



The Smallest Pets in the World

Hints & Tricks

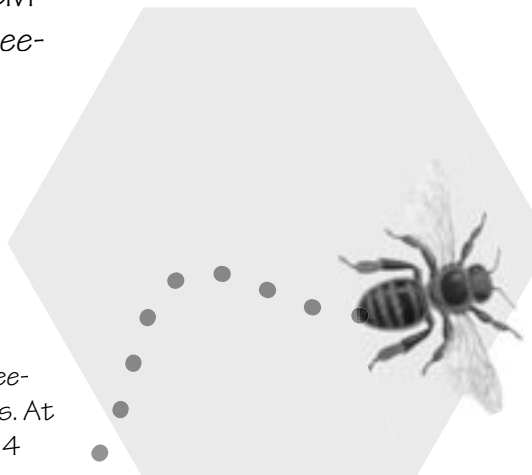
Bees sting and honey tastes sweet. That's probably the shortest way of putting it. Whether you keep bees yourself, or whether you visit the local beekeeper, there are lots of good topics to talk about and many exciting activities in connection with bee keeping.



The main attraction

The most exciting activity is inspecting the beehives.

First of all the, the participants are introduced to life in a beehive, and to what to look for and how to look. Next they put on special bee-keeper's anoraks and go out to the hives. At each beehive there can be from 3 to 4 people. Before the hive is opened, they have to produce smoke and smoke the bees. Then you can taste the honey, look for eggs, larva and pupa etc.



First some smoke



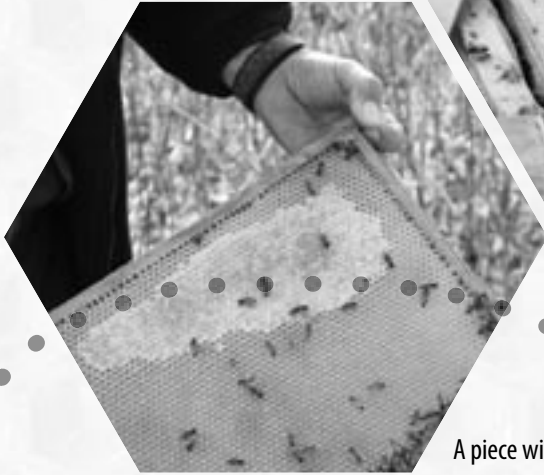
A frame is loosened



What a lot of bees

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A piece with honey...



lovely and warm



mmm...

Lesser tasks and activities

If there are no beehives available, there are other possibilities for activities and work with bees, honey and wax.

Here are some of them:

Bees and similar insects

Equipment needed: photos or drawings of a wasp, a honey-bee and a humble-bee.

Look at the three pictures. Which name fits which insect?



Humble-bee, bee, bumble-bee, hornet, wasp and honey-bee?

NOTE !

Here are several factors, which could be of help when deciding which activities to choose.

- Bees are important for pollinating flowers, so seeds and fruit can be produced. This is essential for many species' survival. Agriculture and orchard gardeners derive great benefit from bees work.
- Bees can communicate with each other. By scent and dances, they can tell each other of danger or about good sources of nectar.
- Bees live in a complex society with completely separate of jobs for the queen, the drones and the workers.
- Bees produce honey, beeswax and propolis in a wholly sustainable manner.
- Bees are insects with complete metamorphosis. In a beehive, all stages are to be found, from eggs and larvae to pupae and the adult insect.

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□ Different bees in the hive

Equipment need: photos or drawings of a queen-bee, a drone and a worker-bee.

The bees in the hive have different jobs and look different from one another.

The **queen-bee's** job is to lay eggs, and there is only one queen in the hive.

The **drones'** job is to mate with the queen-bee so that she can lay eggs. There are only a few drones in a hive.

The rest of the bees are all **workers**. During their life, they manage to look after the small bee-larvae, clean, heat, and ventilate the hive. They also guard the entrance and during the last few days of their lives, they fly out and fetch nectar or pollen. There are many worker bees in a hive.

Look at the pictures to the right and see who is who.



□ Contact the bee-keepers

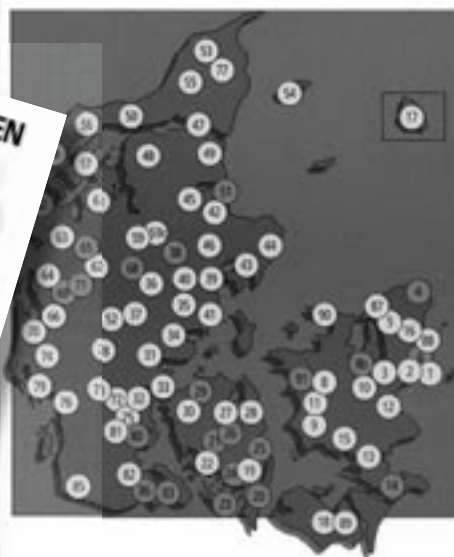
The Danish Bee-keeper Association has bee-keeper schools all over Denmark, where you can learn how to handle bees and produce honey.

The Bee-keeper Association has made some material on bee-keeping specially for schoolchildren - and most bee-keeper schools are willing to make special arrangements, where local pupils visit the bees. The Bee-keeper Association provides the necessary equipment and instructors.



SKOLEBIGARDE I DANMARK

Alle de grønne lokalforeninger har en skolebigård



□ Quite a job

It takes a great many trips to fly with so much nectar to make honey.

A normal beehive produces 50-60 kg honey per year.

How many trips do you think it takes to gather enough for one litre of honey?

We can disclose that it takes trips of a total of about 30.000 km. to make one litre of honey.



School-material about bees and bee-keeping adressed to both pupils, teachers and bee-keepers.

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□ Roll a wax candle

Equipment needed: Honeycombs, wicks, cutting-board, template and knives.

Beeswax is a natural product. With a wick in it, it will burn well and cleanly.

Find the nearest shop that sells honeycombs. Cut pieces either for large candles or small Christmas tree candles. Cut a suitable length of wick and roll the comb around it.



Kari Hald is the author of this issue of Hints & Tricks. Kari is nature interpreter at Præstø Fjord.



□ Making smoke

Equipment needed: smoke puffer, old canvas sacks, tobacco left-overs, matches, and newspaper.

While inspecting the hive, smoke is blown onto the bees in order to calm them.

Light a sheet of newspaper and put into the smoke puffer.

Pieces of sack and pieces of tobacco (refuse from the tobacco company) are then added. When the fire has got going and smokes well, close the lid. Blow into the smoke puffer to keep it alight and smoking.



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