



Bee Safety



The best safety advice is to avoid an encounter with unfriendly Africanized Bees. Be alert for danger. Remember that AHB sting to defend their colony, so be on the look out for honey bee swarms and colonies.

- Be alert for bees coming in and out of an opening such as a crack in a wall, or the hole in a utility box.
- Listen for the hum of an active bee colony.
- Look for bees in holes in the ground, holes in trees or house, and in sheds.
- Be extra careful when moving junk that has been lying around.
- Be alert for bees that are acting strangely. Quite often bees will display some preliminary defensive behavior before going into a full-fledged attack.
- When you are outdoors, in a rural area, a park or wilderness reserve, be aware of your surroundings and keep an eye out for bees the way you would watch out for snakes and other natural dangers.
- Don't panic at the sight of a few bees foraging in the flowers. Bees are generally very docile as they go about their normal activities.



Where They Have Been Found



The location of AHB in Oklahoma.

Africanized Bees probably present the greatest danger in the U.S. to American beekeeping and American agriculture in general. AHBs often enter European colonies to mingle and mate with them. Such mating results in more hybrid bees having African genes and tendencies dominating over European ones. An entire colony may suddenly take on aggressive and short-tempered behavior

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AFRICANIZED HONEY BEES



IN



OKLAHOMA



Africanized Honey Bees

(AHB) -- also called "Africanized bees" or "killer

bees" have been found in Oklahoma. They were discovered in a tree in Southwestern Oklahoma near the town of Tipton in Tillman County in August 2004 and have spread to 33 counties by the middle of May 2008 .. The AHB's are descendants of southern African bees imported in 1956 by Brazilian scientists attempting to breed a honey bee better adapted to the South American tropics.

When some of these bees escaped quarantine in 1957, they began breeding with local Brazilian honey bees, quickly multiplying and extended their range throughout South and Central America at a rate greater than 200 miles per year. In the past decade, AHB began invading North America.

Africanized bees acquired the name "killer bees" because they will viciously attack people and animals who unwittingly stray into their territory, often resulting in serious injury or death.

It is not necessary to disturb the hive itself to initiate an AHB attack. In fact, Africanized bees have been known to respond viciously to mundane occurrences, including noises or even vibrations from vehicles, equipment and pedestrians.

Though their venom is no more potent than native honey bees, Africanized bees attack in far greater numbers and pursue perceived enemies for greater distances. Once disturbed, colonies may remain agitated for 24 hours, attacking people and animals within a range of a quarter mile from the hive.



AHB FACTS

Africanized honeybees are:

- Are slightly smaller than the European honey bee, but only an expert can tell them apart
- Defend their hive more rapidly than the European honey bee
- Usually sting in greater numbers
- Are less selective about where they nest
- Swarm more often than European honey bees
- Do not have stronger venom than the European honey bee
- Each bee can only sting one time – females die after stinging
- Eat nectar and pollen and make honey
- Are not native to the U.S.; they came from Africa

Potential Bee Nesting Sites

- holes or cracks in building walls
- holes in trees
- underneath mobile homes
- culverts or drainage pipes
- flower pots
- old tires
- bird houses
- barns or sheds
- woodpiles
- wooden spools often used as playground equipment

Seek professional help in removing any suspected Africanized honeybee colonies.

What to do if Attacked by Africanized Honeybees

- The best method of escaping a bee attack is to **cover your head and run for shelter**.
 - Any covering for your body, especially for your head and face, will help you escape. A small handkerchief or mosquito net device that fits over the head could easily be carried in a pocket.
 - If you do not have these, grab a blanket, coat, towel, anything that will give you momentary relief



while you look for an avenue of escape. If you have nothing else, pull your shirt up over your face.

- The stings you may get on your chest and abdomen are far less serious than those to the facial area.
- Try to find shelter as soon as possible. Take refuge in a house, tent or a car with the windows and doors closed.
- **DO NOT JUMP INTO WATER!** Bees will wait for you to come up for air.
- Once you are away from the bees, evaluate the situation. If you have been stung more than 15 times, or if you are having any symptoms other than local pain and swelling, seek medical attention immediately.
- If you see someone else being stung or think others are in danger, call 911 immediately.
- Remove stingers as **soon as possible** to lessen the amount of venom entering the body. Scrape stingers off the skin with finger nail, a blunt instrument or plastic card.