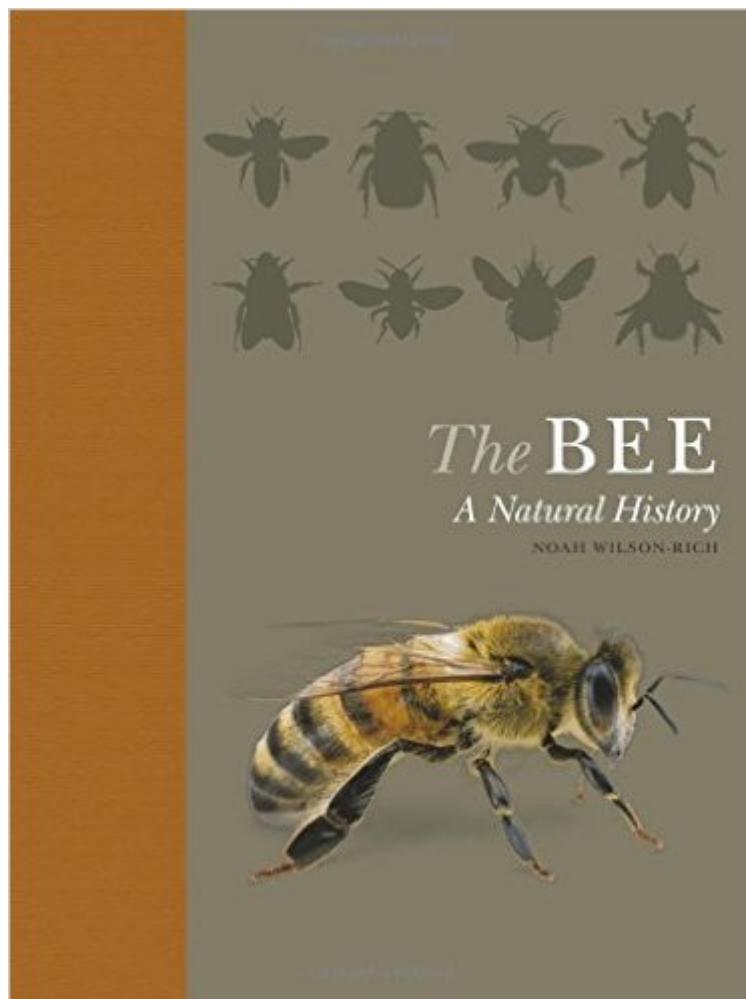


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# The Bee: A Natural History



## Synopsis

Bees pollinate more than 130 fruit, vegetable, and seed crops that we rely on to survive. Bees are crucial to the reproduction and diversity of flowering plants, and the economic contributions of these irreplaceable insects measure in the tens of billions of dollars each year. Yet bees are dying at an alarming rate, threatening food supplies and ecosystems around the world. In this richly illustrated natural history of the bee, Noah Wilson-Rich and his team of bee experts provide a window into the vitally important role that bees play in the life of our planet. Earth is home to more than 20,000 bee species, from fluorescent-colored orchid bees and sweat bees to flower-nesting squash bees and leaf-cutter bees. This book takes an incomparable look at this astounding diversity, blending an engaging narrative with practical, hands-on discussions of such topics as beekeeping and bee health. It explores our relationship with the bee over evolutionary time, delving into how it came to be, where it stands today, and what the future holds for humanity and bees alike. Provides an accessible, illustrated look at the human-bee relationship over time. Features a section on beekeeping and handy go-to guides to the identification, prevention, and treatment of honey bee diseases. Covers bee evolution, ecology, genetics, and physiology. Includes a directory of notable bee species. Presents a holistic approach to bee health, including organic and integrated pest management techniques. Shows what you can do to help bee populations.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The book is informative and well designed with many excellent photographs. There are two reasons

why I only give the book 3 stars; 1. The authors cover a lot of ground in a rather small book, so that each topic, although fascinating, is only superficially covered and I kept wishing that there was more information on each topic. 2. Much of the focus of the book is on the European honey bee but many other species of bees, other honey bees as well as solitary bees. There is not enough attention given by the editor or authors to clearly identify which type of bee they are talking about and this leads to a lot of confusion and head scratching. As an example, the book says that it was once believed that bees originated in Asia but recent research shows that they probably originated in Africa. Does the authors mean that the earliest common ancestor of all bees was found in Africa, just like the earliest common ancestor of all humans was found in Africa? Or are they saying that the Western honey bee, *Apis mellifera*, originated in Africa? The loose use of the term bee makes for confusing reading. Overall the book provides a good introduction to bees and gives much interesting information that is not typically found in beekeeping books.

The pics in this book are great, and there are a lot of bee facts, but at the same time, I had a lot of bee questions that remained unanswered in the end. More information and fewer bee variant pictures would make this a better book.

I've recently become very interested in bees, and bought this on my kindle, not wanting to wait for the book to arrive. I quickly came to realize that many of the charts were illegible on my kindle, and I felt I was missing out on important info. I returned the kindle edition and bought the hardcover, and I am SO glad I did! This is not only an informative book, it is also incredibly beautiful. Each page is well illustrated and laid out to be visually interesting. It is a wonderful introduction to the fascinating world of bees for the lay person. I will treasure this book for many years to come.

Anything you ever wanted to know about bees is in this book. I never knew there were so many kinds in the world. That was a surprise to me. I enjoyed the information therein. Now, I can share it with others as the occasion presents itself. The pictures are wonderful as there are many close-ups of each kind of bee. Someone must have been very brave, or have a telephoto lens to get these pictures. I can recommend this book to anyone who needs or wants more information on the subject of bees. It would be a good book for a library to have. Many thanks to all who made this information possible to others. It was interesting reading in the afternoon with tea, scone, and honey beside me.

I've read a lot of books about bees, but this is full of information and some of it was new to me - so I

learned something from this book and would highly recommend it. It may be a bit technical for some and more information about all kinds of bees than a starting honeybee keeper would want and/or need to know, but I would put it on their reading list for later. It's a must have on my beekeeper bookshelf. Thumbs up on this book for sure!

This is maybe the best general book on bees. The writing is quite good and the illustrations are outstanding. It covers a number of topics related to bees, and some readers may wish a particular aspect was covered more thoroughly. The book is written with a British focus. One fact that I am still amazed by. Bees have been trained to find land mines. Whether that experiment has translated into military use I do not know, but it is an intriguing thing and it has some interesting implications about the intelligence and learning ability of insects. There are seven chapters. Chapter 1 looks at bee evolution. Chapter 2 discusses bee anatomy and biology--this is fairly heavy on science, but should not be beyond most readers' comprehension. Chapter 3 discusses bee society and behaviors, and this to me is the best in the book, looking at bee communication, navigation and such--I found intriguing the idea that "swarm intelligence" exists and immediately thought of crowd sourcing on the internet. Chapter 4 may be the weakest, looking at bees and humans, and really is a bit superficial in covering a lot too quickly. Chapter 5 is on beekeeping, with lots of information for people who've wondered about it. Chapter 6 is a "bee directory" with brief and interesting text about a number of bee species. Chapter 7 is perhaps overall the most important, looking at challenges bees face, including parasites, viruses, colony disorders, habitat issues, pollution, agricultural issues and more. Many species of bees, of economic importance and some not, are in a long term pattern of decline. Most readers will have heard about honeybee populations collapsing because it has important economic consequences. Could bees be the canary in the coal mine, so to speak? There's a useful bibliography and a list of internet sites that might be useful to readers.

I definitely recommend this book not only to beekeepers, but naturalists and those with a passion for wildlife and an interest in learning more about the bee. Well written and fully illustrated with photographs, this book covers some biology, anatomy, history, and a selection of bee species.

Please read this book....any book about bees...."If the bees disappeared off the surface of the globe, then man would have only four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man."---Albert Einstein

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