

Bees and Wasps: A Buzzing Case of Mistaken Identities

At first glance, these black and yellow insects may look alike, but up-close, they are not the same at all. Bees and wasps differ in many ways, both in their behaviour and appearance. Use our guide, your sense of observation, and your curious inner scientist, to discover how to tell bees and wasps apart and to learn why they are an important part of our ecosystem.

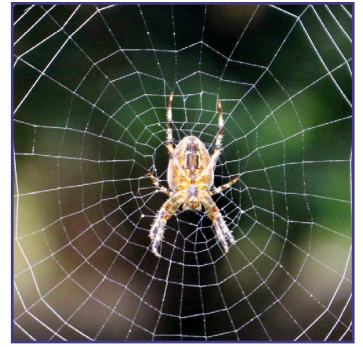
HONEYBEES	VERSUS	WASPS		
	<p style="text-align: center;">APPEARANCE</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Hairy ~ Brown abdomen ~ Fuller bodies ~ Pollen baskets on hind legs </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Smooth ~ Yellow and black stripes ~ Cylindrical body ~ No pollen baskets on hind legs </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Hairy ~ Brown abdomen ~ Fuller bodies ~ Pollen baskets on hind legs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Smooth ~ Yellow and black stripes ~ Cylindrical body ~ No pollen baskets on hind legs 	
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DIET

Nectar and pollen

Adults collect insect larvae and spiders for young, adults eat sugary substance secreted by larvae-then forage for high-protein/sugar foods



ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE

Our most important pollinator

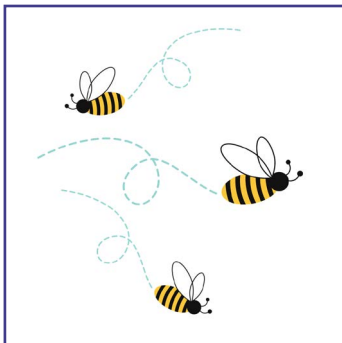
Control insect pests such as caterpillars, grubs and aphids



BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS HUMANS

Docile and will only sting if defending their nest or provoked, not attracted to human food

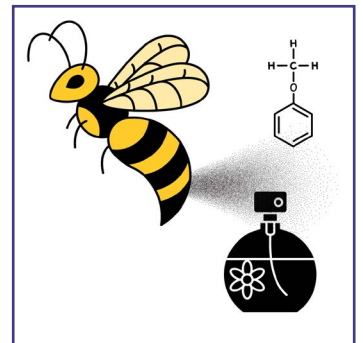
Can be aggressive, more likely to sting, attracted to human food (especially high-sugar and high-protein food in the late summer and fall).



COMMUNICATION

Elaborate dances to communicate nectar sources

Communicate through drumming and pheromones



Pollinators Please!

Pollinator gardens aren't well-manicured gardens, they are messy, beautiful, and colourful! Create a pollinator garden and invite bees to your balcony, backyard, roof-top, community garden or green space in your school.

Read **Pollinators Please!** for step-by-step instructions on how to boost native bee populations in your local area.

More fun STEM resources available here: <https://scientistsinschool.ca/resources/>