

Honeybee Emergency First Aid

Always monitor a victim of a sting event! Allergic reactions do not always happen instantly! People can go into shock even if not allergic to bees!

Local Reactions—The most common side effect of bee venom. Includes itchiness, redness, and swelling of sting site.

Treatment:

- ◆ **Contact family doctor**
- ◆ Oral or topical antihistamines
- ◆ Steroid creams
- ◆ Topical anesthetic with benzocaine
- ◆ Ice packs

Allergic Reaction— Uncommon reaction due to a hypersensitivity to compounds in bee venom. Can be moderate or severe. Includes itchiness, swelling, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea.

Treatment:

Victims must see a medical doctor to receive treatment for allergic reactions.

Anaphylaxis—The most severe form of allergic reaction and is IMMEDIATELY life threatening. SYMPTOMS INCLUDE: difficulty breathing, chest pain, swelling in throat or tongue, loss of consciousness.

Treatment:

Call 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY

Allergies can develop later in life, so always monitor stings for serious reactions.

R9 Hive & Honey Services:

- Crop Pollination
- Live Bee Removal
- Bee/Beekeeping Presentations
- Live Bee Demonstrations



Have any questions or want to learn more?

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Africanized Honeybees



R9 Hive & Honey

Established 2018

*Specializing in live honeybee removals across
the Rio Grande Valley*

History of Africanized Honeybees

Honeybees (*Apis mellifera*) were introduced to South America by Spanish Conquistadors in the 1500's due to their love of honey and need for wax. However, European bees did not fair well in the new tropical climates so bee-keeping was not as profitable and many still practiced the old art of stingless beekeeping, meliponiculture, instead.

In Africa, honeybees were good honey producers despite being in similar climates. Dr. Kerr decided to experiment with breeding European and African honeybees. Unfortunately these highly robust test bees escaped from the apiary and quickly created more colonies in the area. As Dr. Kerr hoped, African-derived honeybees were very productive in the South American tropics, but unfortunately breeding them with gentle European honeybees did not produce calmer offspring as he had hoped.

Over the next several decades the Africanized bees spread north towards the US and are now found in over 9 southern states.



Africanized Honeybee vs European Honeybee

Hybrid between different honeybee subspecies:

- East African Lowland bee (*A. m. scutellata*)
- Italian bee (*A. m. ligustica*)
- Iberian bee (*A. m. iberiensis*)

Physical Traits

Most are brownish with dark stripes. Africanized bees tend to be roughly 33% smaller than the average European honeybee.

Nesting Behavior

Often prefer small nest sites (10 L volume) as they do not over-winter with as much honey.

Occasionally Africanized bees will create open air nests.

They are more likely to nest in manmade objects due to their small nest site preference.

Swarm Behavior

Africanized bees will issue swarms up to 6 times per year. They often swarm throughout the year.

Swarms may vary in size and can be triggered by weather patterns.

Defense Behavior

Easy to agitate, and have 3 day memory, during which they are highly defensive.

Have a patrol radius of up to 100 feet from their hive

Attacks threats with 100's or 1000's of bees of all castes/age groups, not just guard bees.

Comprises 15 different subspecies including:

- Italian bee (*A. m. ligustica*)
- Iberian bee (*A. m. iberiensis*)
- Carniolan bee (*A. m. carnica*)
- European Dark bee (*A. m. mellifera*)

Physical Traits

Come in variety of sizes and colors. Italian bees are known for being blonde, vs the European dark bee is almost completely black.

Nesting Behavior

Prefer larger nest sites (40 L) in order to prepare robust honey supplies for winter.

Infrequently creates open air nests.

Swarm Behavior

Most subspecies only issue swarms 1 or 2 times per year during summer.

Swarms typical consist of 30-60% of total colony size and are mainly triggered by running out of space in the nest.

Defense Behavior

Many European breeds have been semi-domesticated and are used to human interaction making them easy to work with.

Will attack threats with 10-20 guard bees and only defends immediate area surrounding nest.

