

Squeaks and I are enjoying a beautiful day outside the fort! Oh look there's a bee! Oh! It landed on that flower! Let's watch and see what it does. We'll get a little closer, but not bother it!

There it goes, buzzing off to find another flower! You know, bees are some of my favourite animals to watch! They always seem so... Busy! But do you ever wonder what they do all day? You might already know that bees are INSECTS like ants and beetles. Like all insects have 6 legs and 3 body parts. In Bees these body parts are often **brown or yellow** and sometimes there straight with both colours. Bees also have **four wings**. When their wings move back and forth fast enough to make them fly, they make a **buzzing sound** that we think of when we hear the word bee. And there's another part of the bee that you've probably heard about: the **stinger**.

But not all bees have stingers. And the ones that do, don't sting unless they have a really good reason to... Like when they're frightened, or to protect themselves, or to chase Other animals away from their nest. There are lots of different kinds of bees.

But the two kinds that you've probably seen most often are bumblebees and honeybees. **Bumblebees** are easy to spot, because they're big and fluffy. **Honey bees** are a little smaller and don't look like they're covered in fuzz the way bumblebees do. Both kinds of bees make honey, but bumblebees only make a little, while honeybees produce a lot of that sticky stuff. And both kind of bees also live in big group inside nest that we call hive. Do you want to see inside a Honey Bee Hive? let's have a look!

This bee is the **Queen**. No she doesn't wear a crown, but she does have a really important job. She stays in the hive all day and lays eggs... Lots of them! After three or 4-days these eggs will hatch, and eventually grow into adult honey bees. Most of the other bees that live in the hive are **workers** and worker bee... Yup, they do almost all the work. There are lots of jobs for them to do... Like helping to **build** the hive, and keeping the hive clean. But their main job, the one they do almost all of the time, is to **look for food**. That's what the bee that we saw was doing... She was getting food from that flower. When a worker bee lands on a flower, she drinks a sweet juice from the inside of the flower. This juice is called **nectar**. While she's on the flower, the bee also brushes up against the yellow dust that the flower makes. This dust is called **pollen**. So while she's gathering nectar, the bee also gets covered with pollen as she moves around on the flower.

When the bee has as much nectar and pollen as she can carry, she flies back to the hive. She feeds some of the nectar and the pollen to the baby bees and to the Queen.... and then she turns most of the nectar into honey. Bees fly back and forth all day collecting nectar and pollen from flowers, and taking it back to the hive. When it gets dark they go back to the Hive and rest. And then they're up early the next morning to start again!

If you've ever heard the expression "busy as a bee" now you know why we say that! So, if you see a bee, you don't have to be afraid of it... but do leave her alone and give her a lot of the room to get her work done. And that work includes more than making honey... Have something to do with pollen.

Buzzing bees can be found all over the world. There are lots of types of bees: from honey bees to bumblebees (CALABRONE). Solitary bees like carpenter bees and mining bees live alone while social bees like the most common honeybee live in **large colonies**. Each bee has a job. The important **queen bee** lays lots of eggs and they live a long time; **drone**



bees are male and busy **Worker Bees** are female. Bees use **wax** to build a **hive**. Here are some hives in the wild and here is a **beekeeper hive**. Can you see the Honeycomb structure? And busy Worker Bees take care of the Young, clean the Hive, groom the Queen and they collect pollen and nectar from flowers. With their long tongues they slurp the sweet pollen and nectar collecting the pollen on pollen basket on their bodies; they make **honey** with the nectar and **pollen** is used to feed the whole colony. Did you know bees are some of the most important animals on the planet? because they help pollinate flowers, fruits and vegetables. This means they help other plants grow. so you can thank peas for your yummy fruit and vegetables.

