

Africanized Honey Bees

Africanized Honey Bees are the decedents of several experiments where European honey bees and African honey bees in order to create a more robust honeybee subspecies that can thrive in tropical/subtropical areas.

These bees are highly defensive and can cause issues for people not experienced with beekeeping. European honeybees will generally sent out 10-20 guard bees to attack any intruder and will easily forget any incidence within a few hours. Africanized honeybees will respond to any threat by sending out hundreds of bees. Africanized hives will not limit defenders to just guard bees; they will send young nurse bees and elderly foragers as well.

If you see a swarm or think there is a hive near by, it is always best to hire a beekeeper to handle them. Dealing with feral bees often requires the use of protective equipment such as a ventilated bee suit, smoker, and gloves. A beekeeper will also have other items such as a hive box, buckets for removed comb, and extra gear such as ladders, queen cages, and more.

All feral honey bees in the Rio Grande Valley are Africanized hybrids. The first Africanized honey bee hive was discovered in Hidalgo county in the 1990's and has been able to inter-mix with European bees for the past 30 years.

If you see a potential bee colony or a swarm BE CALM and walk away!

If you get stung make sure and seek medical attention, especially if you don't know if you are allergic.

R9 Hive & Honey Services:

Live Bee Removal & Swarm Relocation

Crop Pollination


Native Bee & Beekeeping Presentations

Live Bee Demonstrations



Have any questions or want to learn more?

Visit our website or follow our social media pages to keep up to date on our bee-ventures!

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HONEY BEE COLONY REMOVAL PROCESS



R9 Hive & Honey

Established 2018

Specializing in live honeybee removals across
the Rio Grande Valley

WHY HIRE A BEEKEEPER?

Many homeowners do not realize that a local beekeeper can help remove a living colony safely. While some licensed pest control operators now refrain from killing honeybees, here are a few quick reason to choose a beekeeper over pest control companies.

1. **Less poison in the environment.** Typically we are able to remove colonies alive without the use of anything more harsh than smoke and essential oils.
2. **Less chance of being hurt by bees.** Attempting to kill or remove bees without the proper tools or experience can get people and animals gravely injured.
3. **The bees are unharmed.** While honeybees are not a protected or endangered species (like many native bees and pollinators are) honeybees are useful for agriculture and honey production.
4. **Dead bees will rot and decay.** Just like any animal, a pile of dead bees can rot leaving an unpleasant odor or mold that may permeate wood or drywall. Melting wax can cause damage to the inside of the building leading to cosmetic and structural issues. If the area is not fixed, new bees may also move into the same area later on.
5. **Beekeepers know how to prevent bees.** We work with bees almost every day and learn their habits and preferences that can be used to help homeowners protect their homes against bees.



HOW WE REMOVE BEES



Each bee removal is unique and requires a different approach, however we have a wide variety of tools to accommodate any job.

Step 1—Identification

First we analyze the situation and use a variety of tools such as infrared (thermal) cameras, borescopes, and stethoscopes to locate an obscured hive to supplement traditional low-tech visual cues or even sense of smell.

Step 2—Method Selection

Once located, we estimate the size and consult with the property owner on the exact methods we intend to use to expose the hive. Most homes involve removing soffit boards, cutting through sheetrock walls, or sawing through wooden floors.

Step 3—Removal

After we expose the colony, we use a custom-built bee safe vacuum to gently extract the honeybees. The vacuum barrel acts as a safe container during transportation. All brood comb are then suspended inside empty frames in the new box. Honey comb is removed and placed inside a food safe bucket.

Bee repellent derived from almond oil extract is often used to encourage bees to leave the nest site and help prevent bees from immediately moving back in before the area can be repaired.

Step 4—Relocation

Once back to the apiary, we feed the honey back to our recovering bees to ensure they do not starve and can grow. The bees are introduced to their new hive box with the comb from their old nest and allowed time to recover.

Bees at our recovery apiary are periodically inspected for disease, pests, and will feed them supplementary sugar water or substitute pollen if they are lacking in food stores.

FIRST DAY AFTER REMOVAL

First step is to breathe easy!

For the next 3 days you may still see some honeybees around the removal area. Depending on the time of day the bees were removed, there may have been some foragers out working and arrive home after we have left the site. For those bees, many will be dying of old age within a few days naturally, however many others will likely find other feral honeybee colonies to join after they realize their home is gone.

Feral bees in the area will smell honey and come investigate the area. These foragers will not be moving in. They are simply collecting easily accessible food for their own colony. These bees are unlikely to attack or bother people/animals as they are not defending their home.



TIPS ON REPAIR

Bees are small! Like other tiny insects, it takes very little space for a bee to find a cozy home in your buildings. They only need an opening 5 mm wide to enter any item or structure.

Spray foam is easily destroyed by bees and other insects, so gaps in wood, stone, or other building materials should be filled with silicone caulking, mortar, or wood putty.

Use window screening to block in larger holes or gaps that can not be filled or areas that require air flow. The screening can be nailed, stapled, or even glued to the area, but should be a fine mesh so bees can not enter.

Bees will also nest in upturned buckets, unopened utility boxes, compost bins, or even unused grills, so ensure that these items are opened and checked regularly.