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## L'accoutumance des Abielles et la Couleur des Fleurs

Gaston Bonnier

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Bonnier, Gaston. 1905. L'accoutumance des abeilles et la couleur des fleurs.  
C. R. Acad. Sci., 141:988\*

According to Bonnier, one group of authors defend the idea that bees are attracted to flowers by their colors, while another group hold that the color of the flower has nothing to do with its attractiveness and that the bees are attracted to the nectar by a sense closely allied to odor.

Bonnier says that the time of day of experiments in this regard is important. In the morning bees leaving the hive are not ~~workers~~ <sup>explorers</sup> which gather honey, but are explorers, which explore the neighborhood. As the morning wears on, these explorers find good sources of nectar and develop habits of traveling to and from the same area for food. Other workers will follow them. In the afternoon practically all the bees in the hive have developed a regular foraging route.

Experiment: Cardboards of various colors were placed at various distances from the hive. Honey was placed on these. Observations showed that 1. these were practically completely neglected if put out in the afternoon; 2. if put out in the morning, the bees soon found all of them, no matter what color and soon removed the honey; 3. the distance from the hive made little difference, except that those further away were not found as quickly; 4. color was not correlated in rapidity of finding cards or in transporting honey; 5. if the cardboards are moved before sunrise, the honey is quickly removed; 6. If they are moved towards the end of the morning, the honey is removed after a more or less longer time.

He gives an observation which tends to show that one hive has no effect on another hive in the honey-seeking activity of morning.

Bonnier undertook other experiments such as: Offering honey to bees collecting water, offering water to bees collecting honey and offering nectariferous flowers to bees collecting sweet exudations from leaves of trees, all with the same results as in the above.

Résumé: Habits of bees (in work) which are determined in advance intervene as important factors in all observations made on relations between flowers and melliferous insects.

The experiments noted above showed that color of flowers do not exercise a noticeable attraction for the bees gathering nectar.

Bonnier - 1905