



Tracheal mite

Acarapis woodi

A microscopic mite



ABOUT

The tracheal mite is a microscopic, internal mite capable of infecting every bee in a European honey bee colony. The mites measure approximately 0.125 - 0.175mm in length.

Tracheal mites live within the respiratory system of honey bees, more specifically in the breathing tube of the bee. The mites feed on the bees' haemolymph (blood). Infestations of mites impact a honey bee's ability to breathe creating infection which opens the tracheal surface to other pathogens and ultimately restricts airflow to the bee's wing muscles.

Once a honey bee colony is infested with tracheal mites, the end result often equates to death of the colony. Hives can suffer from disease complications and the inability to forage and store food.

The impacts of tracheal mite are greater in cooler climates with many international countries suffering from significant colony losses during winter and early spring. Researchers believe honey bee colonies that cluster together to maintain temperature during colder months gives the mites the capability of transferring from bee to bee with ease.

Common signs of tracheal mite infestation may include large numbers of bees crawling at the entrance to the hive, disorientated bees and bees exhibiting external wing abnormalities referred to as the "K wing" symptom.

Tracheal mite is not present in Australia. The mite would present a serious and significant health threat to Australia's honey bee populations.

Tracheal mites are listed as prohibited matter under the Biosecurity Act 2014.



Above: Tracheal mite. Image: Simon Hinkley and Ken Walker, BeeAware.org.au. Top Left: Tracheal mites within a trachea. Image: USDA, BeeAware.org.au.

TAKE ACTION

If you see or suspect the presence of tracheal mite 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 tracheal mites from the BeeAware website.



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