

Reasons for Beekeeping

As humans it is!!

Bees are one of the most important pollinators; without them a lot of plants would disappear from the face of the Earth.

#1. Bees give your flowers a boost

They feed on your flowers and vegetables around their beehive. As they go from flower to flower, they carry pollen and pollinate the plants.

#2. Your hard work is rewarded

The main reason many people keep bees is honey production. Local raw honey that you get from your bees gives a healthy boost to your body and can help you overcome seasonal allergies.

Bees also produce wax and Propolis. The bee's wax can be used in making a natural lip gloss, candles, and much more. Propolis is a fantastic medicine which can prevent cavities, heal burns, help with a cough, etc.

#3. Beekeeping is for everyone

Beekeeping is for all ages and genders. Whether you are retired and like the idea of taking care of bees in your spare time, or you would like a relaxing hobby after work hours - bees welcome everyone. If you have a child interested in beekeeping, it can even become a family activity, so you can learn about bees together and later enjoy the delicious honey.

#4. You are helping to save bees

Colony collapse disorder (CCD) has resulted in a serious decline in the number of bees. Unfortunately, we still don't understand it fully and are not sure what caused it and how to stop it or slow it down.

CCD is when worker bees abandon the hive. They may leave the queen, young bees, and nurse bees to take care of the brood which leaves the hive open to parasites that will destroy the colony. Since worker bees cannot survive without their queen, it is against their natural instinct to just leave the colony.

#5. Working with bees is relaxing

People who are not that familiar with bees might find them scary as the fact about honey bees is that they sting. However, you just need to get a good bee-suit which will make the work around the bees safe. When you get over your fear, you will realise that bees are pretty interesting creatures. While manipulating the hive, you

have to move slowly so not to disturb the bees or crush them. The slow pace of beekeeping work is refreshing and calming for yourself.

#6. Beekeeping is rewarding

Beekeeping is rewarding as both bees and the beekeeper benefit from each other. Bees produce honey, propolis, and wax for the beekeeper, while the beekeeper takes care of the bees keeping them healthy and strong. You can have a beehive even in your garden as long as they are docile and there is forage around for the bees! they will be happy.

BEE BEHAVIOR--UNDERSTANDING AND HANDLING BEES TO AVOID STINGING

. Honeybees are never aggressive--they are defensive. You are the aggressor to them!

Bees don't "**think**" like we do--don't anthropomorphise their behaviour! They don't get mad, angry, vengeful, excited, etc.--certain stimuli simply initiate certain behavioural responses. To understand bees, you must understand the stimuli and responses!

Use all your senses to "**read**" the bees. **Sight, hearing, smell, touch (OK, not taste)**. Before a colony goes into defensive mode, their movements change, the pitch of their buzzing changes, they emit the banana smell of alarm pheromone, and they start to "**hit**" you without stinging at first.

Imagine this analogy: bees are **like pit bull dogs**--they can be as sweet as pie, or with only a little warning, they can tear your arm off.

Be aware of the "**little warnings!**" In the field sessions, we will work small colonies in the best of conditions--don't let this give you a false sense that bees cannot suddenly start stinging "**en mass**".

If you disturb a colony of bees, and they start to sting you, **cover your face and GET AWAY QUICKLY.**

Our Native Honey bees will rarely follow you very far. You can "**lose**" following bees by walking through shrubbery.

With the importation of non-native Honey Bees brought into Ireland the cross-breeding between them is beginning to be seen as aggression in our native Honeybee.

. IF YOU GET STUNG

The honeybee stinger releases **about 90% of its venom in the first 20 seconds**. Therefore, you should **remove the stinger immediately!**

It is not critical just how you remove the stinger, just do it and quickly. Most beekeepers simply scrape the stinger out of their skin with a fingernail.

If you get stung in the eyelid, ear, nose or lip it will hurt like hell! The stinger will be hard to remove, so get away from the hive and ask someone to remove the stinger. Or **use the rear-view mirror of your car to see where it is**.

Take antihistamine to reduce swelling and itching immediately *if not sooner*. Some swear by other homeopathic remedy.

Safety warning: If you receive over 50 stings at a time, consult your doctor for at least a week after the incident in case of tissue necrosis that cause kidney failure.

IMPORTANT

What you need to know about Bees

- Occupants of the Hive, their Life Cycle and Functions.
- Beekeeping Equipment and Clothing, Beekeeping Terms.
- Spring Management, Available Bee Flora.
- Hive Types and Assembly of Frames, Honey Sections, and hives etc.
- Summer Management, Swarms, Swarming & Forage.
- Bee Health & Hygienic Beekeeping, Diseases and Pests.
- Honey Removal, Extraction and Processing,
- Summary of Course with Q & A.
- Know your Beekeeping Equipment Suppliers & have spare equipment at hand before you require it.