

Wild Bees and Fun with Words

Can you decode the words to answer the riddle?

Unscramble the words below; each one is a food featured in the book and made in part by wild bees. When you've finished, add each numbered letter into the mystery word to answer the riddle.

Riddle question:

What is a bee's favorite sport?



Digger bee and Red Flowering Currant

ESPEPRPO

1

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NCOIRLTA

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EBEULBRISRE

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Red Flowering Currant (Oregon native)

PLSAES

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UFLWACREOI

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GSGE

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OOTTSEAM

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AHSUQA

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GPTNALEG

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Riddle answer: _____

1 2 3 4 5 6

EFBE

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Blue orchard mason bees (*Osmia lignaria*) are an Oregon wild bee that excels at pollinating fruit crops like this plum blossom, and they are managed for this purpose.

Wild bees are not kept by people, but live on their own. They started to appear in Oregon after continents began to spread apart around 60 million years ago. They evolved together with flowering plants in a process called co-evolution. Over millions of years, these bees and plants helped each other flourish in the forests, savanna and deserts of Oregon. Wild bees are important for the pollination of native plants as well as crops, which are often closely related.

Most wild bees are solitary and nest underground. There are hundreds of different species. Some are smaller in size than a grain of rice and some have not been identified yet. Wild bees help native plants reproduce. Many farmers rent boxes of managed honey bees to pollinate their crops, but wild bees can help pollinate food crops, too! In fact, they both help make the foods featured in this book.

The smallest bees in Oregon are the fairy bees, genus *Perdita*. They are only as long as a grain of rice! ---->



Perdita, enlarged

Word Bank: Apples, beef, blueberries, cauliflower, cilantro, eggplant, eggs, peppers, squash, tomatoes.