



WORKER BEES

Worker bees' hairy bodies attract pollen. The bees then move this to their 'pollen baskets' on their hind legs to take back to the hive.

KEY FACTS

Length:

9mm - 18mm

Lifespan:

35 - 45 days

Honey Production:

A worker bee produces 1 ½ teaspoons of honey in her lifetime!

Worker bees are the females in the colony and make up the majority of the population.

Although female, they very rarely lay eggs. This is the job of the queen bee. Instead the worker is responsible for all other jobs in the colony. Worker bees can be identified as the smallest bees within the colony.



IMPORTANT 'BUZZ'NESS

The worker bee begins her life cleaning cells and keeping brood warm. At about three days old, she begins her role as a nurse bee and spends approximately a week feeding older and then younger larvae.

Next comes the role of wax producing. Between 12 and 17 days old a worker bee develops special glands on her abdomen which secrete wax. This wax is then used to build the internal structure of the hive. During this time she also transports food in the hive, ensuring the queen and drones are fed.

The process of making honey begins here too. From the age of 12 days onwards, a worker bee will consume, regurgitate and store nectar given to them by older workers. This process converts nectar into honey.

Days 17 to 21 of a worker bees' life are spent guarding the hive. They prevent bees from other colonies entering their hive, as well as pests such as wasps, spiders, ants, and flies.

At 22 days old, the worker bee graduates from a 'house bee' to a 'forager bee' where she spends her remaining days visiting flowers, collecting pollen, nectar, water, and plant resin to make propolis. During this time the bee completes the invaluable role of pollination!

WORKER BEE DEVELOPMENT

The worker bee develops from a fertilised egg. After 21 days spent developing in her cell, a worker bee emerges. With an average lifespan of 35 to 45 days, her life is a short but busy one!

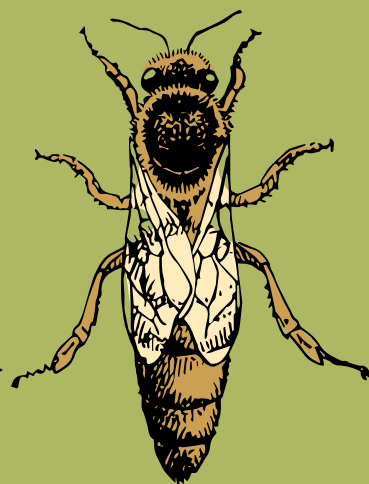
HOW DO THEY COMPARE?



Worker Bee



Drone Bee



Queen Bee



Centre
For Bee
Education

Centre for Bee Education is a collaboration between When Bee Foundation and Bee School by Beechworth Honey and provides a wealth of learning resources and tools on the important role bees and other pollinators play in the environment and food production systems.

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