

DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?



CA NATIVE BEES



Fairy Bee

VS

HONEY BEES



NATIVE RANGE

- Native to California!
- Have lived here for millions of years

- Native to Europe or Africa
- Introduced to California in the 1850s

SIZE & APPEARANCE

- Huge range in size
- Smaller than honey bee on average
- Wide variety in color, shape, and fuzziness

- Relatively large, worker females average 0.5 in.
- Distinctive black & yellow striped abdomen

NEST & LIFESTYLE

- Mostly solitary nesters, with some exceptions (bumblebees, some sweat bees)
- Females build tunnel nests in the ground, in hollow stems, or in dead wood

- Social nesters that create a wax hive where they live together
- Colonies have a queen, workers, & drones

HONEY PRODUCTION

- Do NOT make honey

- DO make honey

FORAGING & LIFECYCLE

- Co-evolved with California native plants
- Some are specialists and only seek pollen/nectar from certain plants
- Most collect pollen on their legs or bellies
- Adults emerge seasonally to pollinate, mate, and nest for a short time, then the next generation spends the rest of the year as immature bees in their nests.

- Generalist species: use pollen from many types of plants, but can't pollinate all plants
- Adults forage year-round in warmer areas, like the South Coast Region
- Collect pollen on their hind legs by mixing it with saliva

AGGRESSION

- Very gentle
- Rarely sting
- No documented allergic reaction to sting

- Can display aggression - especially feral honey bees, especially near hives
- Sting when threatened
- Sting can cause allergic reaction