

## Bee Facts

Interesting and unusual facts about bees

- Bumblebees have five eyes. Two large eyes on the front of their heads, and three smaller eyes on top.
- Bumblebees cannot see red.
- Bumblebees see UV light.
- Bumblebee wings beat more than 100 times per second.
- If you see bumblebees with pollen on their hind legs, these bees are certainly females, and are either queens or workers. Males do not collect pollen.
- Only female bumblebees can sting.
- Bees have smelly feet! After feeding they leave a scent on the flower which helps other bumblebees to avoid landing as there will be little pollen left!
- Bumblebees don't swarm and are not aggressive. They don't like jam so won't join your picnic.
- Bumblebees tails can be one of four different colours - blonde, white, red or brown.
- Bumblebees rarely nest in the same location two years running.
- Bees are capable of buzz pollination. This occurs when the bee grabs the flower and produces a high-pitched buzz. This releases pollen that would otherwise stay trapped inside. Tomatoes are pollinated in this way.
- It was once estimated that, following the rules of physics and aerodynamics, bumblebees shouldn't be able to fly. Since bumblebees can fly, something was obviously missing!
- Some bumblebees with short tongues have found a way to reach the nectar of longer tube-shaped flowers. This is called nectar robbing. They use their mandibles to bite small holes in the side of the flowers, then put their tongue in the hole, and suck out any nectar available.
- The size of a bumblebee depends on the amount of food available while they are growing as larvae.
- Bees that die inside the nest, or any larvae that are found to be sick or dying are removed from the nest to prevent the spread of disease.
- Bumblebees can fly up to several kilometres from the nest to find food. Sometimes they fly further than they need to, to prevent predators and parasites from finding the nest.
- Queen bumblebees live for about a year but worker bees only live for a few months.

