

THE

DARK BEE

There are three beehives on the roof of the SIX building in Zurich-West. They are each home to a colony of the endangered dark bee. In the winter there are around 7,000 bees in the colony. In the summer the number of inhabitants per hive rises to 30,000 to 50,000. Enough reason to introduce the colleagues on the roof and the work they do at SIX.



IS GENTLE

But if it mates erratically when flying, it can lead to crossing with other breeds.

Bees resulting from such interbreeding are more likely to sting.



IS BUSY

It collects as much as 30 kg of pollen a year, for which it flies for kilometres around the hive, reaching heights of up to 400 metres.

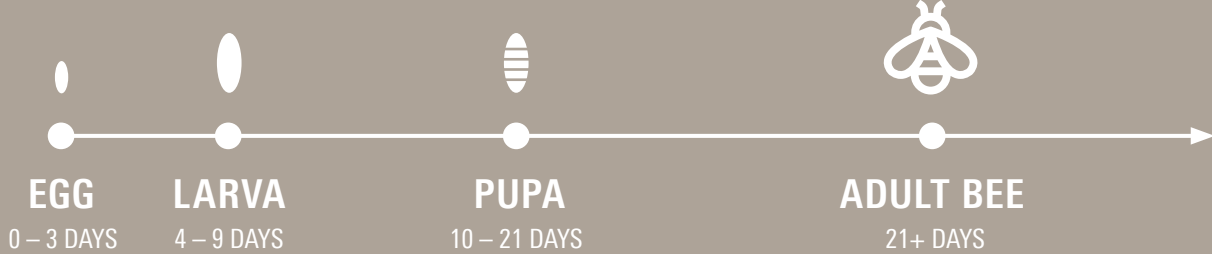
ORIGIN

The dark bee originally comes from Africa. But it has adapted ideally to our European weather conditions over thousands of years. When other types of bees have long been sitting in the hive waiting for better weather, the dark bee is still flying at full speed ahead.



LIFE-CYCLE

Bees that hatch in the summer only live for around 30 days and have to work from the very first moment on: cleaning the honeycomb, feeding larvae, guarding the hive, collecting nectar, making honey.



A LOOK BEHIND THE HONEYCOMB



Pollen, nectar, water – which bee collects what is precisely regulated in the hive, which is organized on the basis of the division of labour.



Dancing on the honeycomb
The bee twirls around and wags its body, showing its colleagues in the hive where they can find something to eat. This little dance tells the other bees exactly about the direction and distance of the source of food.



Sleeping with the enemy
The bloodsucking varroa mite is the bee's mortal enemy: it latches on to the bees and destroys entire colonies. In order to avoid an infestation, the beekeeper prescribes the bees an "oral vaccination" of formic acid.



Long live the Queen!
The Queen Bee lives for 3 – 5 years. So she gets to be much older than her subjects.



Once the Queen Bee's reign is over, she is ruthlessly assassinated by her younger successor. Before the younger Queen hatches, she gives a warning signal: high time for the old Queen to disappear.

URBAN HONEY

HONEY PRODUCTION

40 jars à 250g: This was what the first honey harvest at SIX produced in 2017.

For one jar of SIX Urban Honey the bees collected 1.25 kg of nectar and flew up to **40,000 km**, so practically **once around the world**.

SIX auctioned 30 jars of Urban Honey among its employees. It donated the proceeds totalling **CHF 1,396** to the Swiss Mellifera Bees Society.

