

Reproducing without males? Bees can do it

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

The typical story of reproduction is that males and females of an animal species do it sexually. Generally, that's what honeybees do, too. Sperm from a male drone fertilizes a queen's eggs, and she sends out a chemical signal, or pheromone, that renders worker bees, which are all female, sterile when they detect it.

But the [Cape honeybee](#), a subspecies that lives in the Fynbos ecoregion, a unique area of incredible diversity along the southwestern tip of South Africa, evolved a workaround where, in some cases, female workers can become something like a queen and produce offspring of their own.

Like all honeybees, some Cape bee colonies also have male drones. But female workers can start laying their own eggs in their home colony when a queen dies. These females will also invade colonies of other honeybee subspecies and lay eggs in some cases, and they can enter undetected by bees that would normally kick them out.

Read full, original post: [Scientists Find Genes That Let These Bees Reproduce Without Males](#)