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Today I want to talk to you about wasps and their nests.

今天我想和你们谈谈黄蜂（马蜂）和他们的巢。

You'll recall that biologists divide species of wasps into two groups: solitary and social.

你们会记得，生物学家把黄蜂的种类分成两组：独居的和群居的。

Solitary wasps, as the name implies, do not live together with other wasps.

独居的黄蜂，顾名思义，不和其他黄蜂生活在一起。

In most species the male and female get together only to mate, and then the female does all the work of building the nest and providing food for the offspring by herself.

在大多数的种群中，雄性和雌性在一起仅仅为了交配，然后雌性做所有筑巢的工作，并且她自己为后代提供食物。

Solitary wasps usually make nests in the ground and they separate the chambers for individual offspring with bits of grass, stone, or mud, whatever is handy.

独居的黄蜂通常在地下筑巢，并且它们为了个体的后代用少量的草，石头或泥，无论怎样（只要）是方便的（东西就行），把窝分隔开来。

What about social wasps?

群居的黄蜂怎么样呢？

They form a community and work together to build and maintain the nest.

它们形成一个群落并且在一起工作来建造并维护（蜂）巢。

A nest begins in the spring when a fertile female, called the queen, builds the first few compartments of the nest and lays eggs.

（筑）巢始于春天，当一只能生育的雌性，被称作（蜂）后，建造蜂巢的开始的几个隔室并开始产卵。

The first offspring are small females that cannot lay eggs.

第一批后代是小个的雌性不能下蛋。

These females, called workers, then build a lot of new compartments, and the queen lays more eggs.

这些雌性，叫做工蜂，然后会建造很多新的隔室，然后蜂后产更多的卵。

They also care for the new offspring and defend the nest with their stingers.

它们也照顾新的后代并且使用它们的刺保护蜂巢。

By the way, only female wasps have stingers.

顺便说一下，只有雌性黄蜂有刺。

Most social wasps make nests of paper.

多数黄蜂用纸做巢。

The females produce the paper by chewing up plant fibers or old wood.

雌性（黄蜂）产生纸是通过嚼碎植物纤维或者老旧的木头。

They spread the paper in thin layers to make cells in which the queen lays her eggs.

他们把纸铺成薄层来制作单元格，在那里蜂后产下她的卵。

Most of you, I'm sure, have seen these nests suspended from trees.

你们大多数（人），我相信，曾经见过这些蜂巢从树上悬挂下来。

They may also be built underground in abandoned rodent burrows.

它们也可能被建造在地下，在被抛弃的啮齿类动物的地洞中。