Moeurs et Parthénogénèse des Halictes

J. H. Fabre
Two species furnishing the material for this work are: Halictus lineolatus Lep., and H. sexcitatus Latr. They were studied for a whole year; one near Fabre's door and the second afield.

The Halictines are not truly social in the entomological sense of the word. The family is not community property. Each female is sole proprietress of her own group of cells, the eggs and larvae therein and is solely responsible for gathering food for them. However, the passage to the nest-cells and the opening to the nest are community property, built and guarded by mutual efforts.

The cells are oval, narrowed to a neck on the superior part. The wall is varnished with a varnish having the same origin as that of Colletes.

September is for the Halictus the only month of loves. Then the males are constantly flying over the burrows and penetrating into some of them; they are far in excess of the females. The latter remain in their homes and copulation takes place on the ground. When frosts arrive, the males die and the newly fecundated females pass the winter in their cells.

About May, the females come out of the ground and begin work on the nests. In July a second generation comes forth - without the presence of a single male. From this generation, two months later, comes a third generation composed of males and females. Fecundation takes place, the males die and the females hibernate, etc.

Summing up, the Halictus have 2 generations a year, one "printanier" (spring-generation) and sexual, come from the mothers fecundated in autumn; the other, aestival, is due to parthenogenesis, becomes females and males.

Halictus sexcitatus has Myoditus subdipterus as a parasite. The larvae of the bizarre Coleopteran devours the larvae of the bee when the latter has finished its store of honey.