



Hi, My name is Nick and my name is Joel. We live in Queensland and love a lot of things but especially insects, animals, planting trees and the great outdoors.

Yesterday we found something else great, a Great Carpenter Bee. Great Carpenter Bees look a lot like a Bumble Bee but Bumble Bees are not native to Australia and Great Carpenter Bees are Native Australian bees.

We wanted to find out more about this bee so when we got home we did some research.

We found out that the female Great Carpenter Bee is about two centimetres long and has a shiny black abdomen and a fluffy yellow thorax. Her wings are a smoky grey colour and they are very beautiful. This matched the exact description of the bee that we found. They live very high up in the canopy, so are not often seen. They make their nests in soft and rotting tree trunks and branches.

Great Carpenter Bees are very special because they pollinate flowers in a special way. Some native Australian flowers cannot be pollinated by regular bees or other insects because their pollen is hidden in little sacks within the flower.

The Great Carpenter Bee uses its powerful wings to make a special vibration that shakes the pollen out of the little sack and onto their bodies. The pollen in the sacks is out of reach to other bees and insects and they cannot reach the pollen or shake it out.

Great Carpenter Bees do sting. It feels very much like other bee stings, but the Great Carpenter Bee does not die when they sting meaning they can sting multiple times. I was stung on my finger whilst holding this bee yesterday. It hurt a lot when it happened, like a regular bee sting but it didn't hurt for long and the next day it was back to normal.

Without the Great Carpenter Bee, many of our Australian native plants and flowers would die because the Great Carpenter Bee are the only ones who can pollinate these native varieties.

We think the Great Carpenter Bee is a very, very important part of our Australian ecosystems.

Here are the websites we visited;

aussiebee.com.au

wildlife.org.au

From Nick and Joel

Here are our pictures, isn't she great!!

