

How can we save the Honey Bee?

The honeybees are synonymous with the flowers blooming during the springtime, and they have found their place in some of the most iconic books and paintings down the ages. Moreover, honeybees play an extremely significant role in our lives because an estimated one in three of every bite of food we take has something to do with the pollinating action of these tiny insects, leaving aside the obvious honey. This is in spite of the fact that the major food grains that have emerged as our primary staple since the dawn of civilization have no role for the honeybees as pollinators. However, honeybees continue to be the main, and in many case the only pollinating agents for most of the fruits, nuts, and vegetables. Thus, the survival of the honeybees is of primary importance from both a naturalist and survivalist point of views.

Even though honeybees populate practically every corner of the earth, they have been facing major threat to their continued existence ever since the middle of the last decade of the twentieth century. The phenomenon known as the Colony Collapse Disorder or CCD has been causing a lot of concern to the apiculturists who have been witness to entire colonies of honeybees collapsing in a mysterious fashion with the adult bees disappearing. The phenomenon of adult bees abandoning their hives is having serious repercussions upon the various other lifeforms in their vicinity that depend upon them for their survival, and in the process damaging the entire ecosystem of the place.

The specialists have arrived at some conclusions regarding the probable causes behind this unnatural behavior by honeybees in regard to their hives, and several possible factors include loss of habitat, and increased exposure to pathogens, pesticides. However, the governments around the globe are yet to take truly proactive steps to counter this damaging phenomenon by placing adequate safeguards and regulations in place through proper legislations. Thus, the onus has landed upon the concerned gardeners, beekeepers, and citizens at large to take remedial measures to counter it and protect the honeybees from disappearing off the face of the earth.

It is possible for concerned citizens to be proactive on their own and make a difference to the rising tide of crisis faced by the honeybees. They can do so by providing the bees with proper food, shelter, and water. Moreover, it will not take them much place to get started with something as limited as a balcony of front stop being enough from beginning their good work.

1. Pesticides have known adverse effects on a range of beneficial insects including the honeybees. Thus, it is essential to look for alternative avenues for growing plants instead of continued reliance upon the highly toxic chemical fertilizers. Exploring organic ways to grow crops including the use of biopesticides such as the ladybug beetle to control pest population, as well as, composting to enhance the fertility of soil can be excellent for the population of honeybees present in the area.
2. We can also ensure abundant food sources for the honeybees all the year round by opting for cluster plantings consisting of plants with staggered blooming times. This will help in ensuring that there is adequate supply of food throughout the year, and during the late summer and fall season in particular which are the usually the lean season.
3. Honeybees must also have access to clean water all the year round, and shallow water sources are more than enough to meet their limited needs. Moreover, the shallow water sources are an excellent choice because they provide enough water to the honeybees without enabling the mosquitoes to use them as their breeding grounds.
4. Finally, dead trees and plants, free from all sorts of disturbance and meddling, can be excellent nesting spots for the wild bees.

Questions

1. What is the main role that the honeybees play?
 - a) Natural pollinators
 - b) Symbol of springtime in songs and poems
 - c) Producer of honey
2. What is the full form of CCD?
 - a) Colony Construction Disorder
 - b) Colony Collapse Disorder
 - c) Colony Communication Disorder

3. Among the following options, pick the correct cause/s behind CCD
 - a) Exposure to pathogen and pesticides
 - b) Loss of habitat
 - c) Both
4. Why has it become important for ordinary citizens to take remedial actions for the survival of honeybees?
 - a) Because of rising demand of natural honey
 - b) Because of monetary incentive provided by the governments
 - c) Because of lack of proactive measures by the governments
5. How is it possible to avoid or reduce using chemical fertilizers?
 - a) By giving up of enhanced yield of crops
 - b) By utilizing means of biofertilizers such as composting
 - c) By increasing the duration of cultivation per year
6. According to the author, how can one ensure adequate food supply for the honeybees throughout the year?
 - a) By planting trees with staggered bloom
 - b) By leaving food items in open for the honeybees
 - c) By not extracting their honey from the hives
7. What is/are the benefit/s of having shallow water sources for the honeybees?
 - a) They do not allow honeybees to consume too much water
 - b) They do not allow the mosquitoes to breed in them
 - c) Both