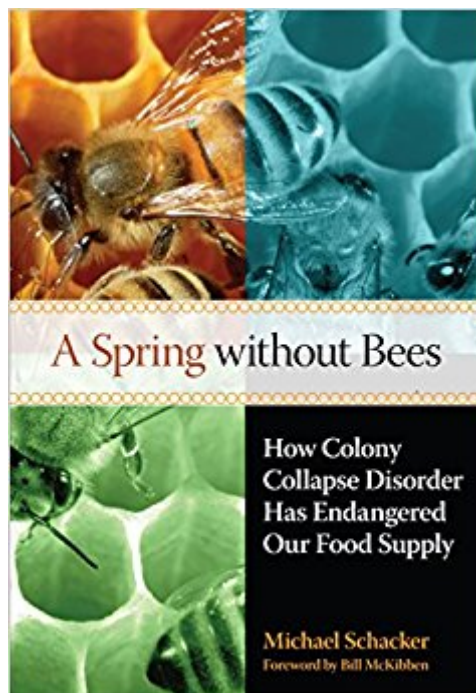




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A Spring Without Bees: How Colony Collapse Disorder Has Endangered Our Food Supply



Synopsis

In a riveting detective story that melds science and politics, Michael Schacker investigates the case of the missing bees, examining the many theories on the cause, including cell phones, mites, new pathogens, and bee management.

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Customer Reviews

â œAt last an authoritative account of the vanishing bees: one of the most puzzling environmental problems of recent times. . . . at once a great detective story and an object lesson of how to live in harmony with the living planet, our home.â • --Thomas E. Lovejoy, President, the Heinz Center for Science, Economics and EnvironmentÂ "Who could imagine a spring without bees? One might say this is impossible, especially the kids. Michael Schacker's eye-opening story *A Spring without Bees* is a must-read for all of us who want to live in a sustainable and regenerating world for many generations to come." --Anthony Rodale, Chairman Emeritus, The Rodale Institute"TheÂ lossÂ of the bees is a four-fold tragedy: for the beekeepers, the growers, the consumers and of course for the bees themselves. Michael Schacker's fascinating andÂ enlighteningÂ bookÂ is anÂ important new look atÂ the great mystery of Colony Collapse Disorder." --Dr. James Amrine, President of the Acarology Society of America, Medical Entomologist, West Virginia UniversityÂ "In a debate clearly underpinned with political and commercial positioning and controversy over scientific fact and assumption, Michael Schackerâ s multi-faceted review of the dispute to date, and its possible consequences, helps us clearly understand what is needed to reverse the bee decline threatening

world food supply." --Dr. Kurt Johnson, ecologist and ethicist; co-author of Nabokov's Blues: The Scientific Odyssey of a Literary Genius "A Spring Without Bees is an object lesson in just how delicate the web of life is. It sounds an urgent call to action on behalf of one of our economy's tiniest laborers but also asks that we re-think the environmental consequences of the entire way we do business." --Jeff Ruch, Executive Director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) "Michael Schacker offers another important rationale for organic farming methods as a way to protect the fruit and vegetable supply." --Dr. Timothy J. LaSalle, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, The Rodale Institute

On the 100th anniversary of the birth of Rachel Carson, the world faces a new environmental disaster, from a chemical similar to DDT. This time the culprit appears to be IMD, or imidacloprid, a relatively new but widely used insecticide in the United States. Many beekeepers and some researchers think IMD is the new prime suspect for the devastating syndrome known as Colony Collapse Disorder, or CCD, which has raised the annual die-off rate of honey bees to 30% of all the beehives in the United States. They say even trace amounts of IMD make bees lose their desire to feed, which would quickly lead to the collapse of their colony. After several days, there are few or no bees left in the hive. Since honey bees are essential to the production of fruit, nut, and vegetable crops around the world, their demise could spell catastrophe for our food supply and global economy. In a riveting detective story that melds science and politics, Michael Schacker investigates the case of the missing bees, examining the many theories on the cause, including cell phones, mites, new pathogens, and bee management. He then examines the evidence against IMD. The book does much more than illuminate the scientific research, however. Using CCD as a metaphor for our own human hive, Schacker asks: Are the bees trying to tell us something? Could this be the warning sign of a much larger crisis looming directly ahead? Might humankind suffer someday from "Civilization Collapse Disorder"? And how must we change our human hive in order to ensure its survival? Like *An Inconvenient Truth* and *Silent Spring* before it, *A Spring without Bees* is a compelling cautionary tale and a clarion call for action.

As a beekeeper, I believe Michael Shacker lays out an irrefutable case for a direct link between widespread neurotoxin-based pesticides (IMDs) and Colony Collapse Disorder, the sudden, massive die-off of honey bees that is now nearly global - except in France where IMDs were banned and the bees returned. He not only documents and assesses the scientific evidence, but also shows how agro-chem companies like Bayer CropScience and BASF have waged a propaganda war

through biased scientific studies, media manipulation, and through the leveraging of compromised university Ag and entomology programs, whose research they fund. Shacker explodes the myth of the "mystery" of CCD, and shows how media attention has diverted attention away from pesticide companies by focusing on red herrings such as cell phones and Israeli Acute Paralysis Virus - even as researchers in those areas have themselves denied any causal link to CCD. Even the most skeptical reader of Shacker's book (and I was skeptical at the beginning) will find it hard to refute the culpability of Bayer and BASF in the ongoing extinction of *apis mellifera*.

A Spring Without Bees is still the only book that documents the real root cause of massive bee die-off. We are using tons of neuro-toxic pesticides in chemical farming, gardening, lawn mixes and in wasp spray and flea spray or collars on our pets---all to our peril and the destruction of the environment. GMO crops use the same poisonous class of chemicals and so now it is in our food. The chemicals are so powerful that even small minute amounts damage our nervous system, our brains, our gut, our immune systems. We are headed for tragedy on a world-wide scale unless we turn toward natural methods. Yes, you could say I'm biased--my husband had a massive brain injury in April 2008. He almost didn't live to see his book published. Yet, if you read the book you will see--it's not just me. The evidence is all there. Now, over 5 years later, hundreds of thousands of people are waking up to the truth that we are poisoning ourselves and the earth--but more important that there is another way! If you don't know about this...read this book to find out.

Really riveting, easy to understand account of the mystery of the disappearing bees. The book begins with a fascinating description of the sophisticated bee behavior and hive society. It reminded me of the first time I became educated on ant colonies, marvelling at their intricate, organized societies. The details are right down to the varying roles of each bee (nurse bees, cleaning squads, honey-processors, foragers, drones, etc.). The book logically takes the reader through every theory on CCD (Colony collapse disorder) proposed thus far, along with scientific references and statistics on all documented research. It challenges the association between university research and the corporations that finance that research, questions the FDA rules on chemical pesticide approvals, offers suggestions for how each individual can assist in solving CCD, and repeatedly gives kudos to Rachel Carson's 1962 revelations in her ground-breaking book. This is an easy read, very appealing, contemporary, up-to-date account of this controversial, potentially civilization-devastating issue. Especially relevant given today's global economic woes in terms of oil, crop production, and world hunger.

This is an excellent and well-researched review of the relatively new problem of Colony Collapse Disorder, which is currently decimating hives in this country (and the world). It is a book that needs to be read by as many people as possible. I originally obtained this book from the local library, but have been so impressed with it that I intend to buy one for my niece, who just graduated with a degree in environmental studies. This book not only delves into the ultimate cause of the disorder, but covers the inner corruption of the governmental and educational institutions who have the power to stop it. Without the bees, the world as we know it will end - even Albert Einstein knew this to be true. With the media and the government too strongly influenced by short-sighted business interests, individuals need to educate themselves and draw attention to this devastating problem before it is too late.

When the book arrived and I started reading it, it was difficult to lay it aside, because I have a deep love for our bees. They are my friends and I want to help them. If only I had read a book like this when I was a child or in high school....I would certainly have done many things differently in my garden. I would have never used pesticides. Our children can save us from the mess that we have created on our planet. Pesticide abuse may not be the only answer to why the bees are dying but I believe they are one of the major reasons. If the chemicals we apply to our crops do not kill the bees, they just might kill us as they gain in strength! If you love yourself, children and grandchildren, and our planet earth, then you will take the time to read, *A Spring Without Bees* by Schacker.

I've trudged through Pollan's *Omnivore's Dilemma* and *In Defense of Food*. Both were enjoyable but due to my lack of focused attention really took a long time. I mention these books as they are also about our food habit and the way we treat the environment. This book on the other hand I read quite quickly as it held my attention. It lays out the argument about CCD being the cause of Colony Collapse Disorder very well. Of course there may be other causes of CCD out there, but the way the author portrays the argument is well organized and informative. A good read for people who are interested in Honeybees, CCD and the way the media has portrayed CCD.

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