



Teacher Resource

Bumblebee Tracking

Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. How many bumblebee species are there?
 - a. 50
 - b. 250
 - c. 500
2. Bumblebees are native to Australia. True or false?
3. How do the researchers put the backpacks on bumblebees?
4. How do the transmitters help the researchers learn more about bumblebees?
5. What questions do you have about the story?

Activity: Class Discussion

Students will discuss the BTN story in pairs and then share their thoughts with the class.

- Why are bumblebees being tracked in Tasmania?
- What technology is being used to track them?
- Where in Australia will you find bumblebees?
- When were they introduced to Australia? How did they come here?
- What impact do bumblebees have on the environment?
- How are bumblebees different to native bees?



Activity: Glossary

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Bumblebee Tracking story. Here are some words to get them started.

INTRODUCED SPECIES	NATIVE	POLLINATOR
TRANSMITTER	QUEEN BEE	NECTAR

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KEY LEARNING

Students will create a profile of a species of bee and learn more about the impact of introduced species.

CURRICULUM

Science – Year 4

Living things have life cycles. Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive.

Science – Year 5

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment.

Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions.

Science – Year 6

The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment.

Science – Year 7

Interactions between organisms, including the effects of human activities can be represented by food chains and food webs.

Activity: Bee profile

Students will research and write a profile of a bumblebee, honeybee or native bee. Students can use the animal profile worksheet at the end of this activity to record their findings. Encourage students to use a range of sources to find their information.

Research

Students will research and create a profile of a bumblebee, honeybee or native bee. Students can use the Animal Profile at the end of this activity.

- Illustration or photo
- Scientific and common name
- Appearance
- Habitat
- Where is it found in Australia?
- Native or introduced species
- Feeding and diet
- Behaviours and adaptations
- Predators
- Interesting facts



What is the life cycle of a bee?

Use a diagram to help illustrate the different stages. Watch this ABC Education [video](#) to learn more.

Why are bees important?

Investigate the role bees play in food security, biodiversity and ecosystem health. Display your research in a creative way.

Introduced Species

Are introduced species always a bad thing?
What makes an animal a 'pest'?

Native Bees

If native bees don't produce honey, do we need them?
Create a poster that explains why native bees are important.

Activity: Anatomy of a bee

Students will learn more about the different parts of the bumblebee by labelling the image below or create their own biological illustration. They can then choose three features to explore in more depth and write a paragraph about each feature.

- Antennae
- Wing
- Pollen basket
- Tongue
- Thorax
- Eyes
- Abdomen



Further Investigation

Explore the similarities and differences between honeybees and bumblebees.

Activity: Introduced Species – Research Task

Students will then investigate the impact introduced species have on the environment and choose one to research. Include the following information:

Introduced species	Research
Describe the animal	
Which country did the animal come from?	
When was the animal introduced to Australia?	
Why was the animal introduced to Australia?	
Where does the animal live in Australia? (show on a map).	
What impact does the animal have on native animals and the environment?	
What methods have been used to control or eradicate the animal? How successful has it been?	

Activity: Bee Quiz

1. About how many species of bumblebees are there?

- A. 50
- B. 250
- C. 500

2. Bumblebees are...

- A. Native to Australia
- B. An introduced species

3. Bumblebees don't make as much honey as honeybees.

- A. True
- B. False

4. Where in Australia will you find bumblebees?

- A. Tasmania
- B. Victoria
- C. South Australia

5. Bumblebees only sting once.

- A. True
- B. False

6. How long does a colony of bumblebees live for.

- A. Up to 1 year
- B. 1-2 years
- C. 2-3 years

Quiz Answers: 1B, 2B, 3A, 4A, 5B, 6A

Useful Websites

- [Researchers put radio backpacks on bumblebees in Tasmania in insect-tracking trial](#) – ABC News
- [Bumblebees](#) - Department of Primary Industries
- [World Bee Day](#) – BTN

ANIMAL PROFILE

Scientific
Name

APPEARANCE

Common Name

ADAPTATIONS

Unique Features
or Interesting Facts

HABITAT

THREATS