

BEE SWARMS

WHAT IS A BEE SWARM??

Have you seen a large group of bees huddled together on your roof, car, fence, or backyard apple tree?! If so, don't be alarmed, this is a bee swarm. Please do not try to hurt them, they are just looking for a new home. Honeybees leave their home in search for a new one when the queen bee decides it is the right time to start over. About half of the current bee residents follow the queen, and the old hive develops a new queen, which is called "splitting". Bee swarming occurs mostly in the spring- early summer and can range in sizes from 100- thousands of bees. The swarm follows the queen out of the hive until she lands. The honeybees will not leave the queen until a new suitable home is found and they can start a new colony.



WHY DO BEES SWARM?

There are a number of reasons including:

- Crowding in their current hive
- Disease in current hive
- Age of the Queen bee

WHAT CAN I DO?

Don't panic. Honey bees are very docile when swarming. Without eggs or food to protect, they have little reason to be aggressive. They also stuff themselves with honey before vacating the hive, making them much like how lazy we humans feel after a really big meal. Although they most likely wont harm

you, it's a good idea not to get too close if you are not familiar with honeybees. Leave them alone, do not try and hurt or kill the bees. Bees only sting when they feel their home, or the queen is in danger, and depend on where they have currently landed, your approach could be threatening to them. If you know someone in your area who is a beekeeper, the bees may have swarmed from his/her hive. Contact this person to see if they can come and collect the swarm.

If you do not know any local beekeepers in your neighbourhood you may try to contact:

JOE WASP (free bee swarm removal) at 778- 628-9277 joewasp.inc@gmail.com

BRIAN CAMBELL (beekeeper) at Blessed Bee Farms in Richmond at 778-554-6421

ERIN UDAL (EYA staff member) at the Environmental Youth Alliance in Vancouver at 778-833-4646

OTHER BEEKEEPERS IN YOUR AREA: Check out [City of Vancouver's listings](#) here