

CONTRIBUTIONS OF EUROPEAN HONEYBEES

- Provide 80% of the bee pollination required for fruit, vegetables, flowers and seed crops
- Pollinate forage crops such as alfalfa and clover which are fed to dairy and meat animals
- Produce honey, wax and other products

Hives of European honeybees managed by beekeepers play an important part in our lives. These bees are necessary for the pollination of many crops. One-third of our diet relies on honeybee pollination.

Efforts taken to control Africanized honeybees must assure the continued maintenance of beekeepers hives. If European honeybees were eliminated in an area, the wild Africanized honeybees would quickly fill the gap.



People can coexist with the Africanized honeybee by learning about the bee and its habits, supporting beekeeping efforts and taking a few precautions.

If attacked by bees, leave the area quickly and find shelter in a building or car!

Honeybees are not the only stinging insects people encounter. People are often stung by other bees and wasps that look and behave differently from honeybees.

STINGING INSECTS



European honey bee



Africanized honey bee



Bumblebee



Yellow jacket



Mud dauber



Paper wasp



Carpenter bee

All insects shown approximately life size.

If you have any questions please contact:

Shasta Mosquito and Vector Control District

19200 Latona Road
Anderson, CA
(530) 365-3768

shastamosquito.org
contact@shastamosquito.org



To order copies or duplication master write:
UC Cooperative Extension-AHB,
5555 Overland Avenue, Building 4, San Diego, CA 92123

This material is based upon work supported by the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under special project number 93-EXNP-1-5191.

In accordance with applicable State and Federal laws and University policy, the University of California does not discriminate in any of its policies, procedures, or practices on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, medical condition, or handicap. Inquiries regarding this policy may be addressed to the Affirmative Action Director, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 300 Lakeside Drive, 6th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612-3560 (510) 987-0097

Bee Alert:

AFRICANIZED HONEY BEE FACTS



Cooperative Extension
University of California
Division of Agriculture
and Natural Resources

BEE PREPARED

Africanized honeybees are also called “killer bees”. Although its “killer” reputation has been greatly exaggerated, the presence of Africanized honeybees will increase the chances of people being stung. Learning about the Africanized honeybees and taking certain precautions can lower the risk of being injured by this new insect in our environment.

The Africanized honeybee is closely related to the European honeybee used in agriculture for crop pollination and honey production. The two types of bees look the same and their behavior is similar in many respects. Neither is likely to sting when gathering nectar and pollen from flowers, but both will sting in defense if provoked. A swarm of bees in flight or briefly at rest seldom bothers people. However, all bees become defensive when they settle, begin producing wax comb and raising young.

AFRICANIZED AND EUROPEAN HONEY BEES

- Look the same
- Protect their nest and sting in defense
- Can only sting once
- Have the same venom
- Pollinate flowers
- Produce honey and wax

Africanized honeybees are less predictable and more defensive than European honeybees. They are more likely to defend a greater area around their nest. They respond faster in greater numbers, although each bee can sting only once.

AFRICANIZED HONEYBEES

- Respond quickly and sting in large numbers
- Can sense a threat from people or animals 50 feet or more from the nest
- Sense vibrations from power equipment 100 feet or more from nest
- Will pursue an enemy 1/4 mile or more
- Swarm frequently to establish new nests
- Nest in small cavities and sheltered areas



Africanized honeybees nest in many locations where people may encounter them. Nesting sites include: empty boxes or other containers, old tires, infrequently used vehicles, lumber piles, holes and cavities in trees or the ground, garages and other outbuildings, and low decks or spaces under buildings. *Remove potential nest sites around buildings. Be careful wherever bees may be found.*

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

- Listen for buzzing indicating a nest or swarm of bees
- Use care when entering shed or outbuildings where bees may nest
- Examine work area before using lawn mowers, weed cutters, and other power equipment
- Examine areas before tying up or penning pets or livestock
- Be alert when participating in all outdoor sports and activities
- Don't disturb a nest or swarm – contact a pest control company or an emergency response organization
- Teach children to be cautious and respectful of all bees
- Check with doctor about bee sting kits and procedures if sensitive to bee stings



As a rule, stay away from all honeybee swarms and colonies. If bees are encountered, get away quickly. While running away, try to protect your face and eyes as much as possible. Take shelter in a car or building. Water or thick brush does not offer enough protection. Do not stand and swat at bees: rapid motions will cause them to sting.

BEE-PROOFING YOUR HOME

- Remove possible nesting sites around home and yard
- Inspect outside walls and eaves of home and outbuildings
- Seal openings larger than 1/8” in walls, around chimneys and plumbing
- Install fine screens (1/8” hardware cloth) over tops of drain spouts, vents and opening in water meter/utility boxes
- From spring to fall check once or twice a week for bees entering or leaving the same area of your home or yard

WHAT TO DO IF STUNG

- Go quickly to a safe area
- Remove stinger as soon as possible
- Don't squeeze stinger; pressure will release more venom
- Scrape stinger out with fingernail, knife blade or credit card
- Wash sting area with soap and water like any other wound
- Apply ice pack for a few minutes to relieve pain and swelling
- Seek medical attention if breathing is troubles, if stung numerous times or if allergic to bee stings.