

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## The Challenges Bumblebees Face

Bumblebees are hardworking insects, but they face many dangers in the wild. These threats come from predators, parasites, environmental changes, and even humans. Despite these challenges, bumblebees have ways to stay safe and healthy.

One of the bumblebee's biggest predators is the spider. Spiders often hide on flowers, waiting to catch unsuspecting bees. Birds, like swallows, also hunt bumblebees for food. Frogs and lizards may snap up bumblebees if they come too close. Even larger insects, like dragonflies, may eat bumblebees.

Parasites are another major threat to bumblebees. Some parasites invade the bumblebee's body and make it weaker. Nosema, a type of fungus, can infect bumblebees and reduce their ability to gather food. Another parasite, the varroa mite, is a tiny insect that attaches to bumblebees and drains their energy.

Environmental changes, like habitat loss, also threaten bumblebees. When people cut down forests or turn meadows into cities, bumblebees lose places to nest and find food. Pesticides, which are chemicals used to kill pests, can also harm bumblebees if they land on treated plants. Climate change is making things worse by causing flowers to bloom at different times, which can leave bumblebees without food when they need it.

Despite these challenges, bumblebees have some defenses. Their fuzzy bodies and quick movements help them avoid predators. They also have stingers, but they only use them when they feel threatened. To stay healthy, bumblebees rely on strong colonies. Worker bees help protect the nest and share food to keep everyone fed.

Bumblebees are vital to nature because they pollinate plants, helping flowers grow and food crops thrive. By understanding their threats, people can take steps to protect these important insects. Planting flowers, avoiding harmful pesticides, and preserving natural habitats can make a big difference for bumblebee survival.