

## Humans and Wildlife: Conflict and Conservation.

*The Honeybee and the Anthropocene: what do different stakeholders think about the relevance of electromagnetic radiation (EMR) to the decline of honeybee populations?*

Since anthropologist Deborah Bird Rose wrote of the 'shimmer of life' and the darkness of extinction, insect decline has reached an all-time high. Is the anthropogenic use of technology helping or hindering the honeybee's existence?

As we enter the time of the sixth mass extinction known as The Anthropocene, should we re-connect to the shimmer, in order to help save the honeybee, and ourselves?



*Dead Bee Portrait-9. pigment print on archival paper. By Anna Noble @ Two Rooms Gallery, NZ.*

Honeybee (*Apis Mellifera*) colonies are perishing at alarming rates (Andrews, 2019). Studies have shown that 41% of the world's insects will be extinct over the next few decades, and bees are most at risk (Buglife, 2021). The rapid decline of the honeybee would be catastrophic for the planet, and a significant contribution to the sixth mass extinction termed The Anthropocene (Crutzen & Stoermer, 2000., Van Dooren & Rose, 2011., Haraway & Ishikawa et al., 2015., Lorimer, 2015., Di Chiro, 2016). Honeybee colony decline is said to be from human intervention, intensive farming, pesticide and habitat destruction, global warming, parasites, and more recently, the progression of radio-frequency electromagnetic fields (RF- EMF's).



***A hand crafted woven 'Sunhive' from the Natural Beekeeping Trust. (Foulkes, 2017)***

In this article, I will be drawing on the writings of the late anthropologist and ecofeminist Deborah Bird Rose: mainly her paper 'shimmer when all you love is being trashed' (2017). I am basing my research of the honeybee *Apis Mellifera*, their brilliance and anthropocentric demise on her conceptual framing of what she has named shimmer to highlight the encounters and processes of entwinement and transformation. I shall investigate the conflicts between commercial beekeepers, who believe in 'pest' management, selling of honey and artificial rearing of queen bees vs, the natural (Darwinian) beekeepers, who believe in a 'leave alone' strategy (Seeley, 2019), leaving the bees to a process of 'natural selection.' I shall show the beekeepers hand-crafted woven hives while weaving the words of scientists, sculptors, authors and activists. Finally, I shall investigate and argue the possible effects of electromagnetic radiation (EMR), how we can challenge ourselves to become more aware, and the importance and urgency of our symbiotic lives entwined with the shimmering world of the honeybee.

## References

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