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The Bee Personality: Some Bees Whisper, Others Shout!

Posted by: Enozia Vakil 4 hours ago

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Talk about keeping a secret- it turns out, bees are actually good at it. At the time of pollinating the bees find a plentiful source of nectar or pollen and in order to avoid being overheard by eavesdroppers, they "whisper" the fortunate news to their companion bees. Conversely, there's also a group that prefers shout outs. Some bee species in Brazil do the exact opposite and "shout" to alert their fellow bees, researchers have found in a new study.

"Researchers from the University of California, San Diego have found that rather than quietly whispering to one another about a sweet treat, these Brazilian **bees** shout to warn other competitors listening that they are prepared to fiercely defend their food source," it has been quoted.



Why Some Bees 'Whisper' and Other Bees 'Shout'
Photo Credits: Flickr

While this may actually be quite risky, it is also an effective mode of communication that exists among these tiny insects.

"It's a signal with honest aspects and the possibility of lies," James Nieh, a professor of biology at UC San Diego, explained. "It tells nestmates where to find good food and hints at a larger occupying force."

The shout method of communication by **bees** hints that eavesdroppers can alter the evolution of animal signals in ways humans never dreamt were possible as discovered by Elinor Lichtenberg, the leader of the study.







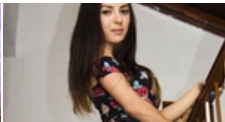
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"Our study provides a new way of looking at how eavesdroppers affect the evolution of animal communication signals," Lichtenberg added. "Until now, it was thought that eavesdroppers select against conspicuous signals, for example by more easily finding and eating prey that sings loudly. But our results show that eavesdroppers can help select for the same conspicuous signals that are easiest for intended recipients to detect and understand."

Stingless bees that tend to compete with each other for similar food sources were mainly focused in the study. *Trigona hyalinata* are the eavesdroppers while *Trigona spinipes* are foragers that shout, the researchers have found. The shouting bees, which are actually extremely aggressive towards intruders tend to be most frightening ones for eavesdroppers.

"Our study provides a new way of looking at how eavesdroppers affect the evolution of animal communication signals," Lichtenberg said.

The findings on **bees**, whispers and shouts were published in the journal *Current Biology*.








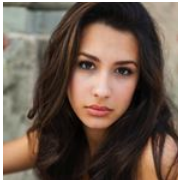


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