

LAUSD PEST OF THE MONTH PROGRAM

AFRICANIZED HONEY BEES

WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW DID THEY GET HERE

In 1956, a well-known honey bee researcher brought queens of African honey bees to Brazil in an attempt to develop a race of bees that would be better suited to Brazilian conditions than the European bees that were there. In 1957, some of these bees escaped from their hives. Since that time, the descendants of these bees started moving up towards North America at a rate of about 300 miles per year. They reached Texas in 1990 and arrived in southern California in October 1994. Los Angeles County is now considered colonized by Africanized honey bees.

WHAT IS SO UNUSUAL ABOUT AFRICANIZED HONEY BEES.

- They respond to threats/disturbances, etc. more quickly and vigorously and in large numbers.
- They can sense a threat from people or animals 50 feet or more from their nest.
- They can sense and respond to vibrations from power equipment 100 feet or more from their nests.
- They will pursue an enemy $\frac{1}{4}$ mile or more.
- They will swarm frequently to establish new nests.
- Once they are disturbed, they remain agitated for several hours.

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS

- Listen for buzzing that will indicate a nest or swarm of bees.
- Pay attention when entering sheds or outbuildings where bees may nest.
- Check your work area before using lawn mowers, weed cutters, chain saws, and other power equipment.
- Be alert when participating in outdoor sports and activities.
- Don't disturb a nest or swarm. Stay away from all honey bee swarms and colonies.
- **Teach children to be cautious and respectful of all bees.**

IF ATTACKED BY HONEY BEES

- **DO NOT STAND** and swat at bees or try to hide in bushes or water. The alarm scent a bee leaves on a stung victim stimulates other bees to attack.
- **RUN** - bees may follow for up to ¼ mile but a healthy person can outrun them.
- **PROTECT HEAD** and eyes with shirt, if possible, when running away.
- **FIND SHELTER** in the nearest building or vehicle. The bees that may follow you inside are fewer than those outside.

WHAT TO DO IF STUNG

- Go quickly to a safe area
- Remove stinger as soon as possible by scraping it off with fingernail, credit card, etc.
- Don't squeeze the venom sac as the pressure will release more venom into your body.
- Wash sting area with soap and water.
- Apply ice pack for a few minutes to relieve pain and swelling.
- Call 911 for emergency rescue if multiple stings occur.
- Seek medical attention immediately if you are hypersensitive or suffer an allergic reaction such as breathing difficulty.

BE AWARE

Honey bees are not the only stinging insects people may encounter. People are often stung by other bees and wasps that look and behave differently from honey bees. See attached paper entitled: **Stinging Insects**.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP

- Read, study, understand, and **share** the information in this program with everybody. Be helpful, be vigilant, show concern, and help to protect and guard the health, welfare, and safety of our children by becoming knowledgeable about this issue and educating and enlisting others to help.
- Share the **BEE SMART** material which is attached with teachers, staff, faculty, parents, students, and anyone else who could benefit from it. By getting involved, you might save a life. Thank you for your help.

HONEY BEES ARE IMPORTANT

Honey bees are important insects because:

- They provide 80% of the bee pollination required for the production of fruits, nuts, vegetables, flowers, and seed crops.
- They pollinate forage crops such as alfalfa and clover which are fed to dairy and meat animals.
- They produce honey, wax, and other products.
- One-third of our diets come from crops pollinated by honey bees.

We can coexist with honey bees by learning about their habits and behavior and taking a few precautions.

BEE AWARE

- **A foraging honey bee is busy.**
If you see a honey bee preoccupied with collecting nectar from flowers or drinking water, **DO NOT DISTURB IT**. This bee will not ordinarily sacrifice its life to sting a human unless it is swatted, trapped, or stepped on.
- **A swarm may soon leave.**
Many bees swarming in a clump may look threatening but because they gorged on honey before they left their old nest, and because they have no honey, wax, or young to protect, they are usually quite docile. Most will huddle around their queen while scout bees search for a place to start a new nest. **DO NOT DISTURB A SWARM**. In a day or so, the bees will probably move on to a permanent home.
- **A colony can kill.**
Hundreds of bees may attack as a group if they feel that a nearby human or animal threatens the honey, wax, and young in their nest. **DO NOT DISTURB A HONEY BEE NEST**. Do not try to remove a nest yourself. Promptly put in a trouble call and get professional help from LAUSD Pest Management Department.

Prepared by Dr. Hanif Gulmahamad, LAUSD IPM Coordinator

Date: 3 April, 2003

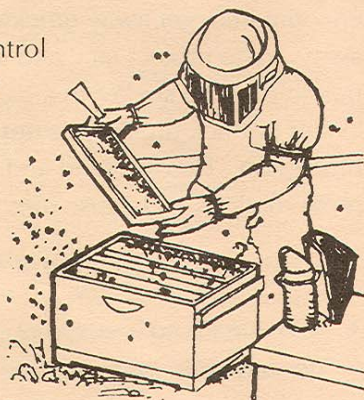
Issue: 03-3.

Contributions of European Honey Bees

- 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 honey bees (EHB) 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 honey bee pollination.

Efforts taken to control Africanized honey bees (AHB) must assure the continued maintenance of beekeepers' hives. If EHB were eliminated in an area, the wild Africanized honey bees would quickly fill the gap.



People can coexist with the AHB by learning about the bee and its habits, supporting bee-keeping efforts and taking a few precautions.

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

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

Stinging Insects *



European honey bee



Africanized honey bee



Bumblebee



Yellow jacket



Mud dauber



Paper wasp



Carpenter bee

* All insects shown approximately life size.

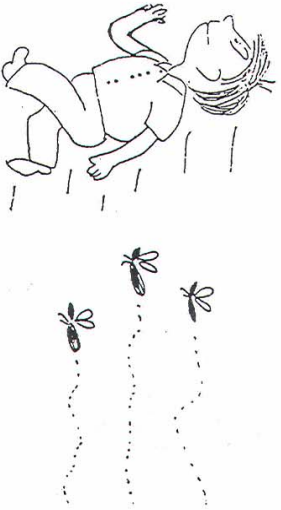
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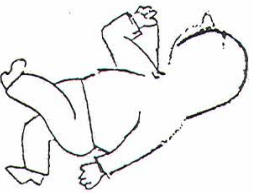


**IF YOU ARE CHASED BY BEES:
BEE SMART!**

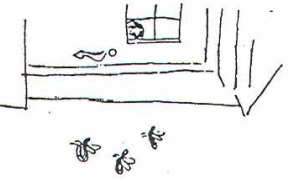
Run away from the bees!



Cover your face and eyes with clothes or hands!

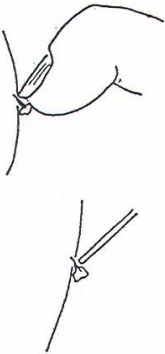


Hide inside a house or car!



**IF YOU ARE STUNG BY A BEE:
BEE SMART!**

Scrape out the stinger, don't squeeze

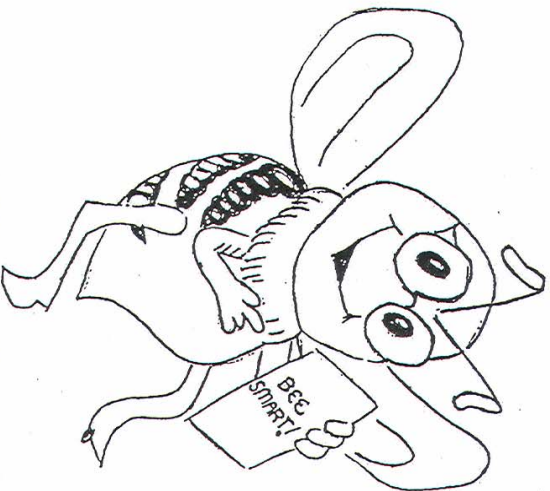


Tell your parents or another adult



BEE

SMART!



A children's guide to
Africanized Honey Bees



A NEW BEE HAS ARRIVED IN CALIFORNIA

BEE SMART!



It's called the Africanized Honey Bee (AHB). It has also been called the "Killer Bee".

IT IS DIFFERENT FROM OUR BEES:

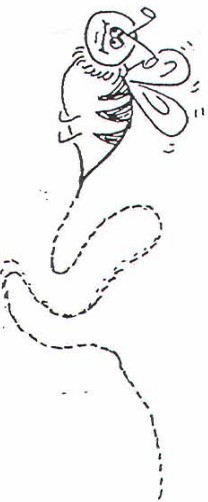
It is more protective of its home



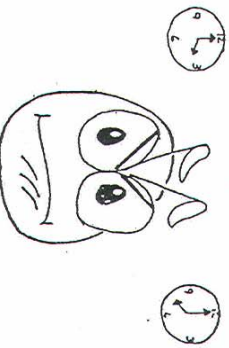
It becomes angry easier



It chases you further



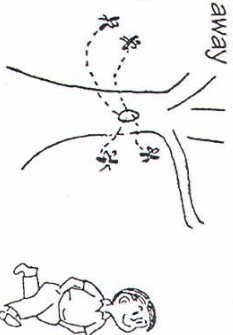
It stays angry longer



IF YOU FIND A BEE'S HOME:

BEE SMART!

Walk away

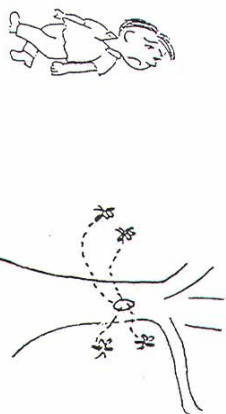


Tell your parents or teacher



DON'T MAKE BEES ANGRY: BEE SMART!

Stay away from a bee's home



Don't throw rocks or other objects at a bee's home

