

Suzy's World

Bees - Why do bees make honey?

Fact

- Bees make honey for their bee community to survive.
- The honey comes from nectar found inside flowers in the flowering season when the weather is warm.
- The nectar the bees collect from flowers and store in their hives changes into honey. Bees eat this honey in the cold winter months when there is little food available from flowers.
- Bees also eat pollen (which is sometimes called bee bread).
- Different bees have different roles to help keep their community survive. Some bees collect honey, others store it and others keep the Queen bee fed. A worker bee does all these jobs at some stage in its life.



Do you know

- In winter beekeepers give their hives honey to help the bees survive.
- In New Zealand we have strict quarantine regulations about bringing honey into our country because the honey could contain bee diseases that we don't have here. NZ exports Queen Bees and is noted for the bees being disease free.
- Honeybees can only sting once. The barb in their sting gets hooked under your skin and the only way for the bee to get free is to tear itself away and leave it's bottom behind (the bee soon dies.)
- Scout bees do a bee waggle dance to show the other bees in the hive where to go to get nectar.
- The wax cells in a hive are made from wax that the bee produces in its body.
- The bee brings the nectar back to the hive in one of its two stomachs then spits the nectar into the wax cells where it will stay until the water has evaporated and it has turned into honey. The bee then makes some wax to cover it.

Experiments you can do

Your mission is to find out whether the worker bees are male or female and what their job is in the hive. Remember the Queen lays the lava that grows into more worker bees. The drones help the Queen make the lava.



Other Investigations

- Bees are social animals. They live together in a group and seem to get on really well. What other animals can live in groups like that?
- Next time you are having honey on toast or a sandwich find out what kind it is. If it is Clover honey the flowers the nectar came from would be mostly clover flowers...
Manuka honey - Manuka flowers.
- What other honey products are there.

Jokes

What goes zzub, zzub? A bee flying backwards.
Why do bees hum? They don't know the words.