

European Bee-Eater



The European Bee-Eater is a slender bird displaying many colours.

These birds are migratory birds and like spending their winters in tropical Africa. During the spring, they fly back to Southern Europe in order to raise their young. They are usually seen on passage to the mainland.



Why are they called Bee-Eaters?

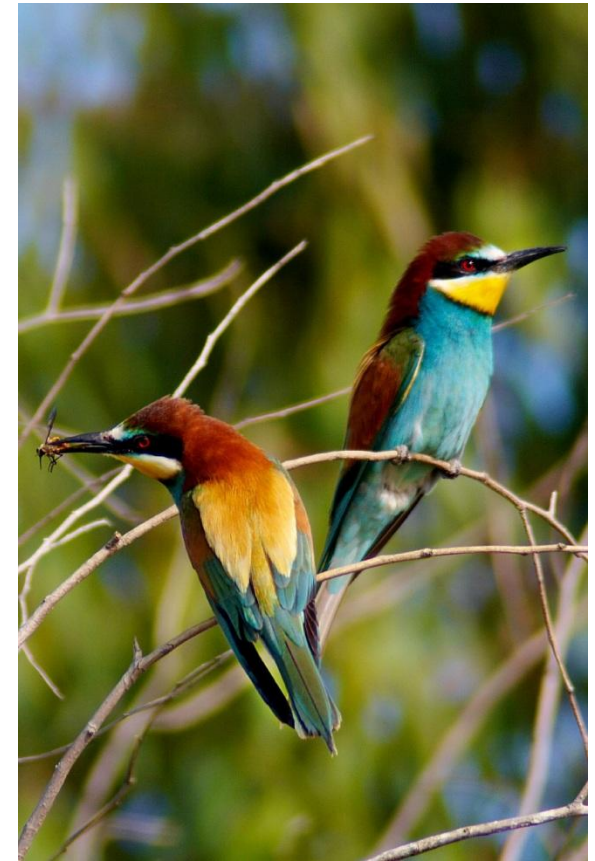
Well, as the name suggests, bees, wasps and hornets are their favourite foods.

Method of feeding

European Bee-eaters eat using a method called *Hawking*. This method means that the bird catches flying insects whilst in the air.

The way in which this is done means that the European Bee-Eater flies out from a perch to snatch an insect flying and then returns to the same or different perch.

Before eating their food, a Bee-Eater removes the stinger by hitting or rubbing the insect on a hard surface many times. Pressure is also applied to remove as much of the venom as possible before eating.



Habitat

These birds like to live in colonies (large group of birds) and like nesting in burrows tunneled into the side of sandy banks, especially those on the edges of rivers.

