



## **Sarah Peebles**

### ***Audio Bee Booths & Cabinets***

***amplified habitat sculptures for native, solitary bees and wasps***

2008-2017

A self-guided vitrine "Studio Tour" in the group exhibit **Workaday**

Harbourfront Centre Visual Art Exhibitions, Toronto

January 21 – April 23, 2017

Curated by Patrick Macaulay

Part of the Toronto Design Offsite Festival (January 16-22, 2017)

Materials: custom nest plank for solitary bees & wasps (wood, plexiglass), custom amplifier (accelerometer, electronics), headphones, video, annotated pyrographic illustration (photocopy), technical drawings, annotated nest tunnels (photocopy of macro image), books, loudspeakers, plant materials, styrofoam bee 'condo', plastic animals, tissue paper, tape, trading cards, selection of Toronto-area native bees and cuckoo bees (corpse), solitary wasp tunnel nest remnants, cardboard tunnel nest tubes & nest remnants, magnifying lenses, "Sonic Solitaries" reference booklet.

All photos enlarge to show details as desired.

**Documentation by Kevin Steele**

# Workaday

Susan Campbell  
Becky Comber  
Robert Cruickshank  
Hannun Lyn  
Caitlyn Murphy  
Sarah Peebles  
Penelope Stewart  
George A. Walker

Curated by Patrick Macaulay  
January 21 - April 23



The title *Workaday* may connote the humdrum nature and trappings of the work world. Indeed the artists here might, on many days, look to the tools of their work as routine. But to the viewer, who may rarely see inside an artist's studio, these objects can reveal the underpinnings of pieces and point to the moments of inspiration for the creative process.

Current understandings of art tools and techniques can be bewildering due to the role new technologies often have in creating and making. But whether cutting edge or traditional, the tools the artist uses are still extensions of the human hand, imagination and ideation. How an artist uses their implements, indeed the tools themselves, creates significant linkages to appreciate an artist's work and the "workaday" matter that matters in art.

- Patrick Macaulay, Director, Visual Arts, Harbourfront Centre



Sarah Peebles



**Scratch-Piebles**

Audio-Visual Research in Context  
An audio-visual research project for audio  
making, video and design. 2008-2011

The project is a collaboration between the  
Department of Design and the Department of  
Media Studies at the University of  
Sussex. It is a multi-media project  
that explores the relationship between  
audio and video in the context of  
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Scratch-Piebles  
An audio-visual research project for audio  
making, video and design. 2008-2011



# Sarah Peebles

## ***Audio Bee Booths & Cabinets: amplified habitat sculptures for native, solitary bees and wasps, 2008-2017***

Nest plank with embedded vibrational sensor: routed wood maple or elm plank, plexiglass, burned surface, accelerometer, audio cable; custom electronics: amplifier, power source (solar panel or battery), headphones; loupe; custom cabinetry; wood-burned illustrations

I have a strong conviction that in order to begin to perceive the connections between the decisions we make as individuals and as societies, and their consequences in the bigger picture, we need to cultivate our mental image of biodiversity; and, that this is best done using all of our senses, outdoors, and immersed in the environments with which we seek to connect. *Audio Bee Booths and Cabinets* foster the art and science of observing solitary wild bees and their role in pollination ecology. Aesthetically compelling, immersive and informative, these outdoor works intersect habitat interpretation, bio-art, sound installation and sculpture. They allow the public to safely view and listen to solitary-dwelling, (mostly) native bees – pollinators which are quite different than European honey bees – and solitary wasps, nature's insect controllers. The cabinets present the nuances of these creatures and their activities within their tunnel nests; pairing magnified views in tandem with amplified sound, these installations facilitate an enhanced perception of their tiny inhabitants: solitaires and other nest biota in action, up close. In effect, the viewer extends her own senses and enters a micro world which normally takes place in the dark – safely spying on the solitaires' nesting activities, life cycles, parasites, and their dynamic relationships with the surrounding habitat. Cabinets in Toronto include High Park Nature Centre and Access Alliance Multicultural Healthcare Centre's rooftop garden (at Victoria Park and Danforth). All venues and details are listed at "Resonating Bodies" ([resonatingbodies.wordpress.com](http://resonatingbodies.wordpress.com)).

- Sarah Peebles

Sarah Peebles is a Toronto-based installation artist, composer and music improviser. Much of her work explores digitally manipulated found sound, unconventional methods of amplification, and distinct approaches to performing shō, the Japanese mouth-organ used in gagaku (court music). She has collaborated with artists, technicians and bee biologists on a series of projects addressing pollination ecology and biodiversity, entitled "Resonating Bodies", since 2008. Peebles' activities over the past 3 decades have been wide-ranging and include music for dance, multi-channel sound, radio, video/film, performance art, integrated media, sound installation and improvised performance. She has been active in North America, Europe, Japan, New Zealand and Australia. She has collaborated with musicians, visual artists, data visualizers and with the groups "Smash and Teeny" (Peebles & guitarist Nilan Perera), and "Cinnamon Sphere" (Perera, Peebles & action calligrapher Chung Gong). Peebles' music has been published on Unsounds, innova Recordings, Cycling '74, Spool, Post-Concrète, and others.

Thanks to Rob Cruickshank – electronics design and fabrication; John Kuisma – nest plank R&D; Chris Bennett – pyrographic illustration of bee lifecycle from illustrations by Celeste Green and Phyllis Thompson (*Bumblebee Economics* by Bernd Heinrich; used with permission); and, Mike Cameron and Siri Robinson – small bee condo fabrication, wood spalting.

[sarahpeebles.net](http://sarahpeebles.net)



Audio-Bees Booths & Cabinets  
simplified habitat sculptures for  
solitary bees and wasps, 2009-2010



These audio-Bees Booths & Cabinets are designed to provide a safe and secure habitat for solitary bees and wasps. They are made of natural, untreated wood and feature a variety of hole sizes and shapes to accommodate different species. The design is inspired by the natural nesting habits of these insects, which typically dig tunnels into the ground or into hollowed-out wood. The audio-Bees Booths & Cabinets are a simple and effective way to support local pollinators and promote biodiversity in your garden or yard.

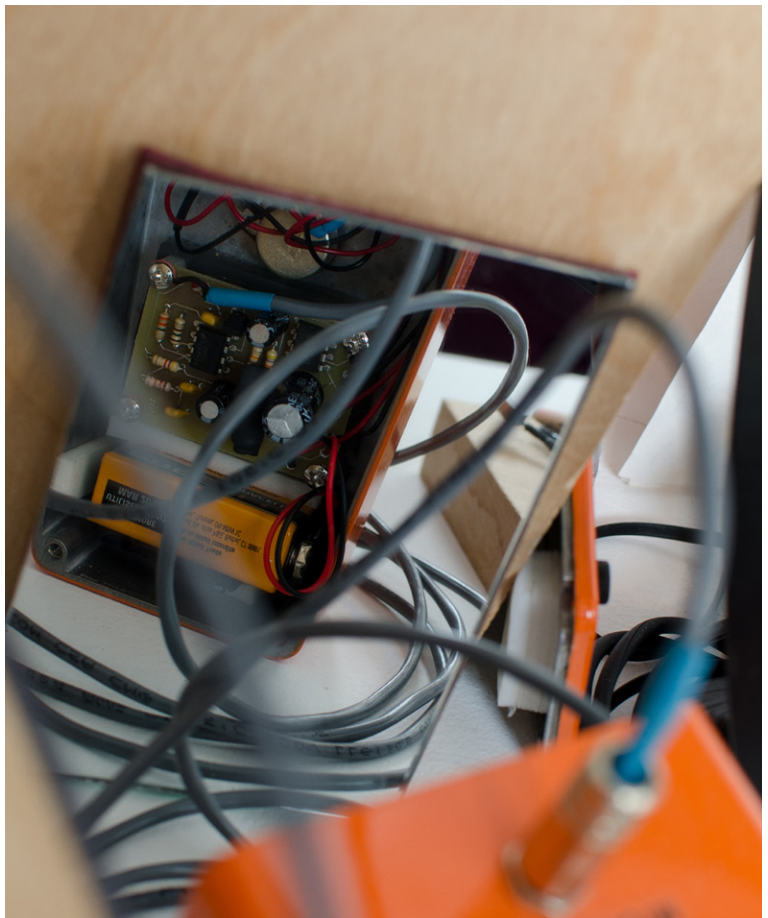


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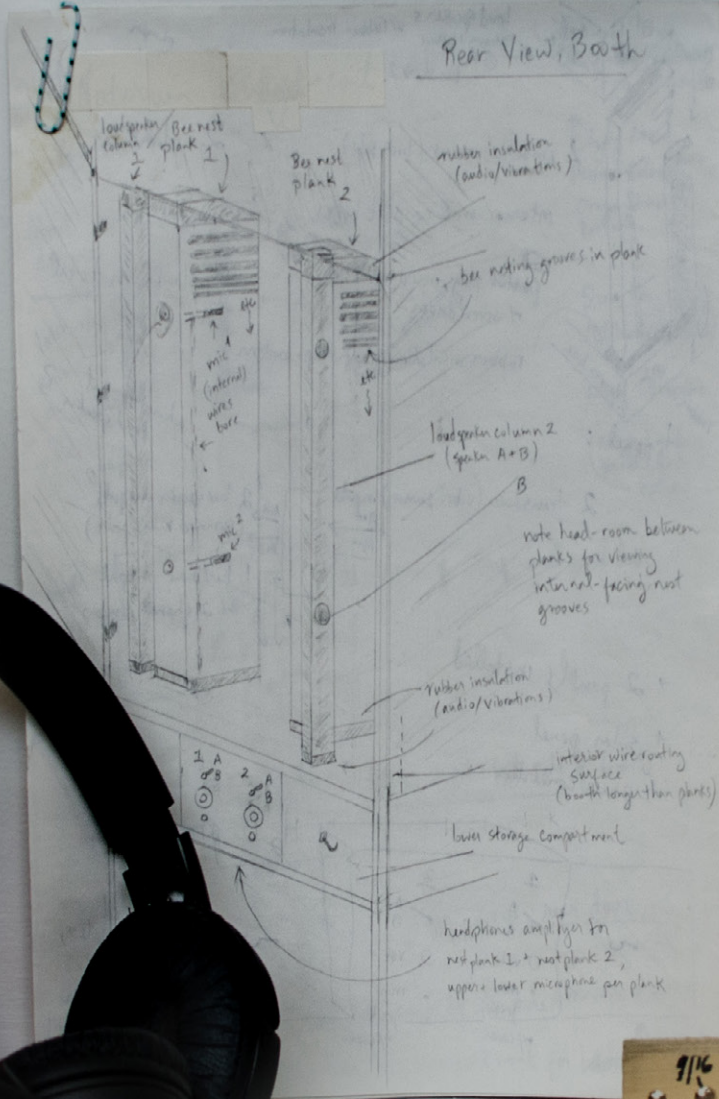








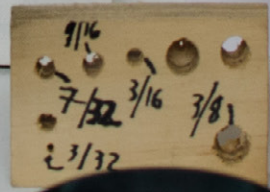
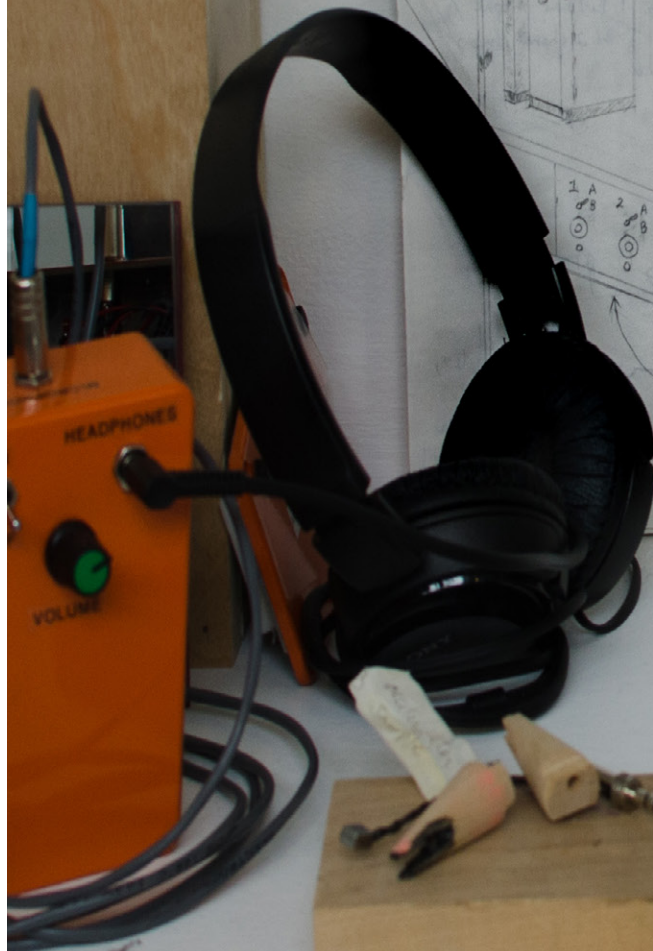
Rear View, Booth

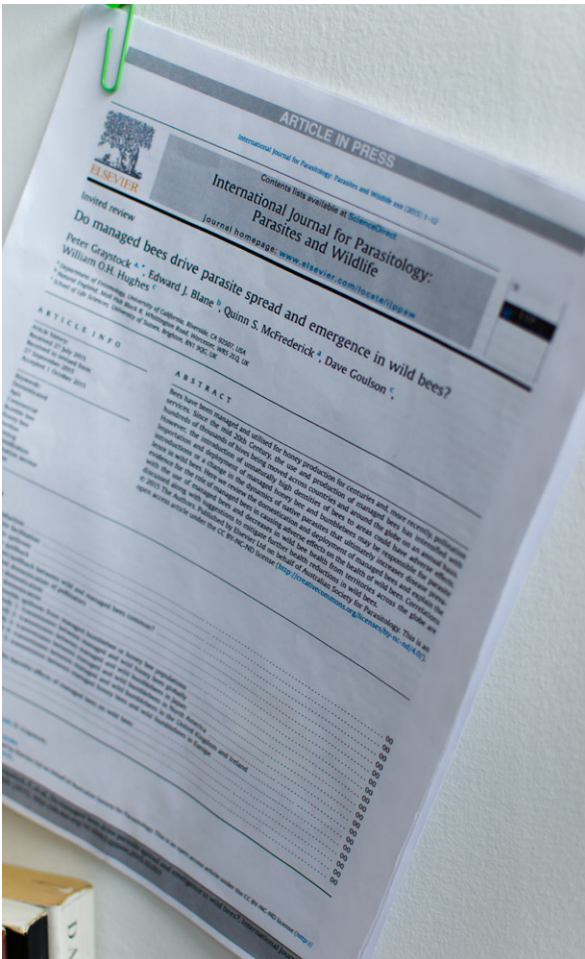


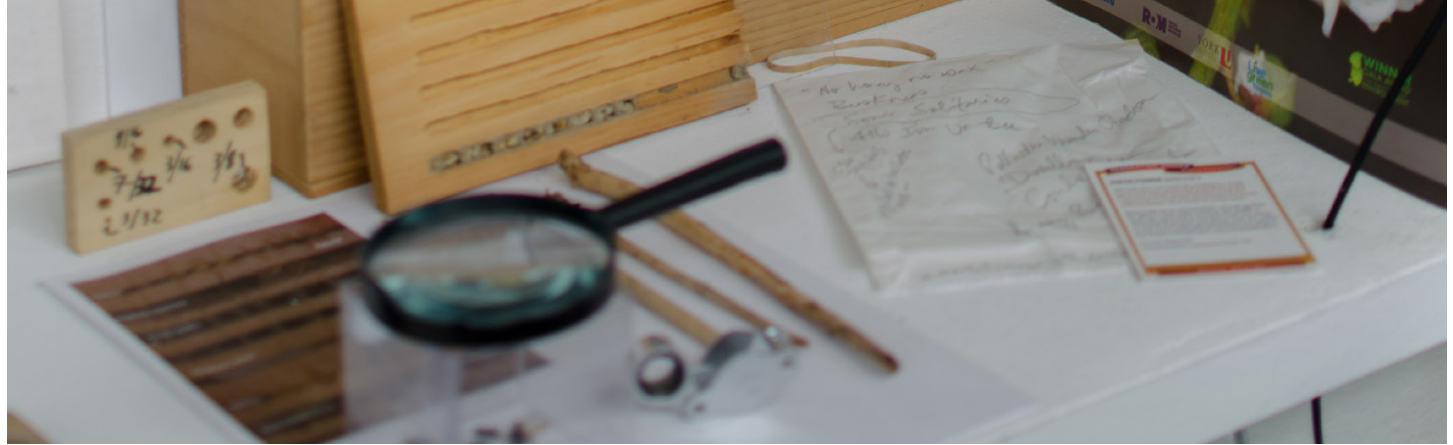
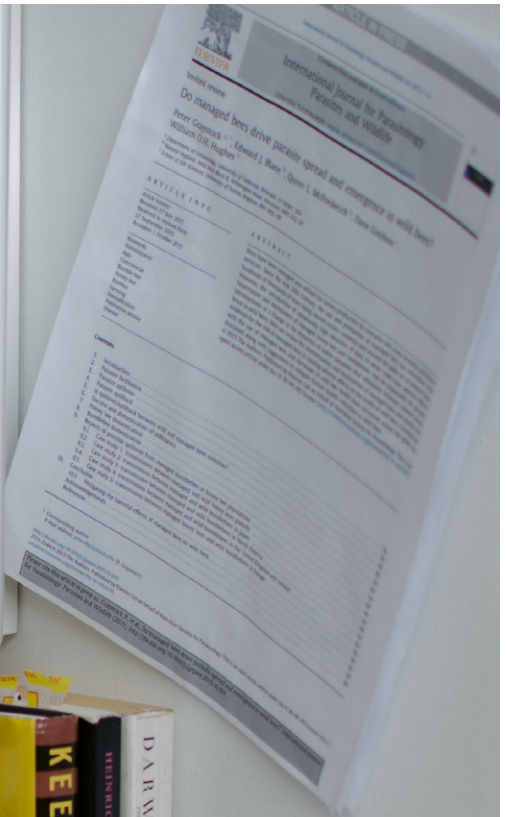
little smaller  
more room for slightly larger bees with mandibles slightly marked  
long mandibles (propagator) or several workers  
Space on left side will be on abdomen just in photo sent by you

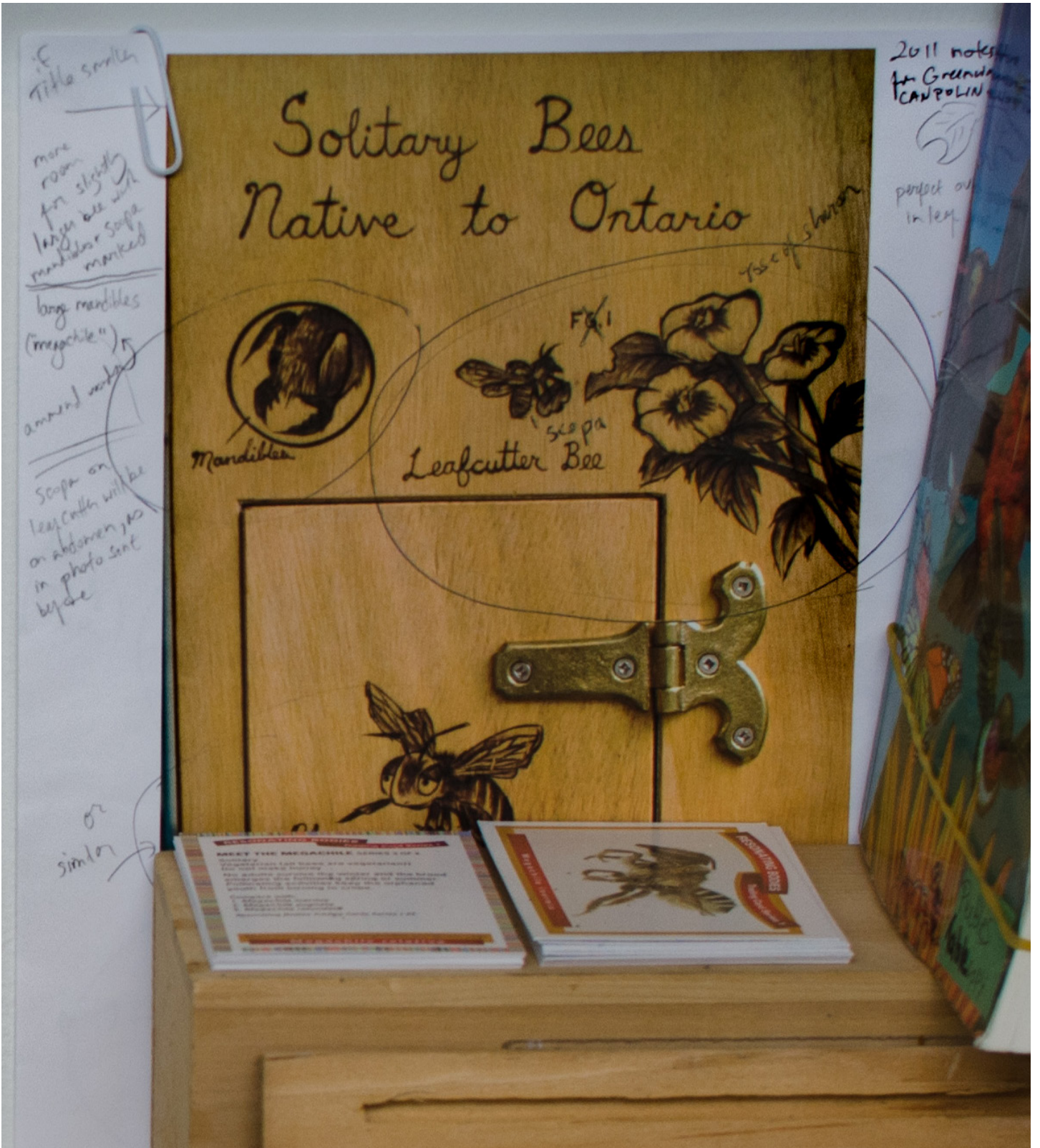


or similar









**RESONATING BODIES**  
Trading Card Series 1

**MEET THE MEGACHILE** SERIES 1 OF 4

Solitary  
Vegetarian (all bees are vegetarian!)  
Do not make honey

Commonly known as leafcutter bees, most of the species of the genus *Megachile* in the greater Toronto area line their brood cells with cuttings from leaves or floral petals. They nest in old dry stems and other pre-existing cavities such as vacated beetle bores. Learn about their powerful jaws on Card 14.

Compare with:  
2. *Megachile pugnata*  
3. *Megachile relativa*  
4. *Megachile rotundata*

Resonating Bodies Trading Cards Series 1 #1

More info: <http://resonatingbodies.wordpress.com>

**Megachile inermis**



**RESONATING BODIES**  
Trading Card Series 1

**SUPER POWER** SERIES 5 OF 9

Although bees can't leap tall buildings in a single bound, they have powers that make them unique. Bees have evolved specialized ways to find and collect food, to sense their environment and to help pollinate flowers, all of which are pretty super!

The mandibles are mouthparts akin to jaws used to cut and chew materials for food or nesting materials. Mason and leafcutter bees (family *Megachilidae*) use their mandibles to construct their nests, while short-tongued bumble bees use mandibles to cut holes in the base of flowers and steal nectar.

Pictured: *Megachile inermis* shows powerful jaws.

Resonating Bodies Trading Cards Series 1 #14

More info: <http://resonatingbodies.wordpress.com>

**Mandibles**



