

Where are the Honey Bees?

By Zach L.

Scientists are concerned about honey bees and my observations may just support their concerns. I walked around my neighborhood 3 sunny days in the month of May, and I saw no honey bees. On flowering lilacs, cherry trees, and crape myrtle there was not one single honey bee to be found. It made me wonder, where are the bees?



Honey bees or *Apis mellifera* are flying insects with five eyes that go around collecting nectar and while pollinating plants in a symbiotic relationship. These honey bees have a complex society different roles in their hives. There is the queen bee or the leader who is the only developed female in the hive and whose job is to unite the colony and produce a lot of eggs. There are worker bees. Their main job is to collect nectar and pollen and feed it to the other bees. Last, but not least, there are the drones. The drone's main job is to mate with the queen bee.



Some plants depend on the bees to pollinate them. For example, my uncle's farm, pictured to the right, depends upon bees to pollinate the thousands of fruit trees and berry plants that support his family. If the bees stopped pollinating the fruit trees, there would be no fruit to sell.

Honey bees play a crucial role in the environment but a horrible thing has been happening to them. They have started dying in mass numbers because of colony collapse. According to the United States, Environmental Protection Agency, colony collapse is when a large number of worker bees disappear or die, leaving the queen bee a lot of food, and a few nurse bees to look after the immature bees. This has greatly affected the environment in many ways. One example of how this has affected the environment is that flowers and other plants have started to rely more on other pollinators and less on the honey bees.



Honey bees play a pivotal role in the environment and it shows in many ways. For instance, they help local farmers. They pollinate all different types of trees, flowers, and bushes. But honey bees are disappearing. Without honey bees, there are less beautiful flowers, less honey, and less profit for local farmers. We shouldn't take honey bees for granted.

Citation

<https://thehoneybeeconservancy.org/2017/03/27/21-flowers-that-attract-bees/>

<https://www.epa.gov/pollinator-protection/colony-collapse-disorder>

<https://cals.arizona.edu/pubs/insects/ahb/inf1.html>