



Africanised Honey Bees

Apis mellifera scutellata

A defensive and aggressive pest



ABOUT

The Africanised honey bee is a hybrid of the African honey bee and several European honey bee subspecies.

The African honey bee was introduced into Brazil in the 1950s for breeding purposes. Unfortunately the African honey bee escaped during the breeding trial and commenced breeding with local populations of European honey bees.

As a consequence of the hybridisation of the above mentioned species, Africanised honey bees are now well known for their aggressive and defensive behaviour which has been documented in studies across North America.

Although measurements of size, colour and body parts of suspected Africanised honey bees may provide some initial diagnostic data, the only method to accurately identify a colony containing Africanised honey bees is to conduct a genetic analysis.

In most situations, the presentation of an Africanised honey bee will appear near identical to the European honey bee, especially observations by the naked eye.

Economic and environmental impacts on Australia from Africanised honey bees could be substantial.

Some reports from the USA suggest areas with dense colonies of Africanised honey bees show a reduction in resources available to European honey bees.

The Africanised honey bee's increased defensive nature, inclination to swarm more rapidly and nest close to human activity has resulted in an increase of Africanised honey bee attacks on humans.

Africanised honey bees are listed as prohibited matter under the Biosecurity Act 2014.



Above: Africanised honey bee. Image: Scott Bauer USDA, BeeAware.org.au. Top Left: Working Africanised honey bee hives. Image: Lorraine Beaman, USDA, BeeAware.org.au.

TAKE ACTION

If you see or suspect the presence of Africanised honey bees in Australia, report the pest IMMEDIATELY.

CONTACT

Report all suspect sightings to: Biosecurity Queensland on 13 25 23 or Exotic Plant Pest Hotline on 1800 084 881

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Scan the QR Code or click here for more information about Africanised honey bees from the BeeAware website.



Early detection is essential to ensure any exotic bees entering Australia are contained