

What is the difference between a bumblebee and a honeybee?

If you saw a bee on a flower, would you be able to tell if it was a bumblebee or a honeybee? Here are some tips to help you.



Bumblebee	Honeybee
Fat and furry.	Smaller and slim, like a wasp.
24 different species of bumblebee in the UK.	Only one species of honeybee in all of Europe.
Different species have different lengths of tongue. This means they feed from different shaped flowers.	All honeybees have a short tongue so they like to feed from open flowers.
They live in nests with 50-400 bees.	They live in hives of 50,000 – 60,000 bees!
Only the queen hibernates, in a hole in the ground.	The queen and many of her daughters hibernate in their hive.
The queen lives for 1 year, but the other bumblebees only live for a few months.	The queen can live for 3-4 years.
They live in the wild, e.g. in gardens.	Most honeybees are looked after by beekeepers, like pets.
Bumblebees only make small amounts of a honey-like substance to eat themselves.	Honeybees make lots of honey, which beekeepers take to eat or sell.
Bumblebee populations are declining due to a shortage of flowers to feed from and places to nest in the countryside.	Honeybees are mainly declining due to diseases and mites, such as the varroa mite.
They can sting more than once but only sting if you really annoy them.	Honeybees die after they have stung as their stinger is barbed and sticks in the skin – when the honeybee tries to fly away its tail falls off.



Wordsearch

n	n	e	y	g	k	q	t	x	q	e	q	u	h	h
m	o	e	l	q	w	e	o	c	x	e	y	o	v	s
h	f	i	c	c	e	q	n	g	y	b	n	x	y	c
e	c	w	t	t	a	u	g	i	e	e	p	w	z	u
b	l	l	z	a	a	y	u	w	y	l	g	n	t	i
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p	k	e	y	r	r	u	f	i	l	z	j	e	s	x
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b	c	z	h	f	r	n	r	x	a	j	v	v	q	z
z	p	r	w	k	d	x	z	h	k	r	a	a	r	p

Find the words below in the wordsearch.

- Beekeeper
- Bumblebee
- Flowers
- Furry
- Hibernation
- Hive
- Honey
- Nectar
- Nest
- Tongue



What is honey?

Honey is a sweet substance that a honeybee makes by collecting nectar from flowers in its “crop” – a second stomach. Here the nectar is mixed with enzymes that change its chemical structure and pH. When the honeybee gets back to its hive it regurgitates the liquid into another honeybee’s mouth and it is then deposited into honeycomb. At this stage the honey is still quite runny so the honeybees fan the honeycomb with their wings to encourage evaporation. Once this has happened the honey is sealed in the comb with wax, which keeps it fresh until the bees need it during hibernation.

Do bumblebees make honey?

No, but they do collect nectar from flowers and bring it back to their nests. Once in the nest a bumblebee worker will regurgitate the nectar into a little wax pot. This honey-like liquid will be used to feed the queen, other workers and any new baby bumblebees. It is not prepared for long term storage like honey.

Recipe idea...Honey berry smoothies

In a food processor, mix half a cup of strawberries, half a cup of raspberries and half a cup of blackberries. These are all fruits that are pollinated by bumblebees and honeybees and can easily be grown in your garden. Then add half a cup of honey and 500ml of semi-skimmed milk and mix well.

Finally, pour into tall glasses and share with your friends.



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