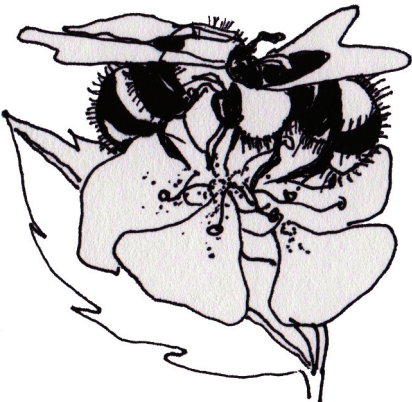




## Wild Bees

*Rhona McAdam*

We, we multitude  
sun-blossomed on leaves or  
dark-spotting petal  
pistil stamen. Knowing each  
flower's golden mean.  
Sweet comfort there  
for our young.  
Priming our baskets  
with pollen.  
A day's work  
and a day's work and a day and a day  
more. All this purpose  
purpose purpose.  
The weeds the woods  
the garden.  
Those single single  
destinations, never mix this  
with that:  
one source in its  
many places.  
We fly, we crawl, we gather.  
And again.  
Our futures waiting to be larded.  
So many homes  
we have, our  
dark places, combed and tunnelled,  
crumbed with our comings and goings.  
The neatness of our labours:  
eggs entombed  
with food  
for an afterlife  
we will not witness.  
Our one season this  
duty, duty.



**Rhona McAdam** is a Victoria-based writer and holistic nutritionist with a consulting practice, Go Local Nutrition, based at Haliburton Community Organic Farm. Author of six poetry collections (most recently *Ex-ville*, 2016) and many articles on food, nutrition and agriculture, her urban agriculture manifesto, **Digging the City**, was published in 2012.



This poem is one of ten poems selected to appear in The Pollinator Poetry Post, a public art project of Border Free Bees. Over 130 original poems were submitted from contributors throughout Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The Post will be installed in various locations in Kelowna and Richmond, British Columbia, Canada from 2016-2017. The poets whose work is published are as follows: Yvonne Blomer, Meri Culp, morgan downie, Tami Haaland, Lisa Huffaker, Guillaume Loslier-Pinard, Christine Lowther, Rhona McAdam, Wendy Morton, Phoebe Reeves.

Border Free Bees is a long-term public art initiative headed by Dr. Cameron Cartiere, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Culture + Community at Emily Carr University of Art + Design and Nancy Holmes, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies at The University of British Columbia, Okanagan, in collaboration with numerous strategic partners. The initiative's mission is to raise awareness of the plight of wild pollinators, empower communities to actively engage in solutions for habitat loss, and transform under-utilized urban sites into aesthetically pleasing and scientifically viable pollinator pastures. Border Free Bees is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Judges for the contest were poets Nancy Holmes and Fionncara MacEoin, pollinator scientist Dr. Elizabeth Elle, and public art theorist and artist Dr. Cameron Cartiere. Border Free Bees thanks Fionncara MacEoin, S. Megan Hunter and Kaila Burke for building the Poetry Post. The poetry pages were designed by Fionncara MacEoin with illustrations by Rhythm Hunter.

[www.borderfreebees.com](http://www.borderfreebees.com)

