

## Relocation of a hive of black dwarf honey bee at Yishun Central

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**Subjects:** Black dwarf honey bee, *Apis andreniformis* (Insecta: Hymenoptera: Apidae: Apinae).

**Subjects identified by:** John Chong Chin Hong.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Island, Yishun Central, compound of Khoo Teck Puat Hospital, Tower C; 12 October 2020; around 1808 hrs.

**Habitat:** Concrete planter box on the third level of a building in urban parkland. On an orange jessamine (*Murraya paniculata*) bush.

**Observer:** Simon Chan Kee Mun.

**Observation:** An active hive of black dwarf honey bee, about 16 cm wide (Fig. 1), was discovered amongst vegetation in a planter box (Fig. 2) on a very cool evening. The following evening, the hive was humanely removed and successfully relocated by Mr John Chong. Dressed in protective beekeeper's gear, he carefully cut the branch with the hive and its resident bees, and placed it into a styrofoam box which he then sealed. The hive was translocated to Mr Chong's farm (Bee Amazed Garden) at Lorong Chencharu.



Fig. 1. Lateral view of hive of black dwarf honey bee.

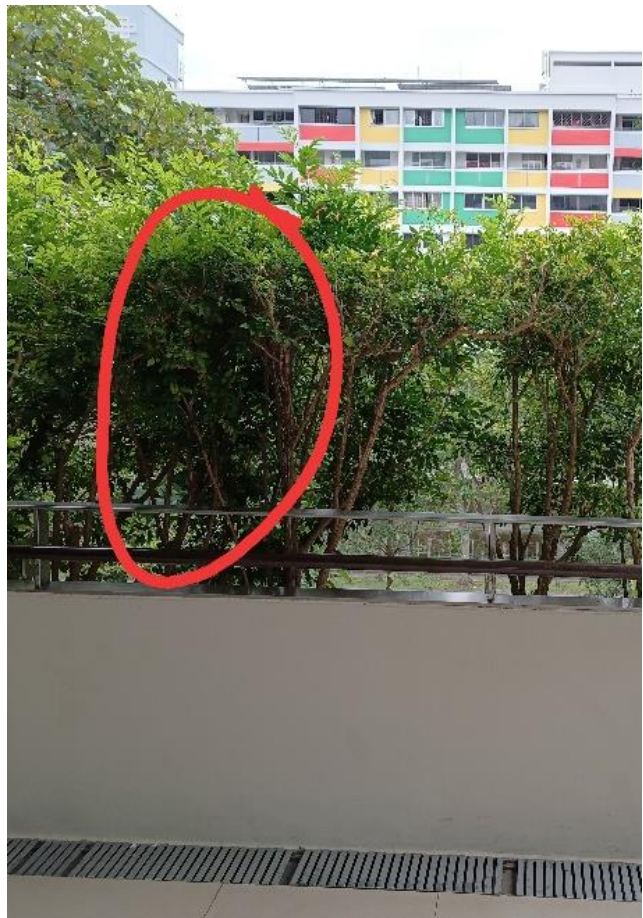


Fig. 2. Location of hive (circled in red) among orange jessamine bushes in a planter box on the third level of the building.

Photographs by Simon Chan Kee Mun



Fig. 3. Mr John Chong in beekeeper's gear carefully cutting the branch with the bee hive.



Fig. 4. He placed the hive with the resident bees on it into a styrofoam box.



Fig. 5. The box was sealed with masking tape before being taken to Mr Chong's farm.

Photographs by Simon Chan Kee Mun

**Remarks:** The black dwarf honey bee frequents urban areas, parkland, forest and coastal areas. Although relatively common in Singapore, it is rarer than the larger Asian honey bee (*Apis cerana*), from which it may be distinguished by its smaller size (c 8 mm) and black or brown body. Its nest of small wax comb is about 30 cm across and constructed around a thin branch on a tree or shrub (Soh & Ascher, 2020: 88). A hive was recently reported at the National University of Singapore's campus at Kent Ridge (Tan, 2014).

This feature shows that bee hives and their resident bees which may pose a safety hazard in areas with high human traffic need not be treated as pests to be destroyed. They can be translocated to a safer location where the bees can continue to play their ecological role in plant pollination.

**References:**

Soh ZWW & Ascher JS (2020) A Guide to the Bees of Singapore. National Parks Board, Singapore. 148 pp.  
Tan HH (2014) A hive of black dwarf honeybees at Kent Ridge campus. Singapore Biodiversity Records, 2014: 101-102.