



Tropilaelaps mites

Tropilaelaps clareae, *T. mercedesae*

An external mite of the Giant honey bee



ABOUT

A native mite to Asia that naturally parasitise brood of the Giant honey bee of Asia, *Apis dorsata*, the Giant Himalayan honey bee, *Apis laboriosa*, and the Giant Philippine honey bee, *Apis brevigula*.

The two species of Tropilaelaps mite, *Tropilaelaps clareae* and *Tropilaelaps mercedesae* are capable of parasitising on the European honey bee, *Apis mellifera*. Tropilaelaps mites are red-brown in colour and are 1mm in length and approximately 0.5mm wide. They are about one third of the size of an adult varroa mite.

Tropilaelaps mites have been observed as active mites that are capable of moving rapidly across brood comb, thus making detection and identification of the pest relatively easy when conducting a brood inspection and drone uncapping.

This external parasitic mite feeds on the haemolymph (blood) of drone and worker bee pupae and will rapidly reproduce on honey bee brood. In order to reproduce, adult Tropilaelaps mites will lay eggs in the brood cells of honey bee larvae and feed on developing brood. Young mites (larval/nymph) will be located in the brood cell, are white in colour and motionless when they feed.

Tropilaelaps mites can cause significant damage to honey bee colonies, with infestations resulting in the deformity of pupae and adult bees, parasitic mite syndrome and overall honey bee colony decline. If honey bee colonies infested with the mite swarm from the hive, the mite is spread to new locations.

Australia is currently free of Tropilaelaps mites. Should the mite become established in Australia, impacts on the honey bee industry would be significant, in turn directly affecting the availability of bees for crop pollination and honey production.

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



Above: Tropilaelaps mite feeding on a Giant honey bee pupa, *Apis dorsata*. Image: Dennis Anderson, BeeAware.org.au. Top Left: Tropilaelaps mite with 0.5mm scale. Image: Ken Walker, Museum Victoria, PADIL, BeeAware.org.au.

TAKE ACTION

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



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

**Information provided in this fact sheet was accurate as at 17/12/21*