

Name _____



How Do Bumblebees Talk to Each Other?

Bumblebees may not use words, but they have fascinating ways of communicating. These clever insects use sounds, movements, scents, and even vibrations to share information with their colony.

One way bumblebees communicate is through buzzing sounds. You've probably heard the familiar hum of a bumblebee flying by. This buzzing isn't just noise—it helps bees shake pollen loose from flowers. Inside the nest, buzzing vibrations can also signal danger or alert other bees that there is food nearby.

Another way bumblebees communicate is by leaving scent trails. When a bumblebee finds a flower full of nectar and pollen, it can leave a scent behind to guide other bees to the same spot. This scent, called a pheromone, acts like a map that helps bees find food more quickly.

Bumblebees also use their movements to share information. When a bee discovers a particularly good source of nectar, it can return to the nest and perform a simple dance. This movement shows other bees the direction and distance of the food. While not as complicated as the famous waggle dance of honeybees, bumblebees' movements are still very effective.

One of the most interesting ways bumblebees communicate is by using their sense of touch. Inside the nest, they often tap or brush against each other to pass messages or keep the colony organized. For example, a queen might use touch to signal worker bees to bring her food or help care for the larvae.

Through their buzzing, scents, movements, and touch, bumblebees work together to keep their colony running smoothly. These tiny creatures show us how powerful teamwork and communication can be—even without words.