

Honey Bee FAQ's

Why honey bees?

- Honey bees all over the world are dying at alarming rates due to a number of factors like the increase of pesticides and parasites, decrease in habitat, and lack of proper nutrition.
- Every third bite of food you eat is thanks to a pollinator
- In 2016 the United States alone lost over 44% of its honeybees
- Honeybees are the world's number one pollinator and are responsible for pollination of 70 of the world's top 100 food crops

Can all honey bees sting?

- No, not all honey bees can sting
- The male bee, called a drone, has no stinger at all
- The worker bees are female and they can sting
- Young bees who are working inside a hive may not have developed their venom glands yet so would be unable to sting

How many times can a honey bee sting?

- A worker bee can only sting a human or animal once and then will die
- This is why honey bees are less likely to sting compared to other insects like wasps or hornets

I saw a honey bee on a flower. Will it sting me?

- Rarely, honeybees normally sting only to protect the hive
- When bees are foraging for nectar they are normally not next to their hive, so the protection instinct is not present
- Honeybees are normally very gentle while outside of their hive on flowers because they are not protecting their home or hive

What is the likelihood I will get stung by a honey bee on campus?

- It is unlikely that a honeybee will ever sting you unless you disturb the bees' hive
- Make sure not to get confused with other insect stings that may occur
- Honeybees are usually the first insect to be blamed for a sting, but are the least likely to actually be what stung you

What do I do if a bee is buzzing around me?

- Slowly move your hand, gently guiding it away from your face and it will move without any issue
- If you are in a shaded area move to a sunny area and vice-versa (Honey bees cannot react quickly to temperature changes. Honey bees become disoriented with temperature changes and will leave you alone)
- If you remain uncomfortable move to a new location, but remember to never swat at a honey bee or any other stinging insect

What do I do if I get stung?

- If you are stung by a honey bee it will leave its stinger in your skin
- Take a credit card or other flat object and rake it across the sting
- Don't pinch or try to pull the stinger out

- Put ice on a sting to reduce the swelling

Was it actually a honey bee that stung you?

- Many patients say their sting was from a honey bee when it was actually from a wasp
- The vast majority of patients (except beekeepers) will be wasp allergic and assume it was a honey bee that stung them

Local Reactions:

- Most stings cause **small local reactions** of no significant medical consequence.
- These normal sting reactions are characterized by pain, itching, redness, and swelling at the sting site that resolve within several hours and are caused by the pharmacologic properties of the venom.
- Some **large local reactions** are mild initially but progress after 12 to 24 hours to a diameter of more than 5 cm
- These usually peak in intensity at 48 to 72 hours.
- These reactions are contiguous with the sting site
- Large local sting reactions typically resolve gradually over 5 to 10 days but are rare

Systemic Reactions:

- Occur in less than 2% of the adult population
- Symptoms include (but not limited to), rash, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, severe headache, swelling that is not in the general area of the sting site (especially in throat, neck, or tongue), drop in blood pressure

What's the difference between a local reaction and systemic reaction to a honey bee sting?

- Less than 2% of the adult population will have a systemic reaction when stung by a honey bee
- Less than .8% of children will have a systemic reaction when stung by a honey bee
- The majority of the population believes they are allergic to honey bees if they are stung on their hand and their hand swells, but are actually only having a normal local reaction (just like an ant bite)

Where will the honey bees be located?

- Bee Downtown partners with each company's grounds team to find the best location for the hives as well as for the employees working on the campus

Who takes care of our bees?

- Bee Downtown will be responsible for the installation and maintenance of the hives and will be maintaining the hives a least every 2 weeks
- Bee Downtown currently keeps over 120 hives with 40 corporate companies



Fun Facts about Bees

1. The honey bee is responsible for pollinating 70 of the 100 crops that provide 90% of the world's food.
2. It would take one ounce of honey to power a bee's flight around the world.
3. There are three types of bees in the hive- Queen, Worker, Drone.
4. The queen can lay over 1,500 eggs each day during her lifetime.
5. Honey bees are the only insect to produce food for humans.
6. Honey bees die after they sting.
7. The male honey bee, the Drone, does not have a stinger.
8. Honey bees are responsible for pollinating approx. 80% of all fruit, vegetable and seed crops in the U.S.
9. Honey bees have the most complex symbolic language of any animal on earth, outside the primate family. They communicate with each other by dancing and by using pheromones.
10. To make 1 pound of honey, the bees in the colony must visit 2 million flowers, fly over 55,000 miles and will be the lifetime work of approximately 768 bees.
11. Honey is the ONLY food that includes all the substances necessary to sustain life, including water.
12. Honey never spoils.
13. A strong beehive can make over 100 pounds of honey per year.
14. Bees have two separate stomachs; one for food and another just for nectar.
15. Honey has natural preservatives so that it won't go bad.
16. Honey bees contribute over 15 billion dollars annually to the U.S. economy .
17. The practice of honey collection and beekeeping dates back to the stone-age, as evidenced by cave paintings.
18. Honey bees can see two things we cannot. One is in the ultraviolet and another is polarized light.
19. Honey bees have been producing honey for at least 150 million years.
20. Honey and beeswax form the basis of many skin creams, lipsticks, and hand lotions.
21. Honey bees visit 50-100 flowers during one collection trip.
22. Honey bees can fly up to 15 miles per hour.
23. The average worker bee makes 1/12 of a teaspoon of honey in her life.
24. The honeybee's wings stroke 11,400 times per minute, thus making the distinctive buzz.

Above all else it is our hope and desire that employees with Bee Downtown hives on their campus feel safe and excited about the bees joining their place of work. If you have any remaining questions or concerns about the installation of your newest neighbors, please don't hesitate to call or email us with any questions you may have! We want to remind everyone as well that your place of work already has honey bees, and other important pollinators pollinating the flowers, trees, and natural habitats you have surrounding your campus. The difference with these hives is that you will now get some of the sweet honey they produce from your vibrant and beautiful campus!

All the best!

--The Bee Downtown Team
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~~Bee The Change~~