

"KILLER" BEES vs HONEY BEES

GENETIC LINEAGE

Species: Western Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*)

Hybrid between different honeybee subspecies:

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

Species: Western Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*)

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

Most are brownish with dark stripes.

Average of all bees in colony is 10% smaller than the average European honey bee breed colonies.

Come in variety of sizes and colors.

Italian bees are known for being blonde, vs the European dark bee is almost completely black.

NESTING BEHAVIORS

Often prefer small nest sites (10 L volume)

Occasionally creates open air nests.

More likely to nest in manmade cavities due to their small nest site preference.

Will nest on or underground if a suitable existing cavity is found.

Prefer larger nest sites (40 L)

Infrequently creates open air nests.

Uncommon to find in artificial cavities out side of beekeeper's boxes.

Prefer nesting in large cavities several feet above ground.

SWARMING BEHAVIORS

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

Swarms may vary in size but prime swarms are typically 30-60% of total colony size and can be triggered by weather patterns.

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.

DEFENSIVE BEHAVIORS

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

Have a patrol radius of up to 100 feet of nest.

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

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.