

# The Benefits of Bees

## The Scoop

We all know bees pollinate but do you know the effect of bees on the food you eat every day? Scientists estimate that bees pollinate one of every three bites of food that we eat. With facts like that it is clear that bees are essential to our lives and now is the time to save them. Just a few years ago the first bumble bee species was added to the endangered species list and if we do not act soon, more species may follow.



Urbanization is one of several problems causing a bee decline. With more cities and less natural plant life bees are having trouble finding food. This trend of building coupled with increased pesticide use has bees in danger.

## How You Can Help



Be bee friendly. Of course if you see a bee remember the impact they have on us and leave it be! Bees do not want to sting you so if one is near you hold still and gently blow on it to convince it to move along without upsetting it. Bees are attracted to sugary foods and drinks, flowery fragrances, and bright colors so be aware that these things may attract more bee visitors.

To take it one step further, plant bee friendly gardens. Native wildflowers are the best plants to include in your bee garden and ensuring that you have a flower blooming all year round ensures bees have a continuous food source. Even leaving a dish of water out can give bees a source of hydration.

Buy local honey to support local beekeepers; it's great for the bees and good for your health!

Be aware that pesticides can harm a wide variety of insects, not just the ones you view as pests. Consider planting plants that draw in natural pest eaters.



Finally, if bees decide to take up residence near your home, consider finding a company that will humanely relocate the hive so the bees can continue to thrive.

Sources:

“9 Ways You Can Help Bees and Other Pollinators At Home.” *National Geographic*, National Geographic Society, 8 Apr. 2016, [news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/05/150524-bees-pollinators-animals-science-gardens-plants/](https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/05/150524-bees-pollinators-animals-science-gardens-plants/).

Suzuki, David. “1 Of Every 3 Bites of Food Depends on Bees -- Let's Save Them.” *HuffPost Canada*, HuffPost Canada, 1 Sept. 2014, [www.huffingtonpost.ca/david-suzuki/colony-collapse-disorder-\\_b\\_5549504.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/david-suzuki/colony-collapse-disorder-_b_5549504.html).