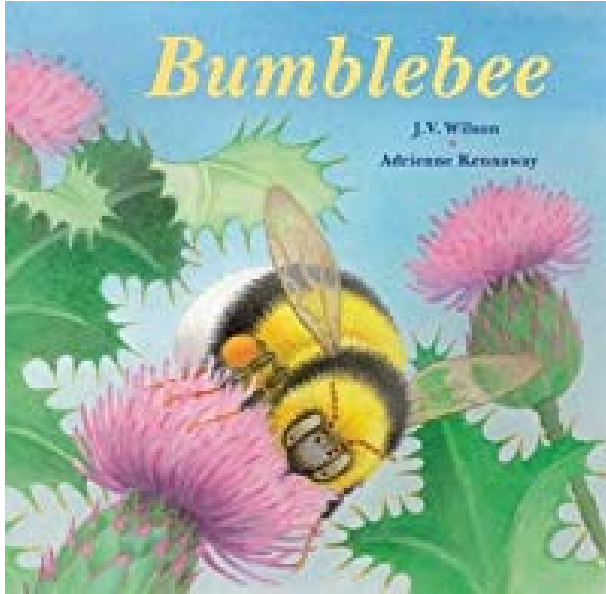


# Bumblebee



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From the moment the queen bee first wakes from her winter hibernation, she is looking for a site to build a colony and reproduce. As she flies from flower to flower collecting nectar she takes pollen from one to another, enabling plants to produce seeds. Eventually she finds an old mouse hole where she begins building the wax honey pots which will form the physical colony or hive. And she begins laying eggs, sitting on them to keep them warm - eggs that will grow into worker bees that will help her. The colony attracts the attentions of animals like weasels and badgers, but the worker bees are able to frighten them off. A more troublesome invader is the cuckoo bee who tries to take the colony over from the queen, but the workers recognise her as an imposter and chase her out. Finally, the queen is ready to lay eggs which will become male drones and queens. Her work is done and in late summer she leaves the colony for the last time. Then in autumn the new queens leave the nest to find places where they can sleep the winter away, as the colony perishes in the winter cold. Beautifully illustrated, this lyrical story inspires young readers to learn more about these creatures and their extraordinary lives. It includes a glossary and information about protecting bees.