

BLOG

WORLD BEE DAY: BEE-ING ESSENTIAL

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According to the United Nations, bees are in danger of becoming extinct. Current rates of species extinction are between a hundred and a thousand times higher than normal due to the impact of human intervention. Nearly 35 percent of invertebrate pollinators - such as bees and butterflies - and about seventeen percent of vertebrate pollinators - such as bats - are threatened with extinction worldwide. This worrying decline, particularly of bees and butterflies, is mainly due to intensive agricultural practices, land use changes, pesticides (including neonicotinoid insecticides), invasive alien species, diseases, pests and climate change. Farmers and policy makers have a critical role to play in protecting our pollinators. But we can all do our bit.

Casa de la Miel raises awareness about the importance of bee pollination:

Among the infinity of insects involved in pollination, the honey bee (*Apis Mellifera*) is the most effective. Several years ago, out of every one hundred insect visitors, bees made up 70-80 %. Today, due to the progressive decline of wild pollinating species because of environmental conditions, the percentage reaches 90-95% of all insect visits. Therefore, bees can be considered professional pollinators.

The pollination function is also related to the collective organization of thousands of individuals and to the biological cycle of a bee colony. Only they, having overcome the winter en masse, are ready and fully energized in the spring for the work of pollination.

In a medium-sized colony, about 60,000 individuals live, of which about 2/3, or 40,000, go out every day for pollen and nectar, with a daily frequency of 15 to 20 trips, during each of which they visit 30 to 50 flowers.

When we do the math, for a single colony, in one day we reach the magnitude of millions of flowers visited daily.

The bee's great capacity to adapt to any type of flora is another advantage, and even more so when combined with its strict fidelity to a plant species, because when they choose a particular species, they work with it until they exhaust their reserves of both nectar and pollen.

The current agricultural dimension revalues the role of the bee as a pollination professional. The modernization of agriculture, based on monocultures, protected crops, the use of hybridization and the increasing use of self-sterile varieties, require an important pollination work, concentrated in a short time and in special conditions (greenhouses). (*Excerpt from Casamiel.org*)

One of the reasons for the predominance of the bee as a pollinator is the considerable and not always positive changes that human society causes in the environment. The continuous expansion of urban areas, deforestation, environmental pollution, in addition to the type of agriculture with the use of chemicals for pest control, have caused a decrease and the total disappearance in some areas of wild pollinators, bumblebees, solitary bees, wasps, diptera, coleoptera, etc., which to some extent contribute to pollination.

The Autonomous Regional Environmental Corporations play a very important role in the management and handling of bees. In La Guajira, the Corporation has established committees to train, strengthen knowledge, and learn about experiences in this area. They have done coordinated work to preserve the vegetation cover of the Montes de Oca protected reserve.

Waya Guajira Hotel joins the preservation of the environment and the permanent care and protection of any species that in one way or another contributes to the life and functioning of the different ecosystems.