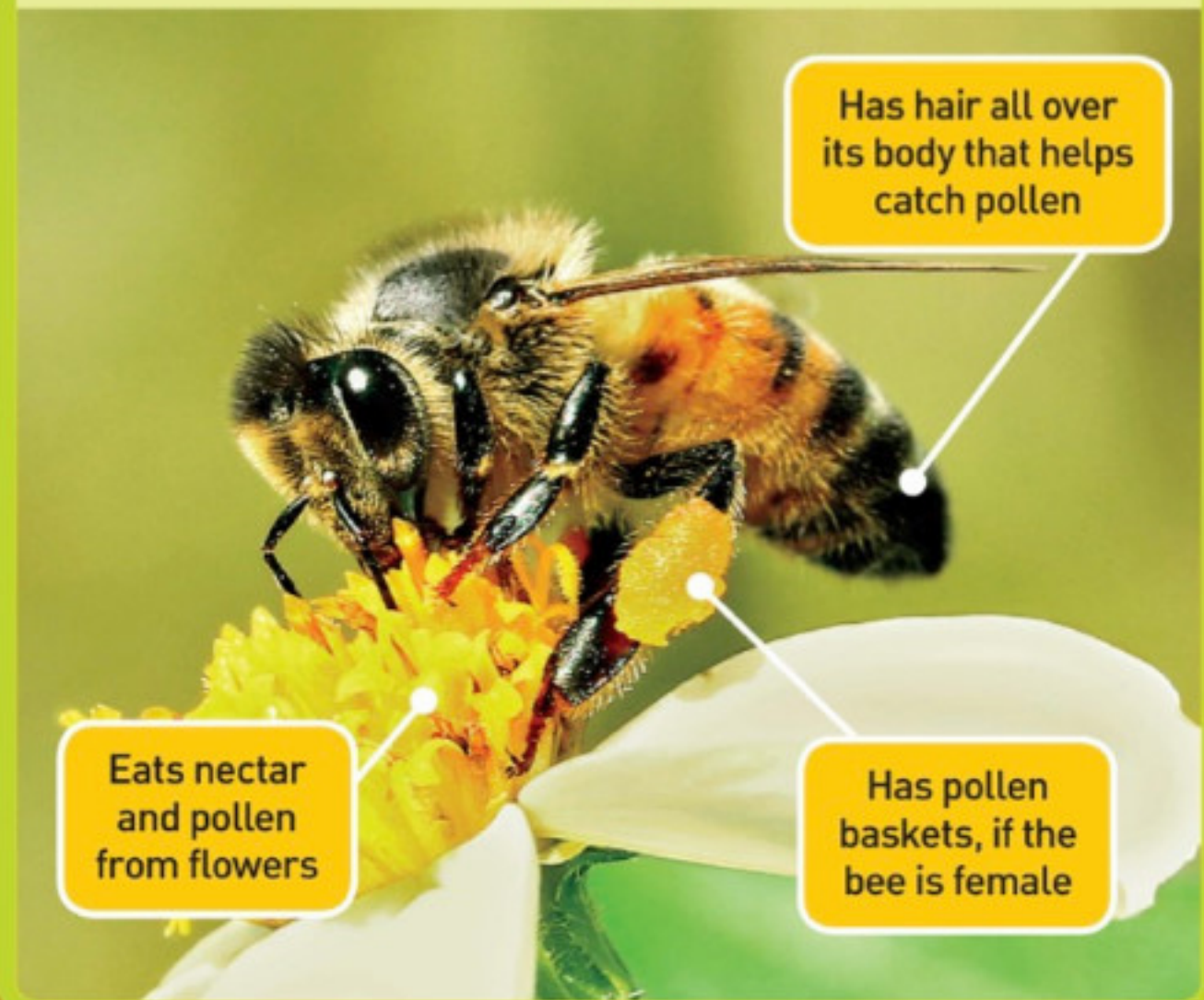
公众号: Wecancan

Q What do you call a wasp? A A wanna-bee!

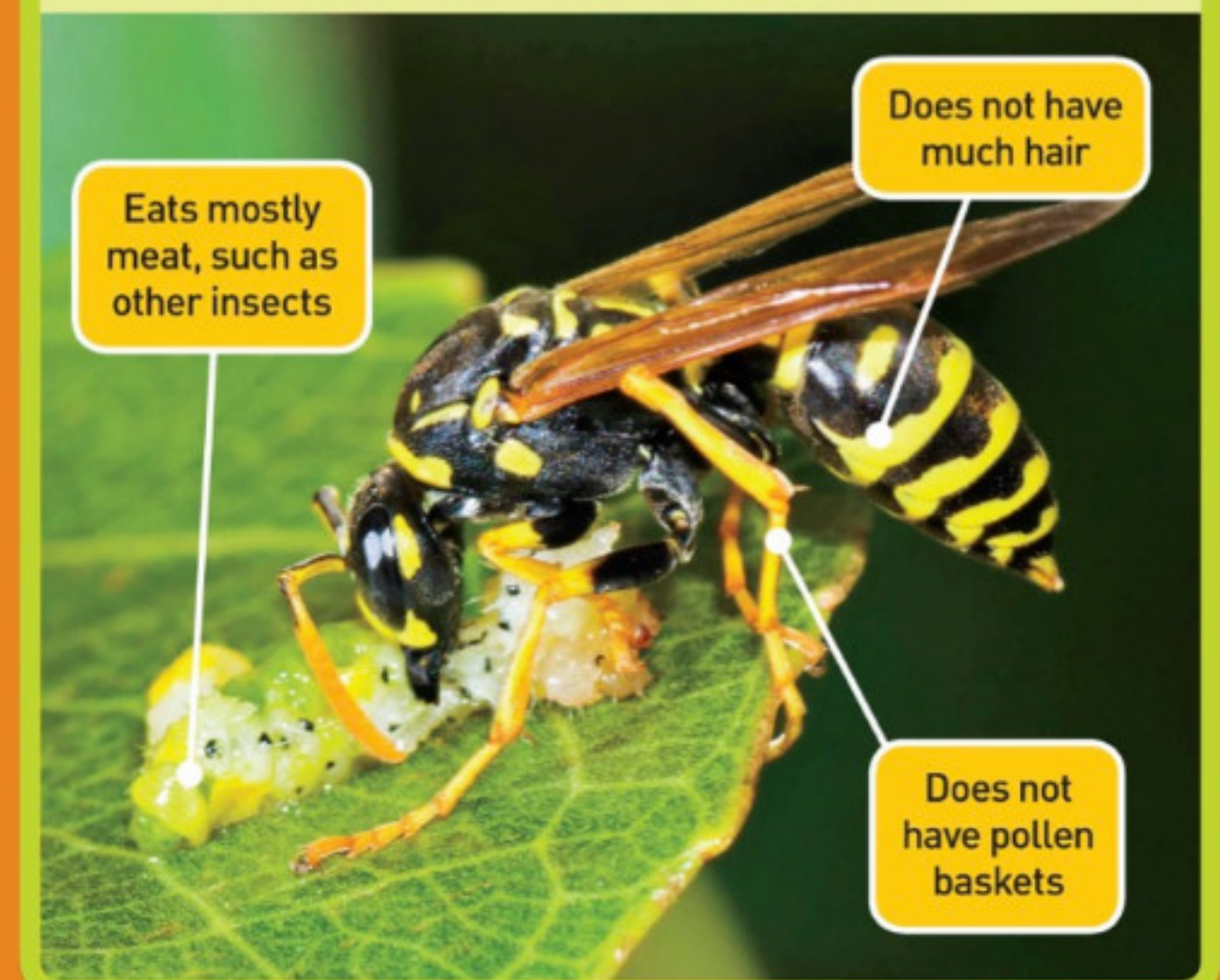
It's easy to mistake other insects for bees. They often look alike.

But there are ways to tell them apart. Take a closer look at a bee and a yellow jacket wasp, which is not a bee. Do you see what's different?

## Bee



## Yellow Jacket Wasp



# A World of Bees

公众号 Wecanacan



Most bees are solitary bees.

About 20,000 kinds of bees live on Earth. All bees are either solitary (SOL-uh-ter-ee) bees or social (SOH-shul) bees.

A solitary bee makes a nest for its young. The nest is inside a hole in the ground, in wood, in walls, or in plant stems. Solitary bees collect pollen. But they do not make honey or beeswax.

**Buzz Words**

**SOLITARY BEES:**  
Bees that live alone

**SOCIAL BEES:** Bees that live in a group

Social bees live with many other bees. A group of social bees is called a colony (KOL-uh-nee). A colony of bees lives in a hive.

Honeybees are one kind of social bee. As many as 50,000 honeybees may live in one hive. Bees care for their young there. They make and store honey in the hive too.

**Buzz Word**



**HIVE:** An open space within a tree, structure, or box where social bees live together



honeybee hive

# Home Sweet Home

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Inside the hive, honeybees build with beeswax. The bees mold the wax into six-sided shapes called cells. Lots of cells together make a honeycomb.



## Buzz Word

**HONEYCOMB:** A sheet of six-sided cells made of beeswax



The bees put nectar from flowers into some of the cells. As the nectar gets thicker, it turns into honey. Bees eat the honey for food.



Each cell has one egg.



Adult bees feed and care for the young.



These young are almost ready to come out of the cells.

Other cells in the hive hold bee eggs. There is one egg in each cell. The eggs hatch. The young bees grow and change. After 21 to 24 days, the young bees become adults.



A bee starts as an egg and becomes an adult in about three weeks.

# Busy as a Bee

Every honeybee in the colony has a special job. These jobs keep the colony healthy and strong.

There is only one queen bee. She is bigger than the other bees. She lays all of the eggs—up to 1,500 per day!

Worker bees surround the queen. She is the largest bee in the middle.




There are two other kinds of bees in the colony.

Drone bees are male bees. Their job is to help the queen make eggs.

Worker bees have many jobs. These females feed the queen and care for the young. They build the hive and make honey. On long flying trips, they collect pollen and nectar.

They also guard the hive against enemies. Whew, that's a lot of work!



This worker bee is collecting pollen.

# Keeping Bees

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Q Why did the bee get married?

A Because he found his honey!

Some humans build honeybee hives out of wooden boxes. Beekeepers take care of the hives and collect the honey.

Beekeepers also check the bee colonies to make sure they are healthy. Beekeepers know how important bees are to our world.



## Bee Aware

Here are some tips for staying safe around bees:

- Move slowly. Don't wave your arms or jump around. If a bee thinks it's being attacked, it may sting.
- If a bee comes near you, stand still or walk slowly away.
- Do not swat at a bee. Let it fly away on its own.
- Do not disturb any bee nest or honeybee hive. The bees will defend their home and may sting an attacker.
- If you are stung by a bee, put ice on the sting.
- If you leave bees alone, they will probably leave you alone.

Beekeepers wear special clothes to protect them from stings.

# QUIZ WHIZ

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How much do you know about bees? After reading this book, probably a lot. Take this quiz and find out.

Answers are at the bottom of page 31.

1 What do honeybees do in a hive?

- A. live with other honeybees
- B. raise their young
- C. make and store honey
- D. all of the above

1



2

2 What is pollen?

- A. a kind of bee
- B. a powder made by flowers
- C. a kind of plant
- D. a place where bees live



3 Social bees live \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. with other bees
- B. alone
- C. with ants
- D. with wasps

3



4



4 Bees are helpful because they \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. make honey
- B. help plants make seeds
- C. make beeswax
- D. all of the above

5

5 There is only one of these in a bee colony.

- A. a drone
- B. a worker
- C. a queen
- D. a cell



6

6 What's the name of the honeybee's dance?

- A. the waggle
- B. the hustle
- C. the wiggle
- D. the chicken



7

7 What does a bee do with its long tongue?

- A. brushes pollen into baskets
- B. drinks nectar
- C. attracts the queen
- D. sticks it out at other bees





**HIVE:** An open space within a tree, structure, or box where social bees live together



**HONEYCOMB:** A sheet of six-sided cells made of beeswax



**NECTAR:** A sweet, sugary juice that flowers make



**POLLEN:** A sticky, yellow powder made by flowers



**SOCIAL BEES:** Bees that live in a group



**SOLITARY BEES:** Bees that live alone