



How bees can measure air pollution

No life without bees

Looking at the map of bees great death toll it was clear that they were mainly disappearing in areas with three different pollution factors: road traffic, domestic heating pollution and plant protection products used in agriculture.

During the last 30 years scientists have observed that bees disappearance may be connected to sudden cold winters, late and excessively rainy springs and extremely hot and arid summers.

If man spoils the environment bees are the first ones to suffer from that. Bees are essential to pollination that is to plants and their annual fruits. Some trees can “reproduce” themselves only thanks to bees; without them several plant species would be extincted and consequently the animals living thanks to those plants.

Bees measure pollution

In Turin and other Italian towns researchers are experimenting new kinds of hives to be used as bio-monitoring of air quality. These hives are placed on chosen terraces where they are not dangerous for people and researchers observe their behaviour and analyse the honey they produce: the collected data are integrated with those ones gathered by ARPA control units.



Answer the following questions.

1. What are the main causes of bees disappearance?
2. What is the function of pollination?
3. What is the connection between bees, plants and other animals?
4. How are they useful for environment researchers?
5. What is an ARPA control unit?

True or false?

1. Bees are in danger all over the world. T F
2. The reason for their death is clear. T F
3. Bees are not useful insects. T F
4. Bees survival is vital to our own survival. T F