

Bees: Nature's Little Wonders

Candace Savage

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Candace Savage uses lay terms to explain the complex communications, resource management, and division of labor of *Bees: Nature's Little Wonders* (Greystone Books, 978-1-55365-321-9). Her approach follows the breakthroughs of leading apiary scientists von Frisch, Lindauer, Seeley, and others. Savage believes humans could learn much from bees about collective decision-making, because, "...a swarm of bees is always smarter than the sum of its parts."

She notes the difficulty that humans have with living in harmony. The fact that thousands of insects in a hive work together for common survival has attracted close observation. Though bees perform specialized tasks which may shift as they age, close study shows they also step in to take care of anything they see neglected when caught up with their own responsibilities.

Bees aren't the harmonic model when it comes to relations between the queens and female workers and the lowly male drones. The latter are sometimes left to die after having their reproductive parts and entrails ripped from their bodies. As the nectar supply declines and the drones become a drag on resources, they could be stung to death or have their wings pulled off. The upside to being a drone is—well, there isn't one.

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