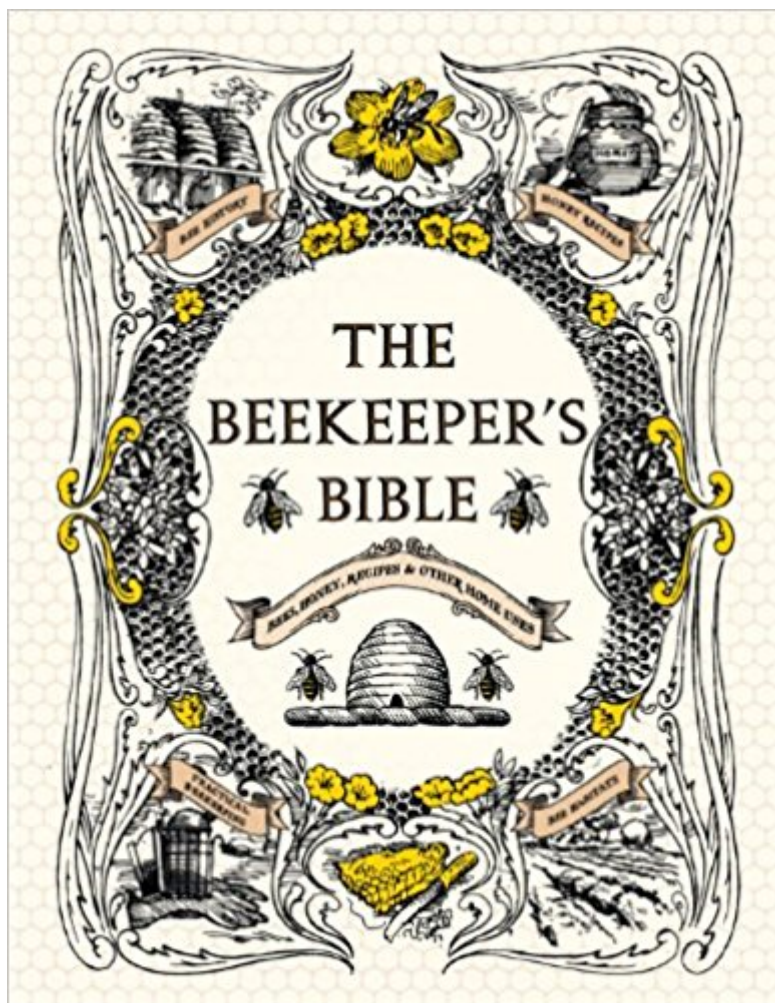


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The Beekeeper's Bible: Bees, Honey, Recipes & Other Home Uses



Synopsis

The Beekeeper's Bible is as much an ultimate guide to the practical essentials of beekeeping as it is a beautiful almanac to be read from cover to cover. Part history book, part handbook, and part cookbook, this illustrated tome covers every facet of the ancient hobby of beekeeping, from how to manage hives safely to harvesting one's own honey, and ideas for how to use honey and beeswax. Detailed instructions for making candles, furniture polish, beauty products, and nearly 100 honey-themed recipes are included. Fully illustrated with how-to photography and unique etchings, any backyard enthusiast or gardener can confidently dive into beekeeping with this book in hand (or daydream about harvesting their own honey while relaxing in the comfort of an armchair). Praise for The Beekeeper's Bible: "Jones and Sweeney-Lynch explain the science and society of bees in clear, accessible language. And the recipes are admirably useful: honey scones, honey soap, honey hangover cures. 'Oh, stuff and fluff,' as Pooh might say. Dip a paw into this richly satisfying volume and you won't have to do stoutness exercises." -The New York Times "Lip-smackin' throughout, The Beekeeper's Bible is, at its heart, a glorious invitation into the depths of the honeybee hive." -Chicago Tribune "An elegant, information-packed addition to the library of the most serious beekeeper." -Better Homes & Gardens Country Gardens "An amazing compendium of information, lore, facts, tips, techniques, and benefits of having bees in your life - whether you choose to keep a hive yourself, enjoy the by-products, or just appreciate these wonderful creatures for all that they contribute to our human ecosystem." -About.com

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Richard A. Jones is a writer, ecologist, and high-profile UK expert on insects, and is a contributor and scientific advisor to BBC Wildlife Magazine and New Scientist.Â Sharon Sweeney-Lynch is a freelance writer for the Guardian, the Independent, the Times Higher Education Supplement, and various consumer magazines.

This is a beautiful book on beekeeping and a hefty tome that's a pleasure to hold. Full of informative history, great photography, heavy paper stock, quality binding, and rife with a fairly complete overview of standard practice beekeeping methodology of the last 50+ years. And therein lays the problem. There is virtually no mention at all of top bar hives or the growing interest in balanced and natural beekeeping methods aimed at encouraging self-sustaining hives. Given the current state of affairs in the beekeeping world, this is a somewhat unforgivable oversight for a book with a publish date as recent as 2011. Instead what we have is a book that focuses almost entirely on the highly interventionist beekeeping methods developed by commercial beekeepers over the last 50 to 100 years. Methods which many beekeepers are now beginning to suspect are contributing to the diminished capacity of bees to be naturally self-sustaining in the absence of persistent human interventions. They are the methods established, and now sadly accepted as standard practice, by production-focused commercial beekeepers and oriented toward a single purpose.....high honey yields. This means intensive "management" of the bees inhibiting any number of natural behaviors to induce greater honey production. They include routine refined sugar feedings, application and use of synthetic and highly potent medications to control pests and viruses, queen manipulation including artificial insemination & frequent replacement, drone and swarm suppression by the excision of drone and queen cells (or by colony splitting). They are methods which are increasingly becoming associated with fumigants, antibiotics, chemical repellents, plastic parts, artificially contrived cell structures, expensive specialty equipment, corn sugar and soy based "feeds", and frequent seasonal hive replenishment via an increasingly precarious mail-order-bee industry in which bees are transported from distant geographic locations. Sadly, there is virtually no mention of any of the newer (older actually) beekeeping practices which are gaining favor and showing at least the promise of greater self-sustainability in recent years. These new methods are less equipment dependent and based on a different ethos with bee welfare and hive self-sustainability as the primary goals. The harvesting of hive "products" run a distant second and are regarded as only a fortunate, but not guaranteed, byproduct. It's an approach to beekeeping that seeks to facilitate, rather than inhibit and retard, the natural inclination of the bees, involves a highly restrained harvesting of hive products, and seeks minimal dependence if not complete independence from

potent synthetic chemical treatments. Priority one is the natural viability of the bees and the establishment of hives that do not require frequent and persistent human intervention. If that means less honey then so be it. As beautiful as the book is (and it is) it's a bit like reading a book that touts itself as the definitive "Bible" on forest & land management which ONLY discusses the practice of industrial clear cutting while completely ignoring selective harvesting, dispersed cut blocks, longer green up periods, and any number of increasingly accepted forest management practices aimed at improved sustainability. Sadly this is all too common. All too often even backyard beekeepers are taught to ape the practices of high yield, commercially oriented beekeepers even though they may have radically different goals and objectives in mind. And in any event, consider where those commercial practices have brought the bees. Wild populations all but gone and commercial populations all but halved in the last 30-40 years. Yes, external factors such as mites and other disease play a part here, but these too are the result of non-native pests being introduced into non-resistant populations as the result of heavy commercial trafficking of bees across otherwise natural boundaries. I'd have loved to give this beautiful book 5 stars but any "Bible" on beekeeping has to include these now pressing considerations and at least minimally recognize that when one finds oneself in a hole....it's time to stop digging. Same practices beget same results. New ideas, and new methods based on new priorities exist and should be given at least some small amount of coverage. Perhaps in the second edition.....provided there are still bees to keep.

Purchased this as a gift for my husband. He's into his second year of beekeeping. I read a lot of the reviews and based my decision on that when purchasing - so glad, because he loves this book. He has various books he references, and this is one of his favorites. He likes that it has a lot of information including the history of beekeeping. For a complete newbie, he still recommends *Beekeeping for Dummies* - very informative read, you'll learn the essentials in this step-by-step how-to. *Fifty Years Among the Bees* - also a good read.

This book is of high quality. The cover has nice crisp corners and is embossed. The paper is slightly heavier than a text book. They spared no expense in making this a book you can proudly display and use for years to come. It's just so beautiful! The history section was very interesting. The practical application section is useful for getting ideas and for feeling like you're on the right track. It's nice to get a lot of different perspectives. Among other things, it goes into great detail on what plants produce what kind of honey, and when these plants bloom. On occasion, however, you would have to look somewhere else to get a more in-depth explanation on how to do something. Example:

they mention what creamed honey is, but not a practical guide on how to make it. I'm not sure what I was expecting from the recipe section, but the recipe section was underwhelming. Maybe I will warm up to it once the summer is in full swing and we have some fresh honey to use. In all, I really like this book. It's an excellent resource. It lost a star because I feel it could have gone into more detail in many instances.

I didn't really know much about beekeeping and bees...until I read through this book! This book really offers great information for aspiring beekeepers. I'm sure it would be just as valuable for experienced beekeepers as well. My boyfriend and I plan on starting a local farm and Co-op in the future with a variety of organically and sustainably produced food and goods. This book really helped me learn a lot about what it is like to have bees and helped me become better informed on the lives of bees. I would recommend this book to anyone who is interested in bees, especially in beekeeping. This book has history of bees, about bees, about beekeeping, and recipes. It's really an all-in-one book. Even though I have already read through the whole book, I will definitely be using it in the future to look things up again and reference it.

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