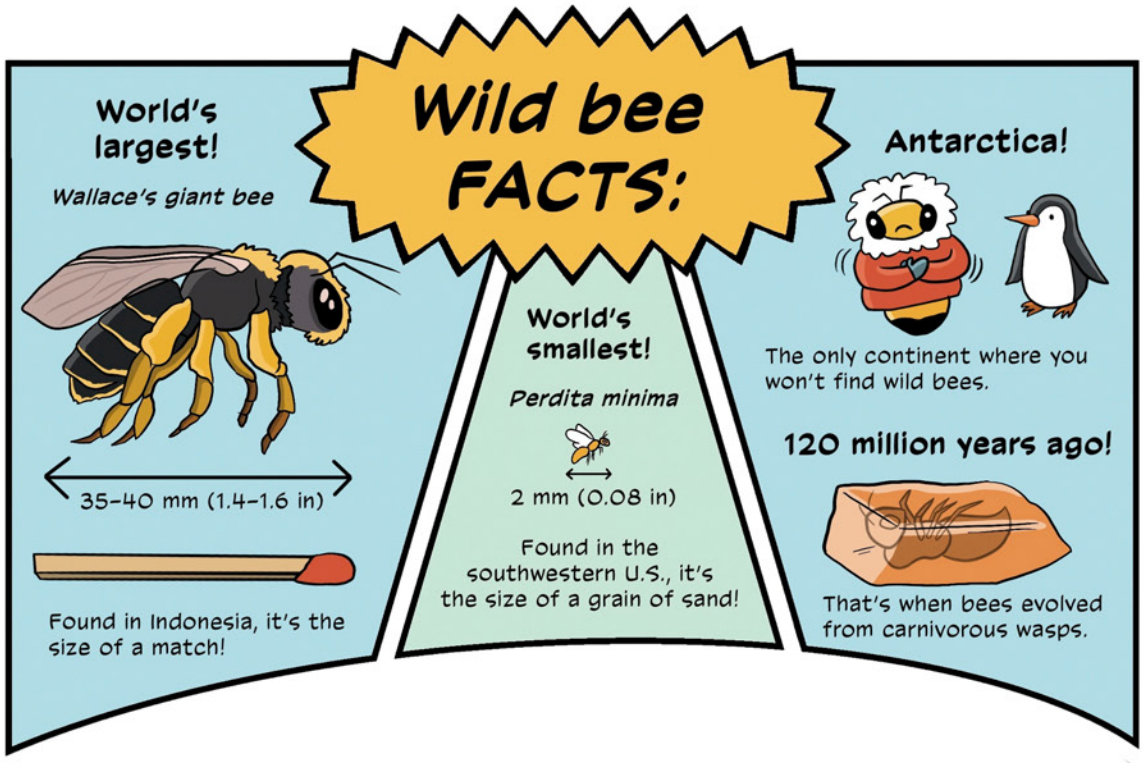
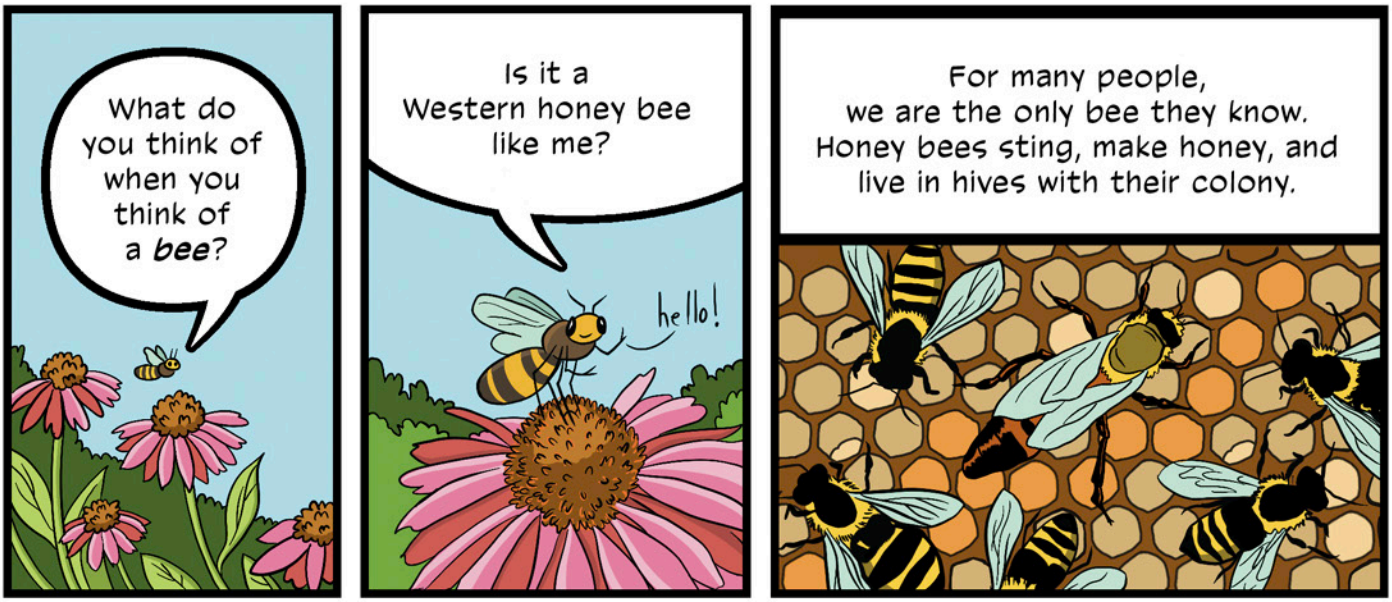
Discovering wild bees

WILD GUARDIANS

COMIC



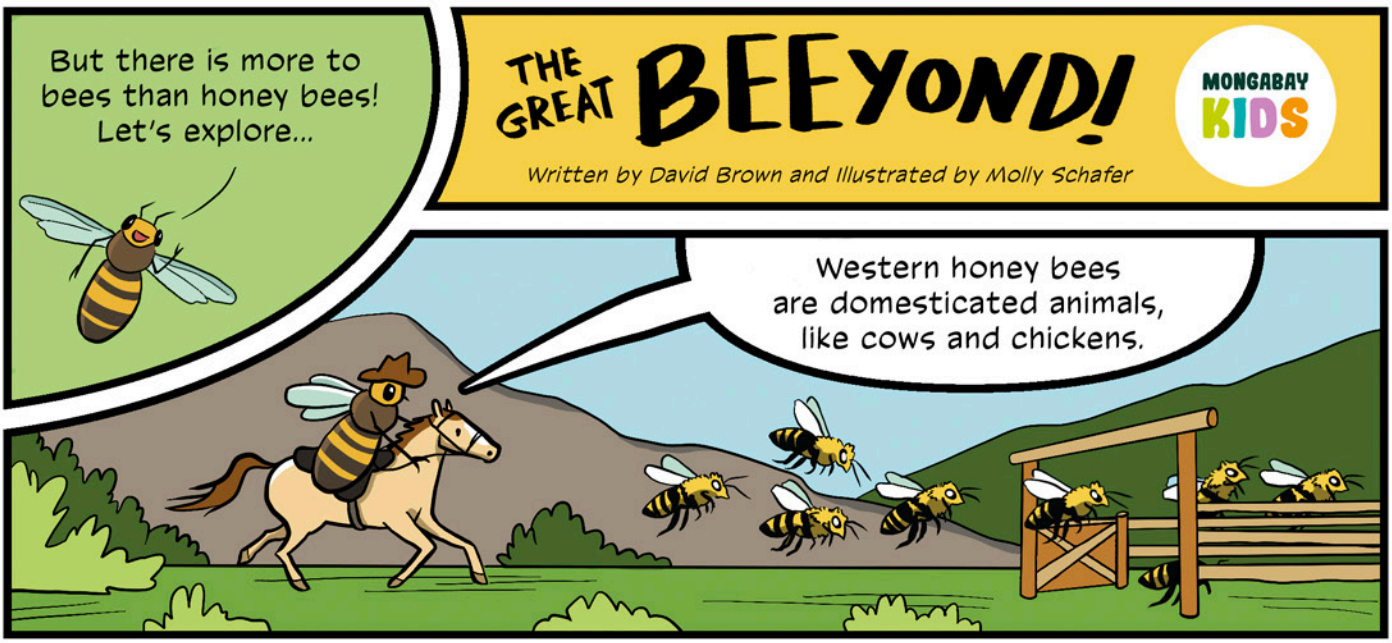
MONGABAY KIDS



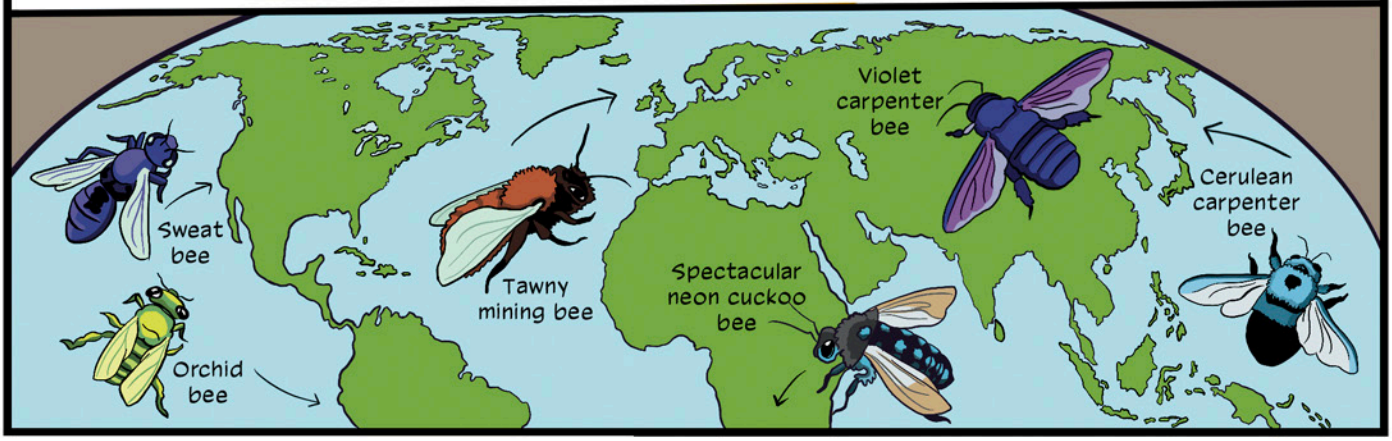
THE GREAT BEEYOND!

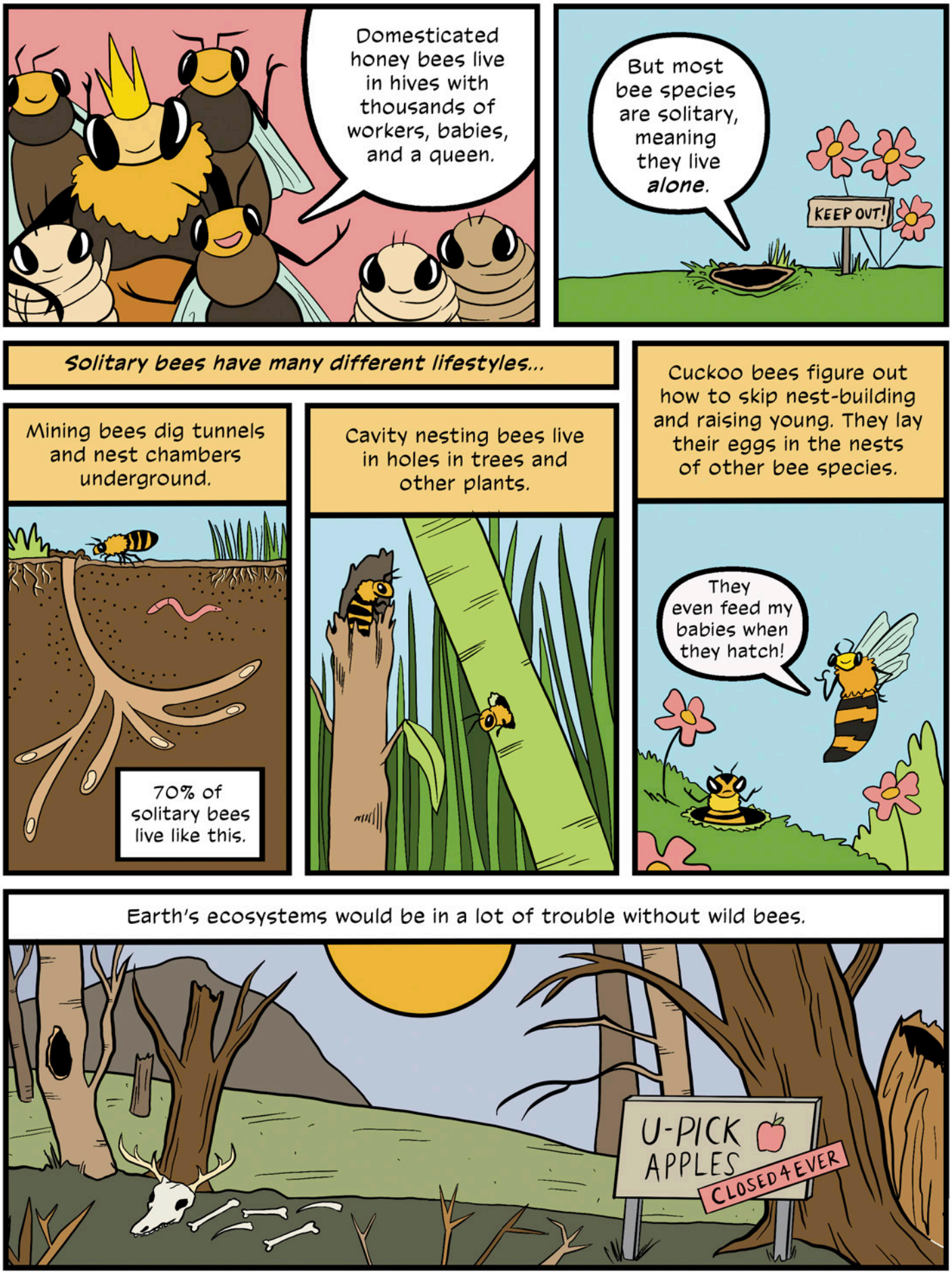
Written by David Brown and Illustrated by Molly Schafer

MONGABAY KIDS



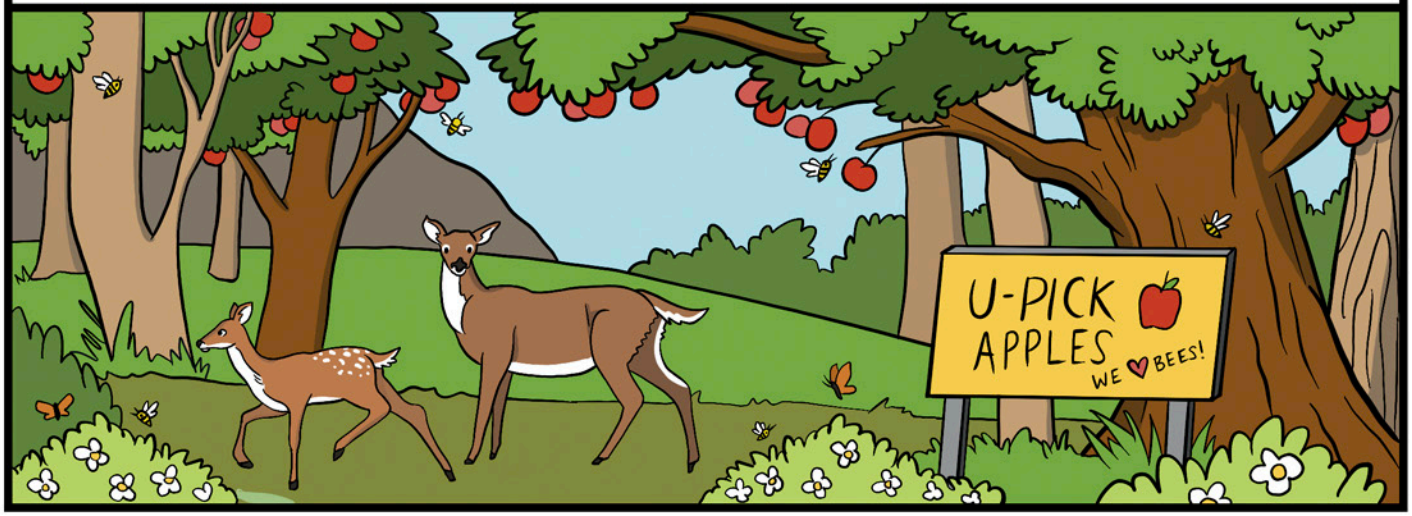
Most bee species are **wild bees**, not managed by humans. When wild bee species are indigenous to a place, they are called **native bees.** Wild bees live all over the world. They come in multiple colors and shapes. We know of at least 20,000 species, and scientists describe more species every year.

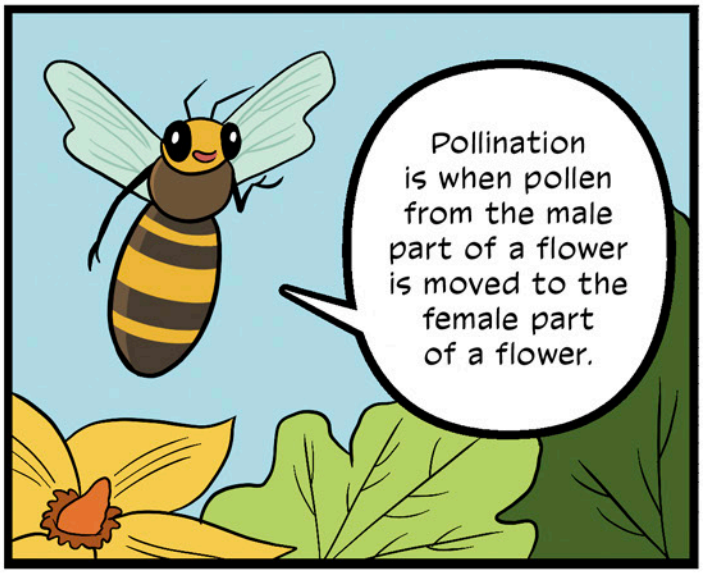


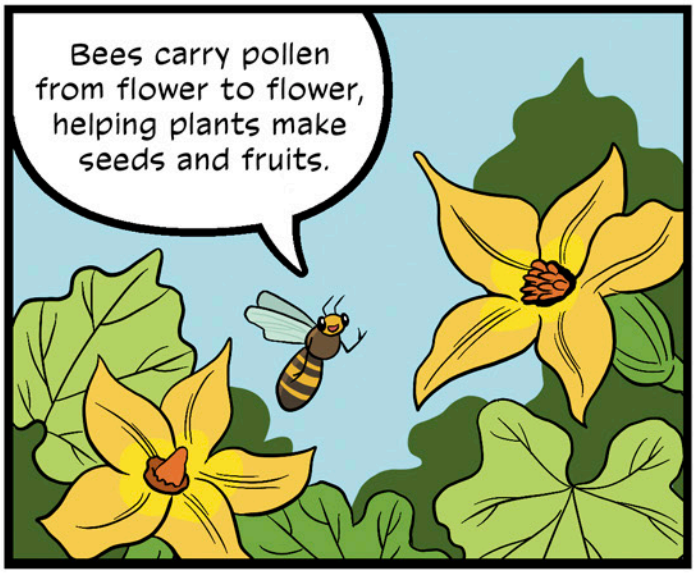

Domesticated honey bees live in hives with thousands of workers, babies, and a queen.
But most bee species are solitary, meaning they live *alone*.
KEEP OUT!
Solitary bees have many different lifestyles...
Mining bees dig tunnels and nest chambers underground.
70% of solitary bees live like this.
Cavity nesting bees live in holes in trees and other plants.
Cuckoo bees figure out how to skip nest-building and raising young. They lay their eggs in the nests of other bee species.
They even feed my babies when they hatch!
Earth's ecosystems would be in a lot of trouble without wild bees.
U-PICK APPLES
CLOSED 4EVER

Wild bees help run the world!

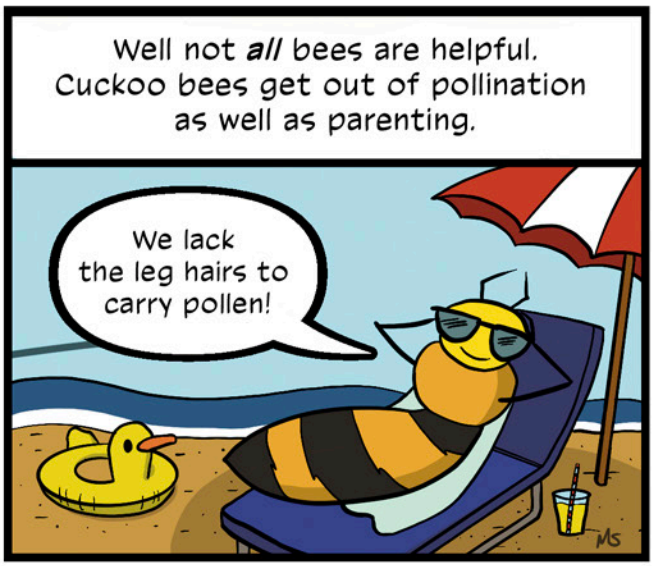
Plants are the foundation of ecosystems and without bee pollination these ecosystems would not work. In many places wild bees pollinate most of the plants.











Wild bee FACTS:

World's largest!

Wallace's giant bee



35–40 mm (1.4–1.6 in)



Found in Indonesia, it's the size of a match!

World's smallest!

Perdita minima



2 mm (0.08 in)

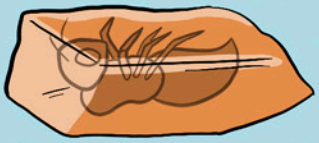
Found in the southwestern U.S., it's the size of a grain of sand!

Antarctica!



The only continent where you won't find wild bees.

120 million years ago!



That's when bees evolved from carnivorous wasps.

Be a wild bee guardian!





1. *Plant a pollinator garden*

Learn which native plant species your local wild bees like to visit. Plant them in a pot, or plant a pollinator garden at home, school, or in your community.







2. *Create nesting sites*

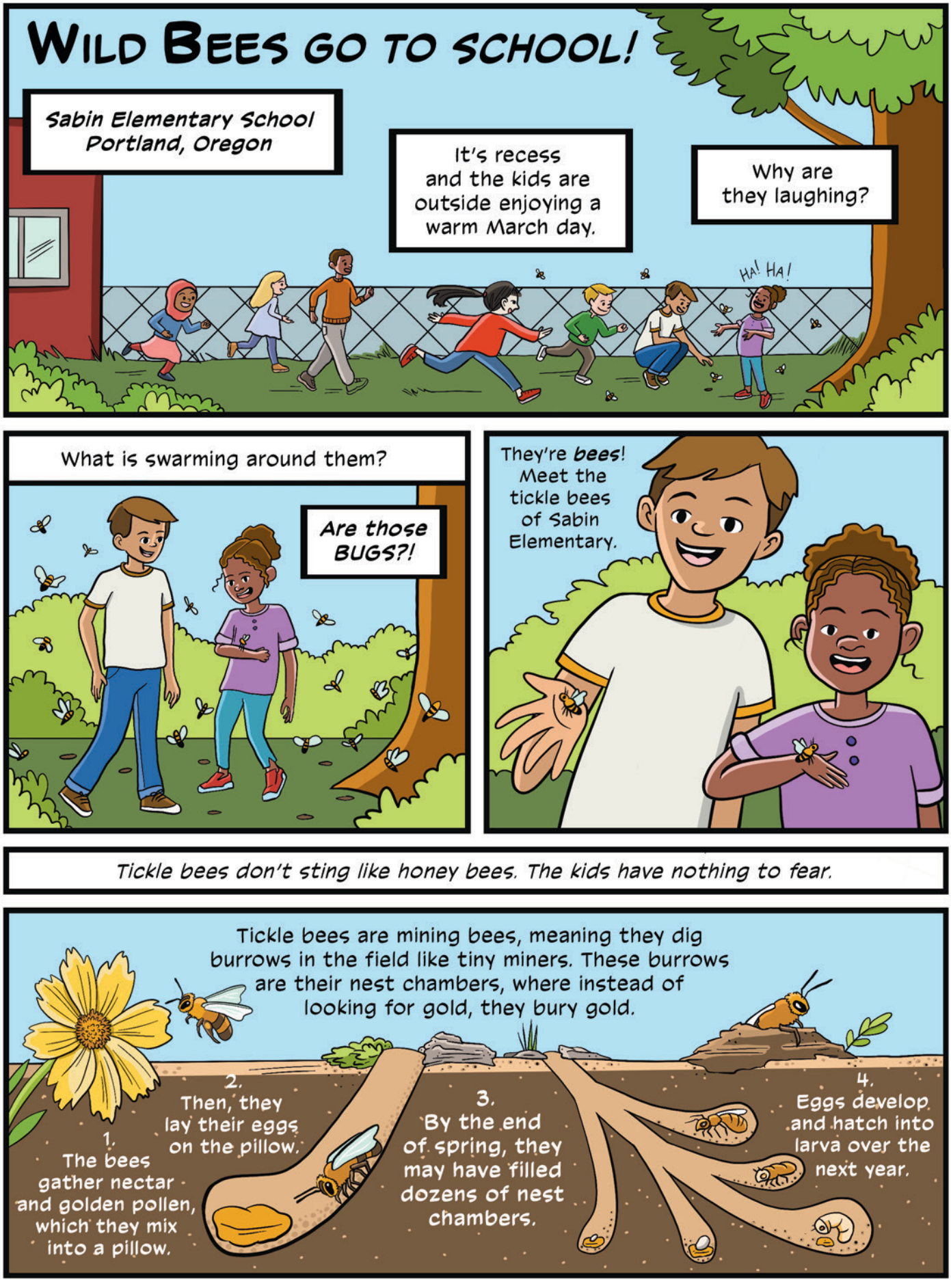
Find out what types of wild bees live near you and provide nesting sites for them. Some bees sleep in hollow stems. Others burrow in loose dirt. Can you create a home for wild bees?



3. *Raise awareness*

Toronto, Canada, has a city bee mascot. Could you create a wild bee mascot for your school or city to show other people how cool wild bees are? Go wild bees, go! RAH RAH RAH!




WILD BEES GO TO SCHOOL!
Sabin Elementary School
Portland, Oregon
It's recess and the kids are outside enjoying a warm March day.
Why are they laughing?
HA! HA!
What is swarming around them?
Are those BUGS?!
They're bees! Meet the tickle bees of Sabin Elementary.
Tickle bees don't sting like honey bees. The kids have nothing to fear.
Tickle bees are mining bees, meaning they dig burrows in the field like tiny miners. These burrows are their nest chambers, where instead of looking for gold, they bury gold.
1. The bees gather nectar and golden pollen, which they mix into a pillow.
2. Then, they lay their eggs on the pillow.
3. By the end of spring, they may have filled dozens of nest chambers.
4. Eggs develop and hatch into larva over the next year.

Kids run and play on the field all summer and autumn while the tickle bees shelter underground. You wouldn't even know they were there.

But come next spring, the new generation of tickle bees emerges from their burrows by the thousands.





Sabin elementary adopted the tickle bee as their mascot.

Older students help to teach younger students about the bees.





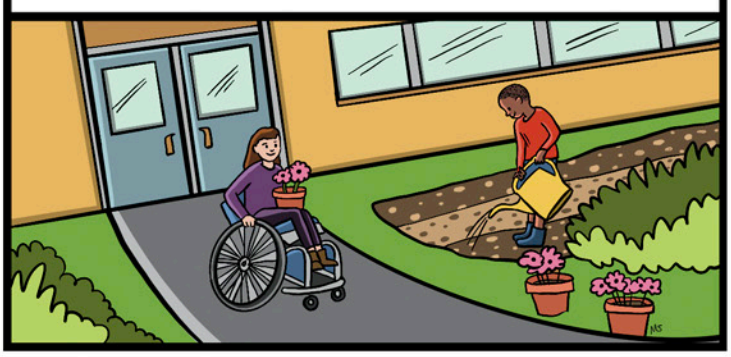
The bees gather pollen from the flowers and store it in their burrows. After they hatch, the baby bees eat the pollen.



The tickle bees pollinate plants in the neighborhood and help them make seeds and fruits.



Do ***you*** have wild bees at your school? Does your school have a garden or habitat for wild bees?



DO-IT-YOURSELF

INSECT SAFARI

WITH



CONNOR & COLE

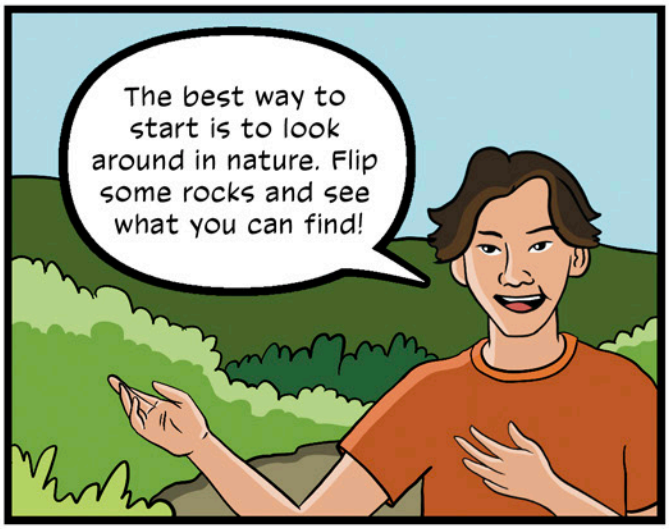
Connor and **Cole** have been insect fans since they were young.

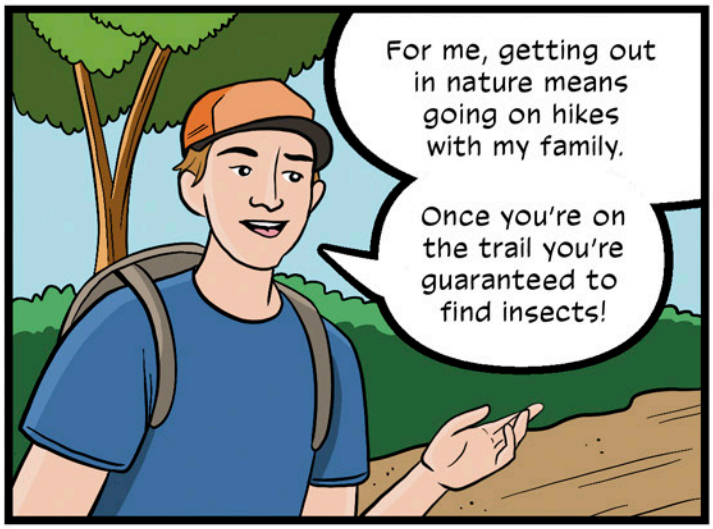
They met in middle school at a science camp for young entomologists.

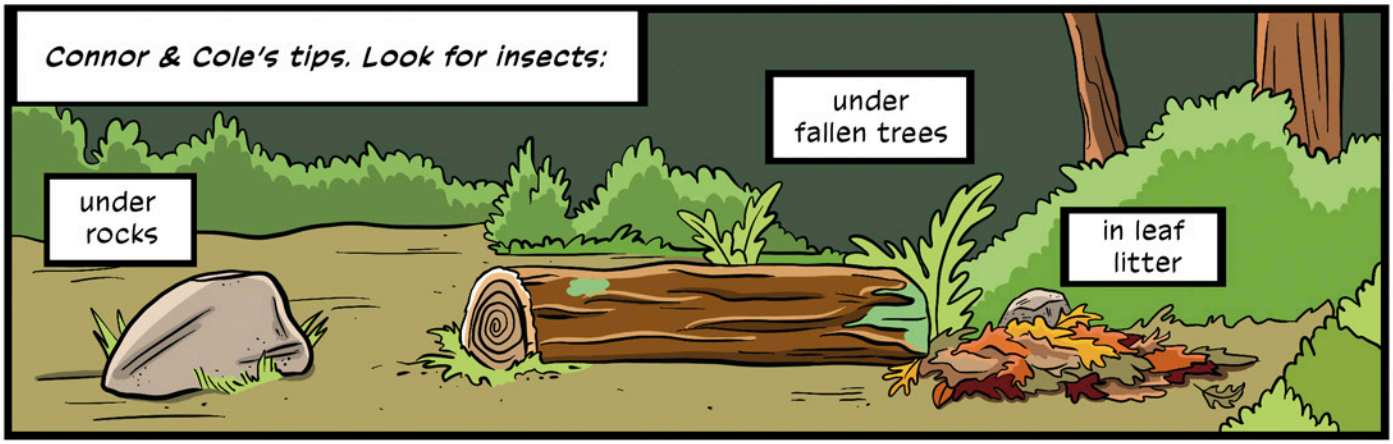


Now in high school, they've formed a group for young insect enthusiasts called The Lorquin Society Scholars.

Connor and Cole want to help kids all over the world become interested in insects and their natural history – where they live, what they eat, the role they play in ecosystems. They show kids that insects are ***cool, not creepy!***








I spend a lot of time observing plants. My biggest tip: look *under* the leaves!
I find things like:
chrysalises
praying mantids
ladybug eggs
caterpillars
ladybug larvae
You can learn a lot about insects by making fun observations!
Does it move quickly or slowly?
Does it sit still?
Does it wiggle its antennae?
What color is its body? Does it have big eyes?
Take photos and document insects on iNaturalist.
click!
ID: MILKWEED LEAF BEETLE
FIELD GUIDE INSECTS
FIELD GUIDE MOTHS
Use field guides to learn the common names, diets, and habitats of insects.
When I was younger, I did a lot of digging in the dirt just to see what I could find.
isopods
beetle larvae
springtails
grubs
Insects are everywhere. Wherever you are, you can try looking for them.
It's a great way to have fun outdoors and to learn about nature!
MS

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Illustrations: Molly Schafer (feralpony.com)
Editor: Megan Strauss

Mongabay Kids is the Kids Desk of Mongabay, a nonprofit environmental science and conservation news platform.
Website: kids.mongabay.com

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Special thanks

Jess Mullins of the California Native Bee Society, Cole Cramer and Connor Hsu of the Lorquin Society Scholars, and Mace Vaughan and Matthew Shepherd of the Xerces Society

This project was supported by a grant from The CEK Foundation Earth Focus Initiative.