

ABSTRACT

The Africanized honey bee, a hybrid of European and African honey bees, is thought to displace native pollinators. After experimental introduction of Africanized honey bee hives near flowers, stingless bees became less abundant or harvested less resource as visitations by Africanized bees increased. Shifts in resource use caused by colonizing Africanized honey bees may lead to population decline of Neotropical pollinators.

DAVID W ROUBIK

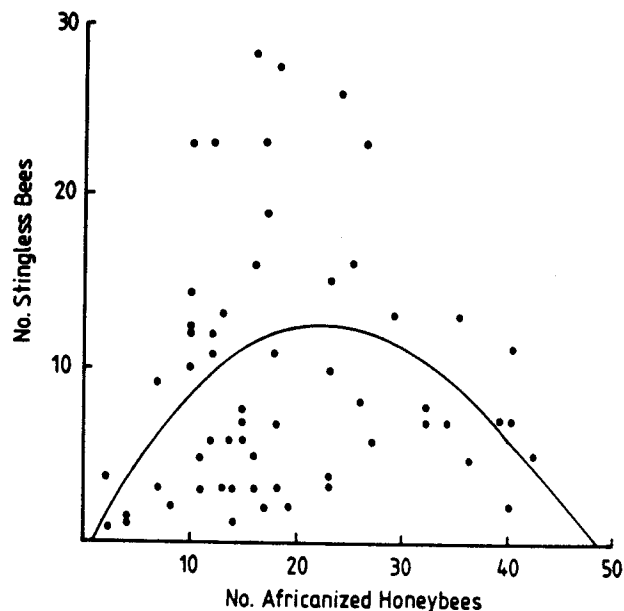


FIGURE 1. The relations of Africanized and stingless (meliponine) bee abundances on flowering *Melochia villosa*. The full line is a quadratic polynomial (given by $y = -0.516 + 1.08x - 0.023x^2$) which gave the best fit to the points.

The rather fanciful curve fitting of Roubik (figure 1) has prompted me to propose an alternative interpretation of his data (see figure 2).

ROBERT M HAZEN

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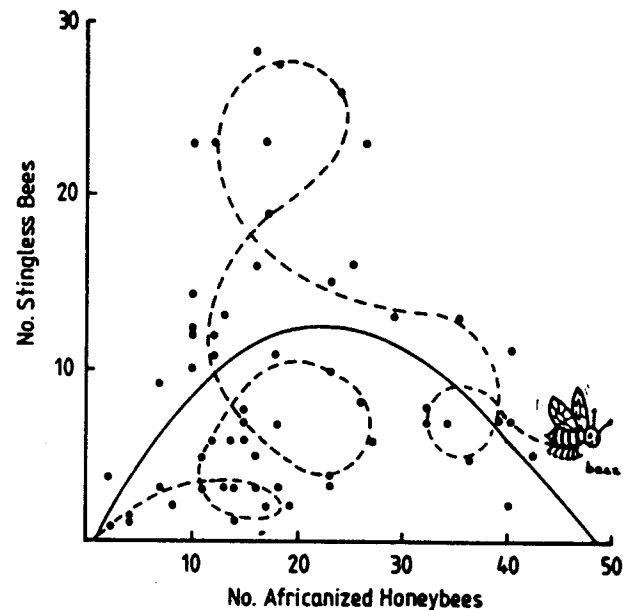


FIGURE 2.

In reply, Dr Roubik has commented 'I think Dr Hazen was right in being sceptical, but I do not think that it would justify disregarding the study or my conclusions. I thought that his letter to the editor was hilarious, but some of my colleagues did not. It seems to me that biologists are often obliged to take a different view of quantitative data from that of physical scientists. They have more or less set rules, while we must often try to discover nature's meaning. And there is a lot of slop in nature.'



Understanding atomic physics is child's play compared to understanding child's play.

ANON

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