



MoonTree Studios
Fearlessly Creating

HONEY BEES

are living on

the MoonTree Prairie!

All of us depend on bees to fertilize plants that produce our food. Bees transfer pollen from one flower to another to fertilize them, without which plants would not bear fruit. A few of the plants that rely on pollination include watermelon, apples, pears, strawberries, almonds, corn, cucumbers and tomatoes.

Honeybee hives have long provided humans with honey and beeswax. Such commercial uses have spawned a large beekeeping industry, though many species still occur in the wild.

Honeybees are social, cooperative insects. The hive's inhabitants are generally divided into three types:

- Most of the bees we see are worker bees. Workers are females that are not sexually developed. Workers forage for food (pollen and nectar from flowers), build and protect the hive, clean, circulate air by beating their wings, and perform many other societal functions.
- The one queen has a simple job—laying the eggs that will spawn the hive's next generation of bees. If the queen dies, workers will create a new queen by feeding one of the worker females a special diet of a food called "royal jelly." This elixir enables the worker to develop into a fertile queen. Queens also regulate the hive's activities by producing chemicals that guide the behavior of the other bees.
- Male bees are called drones—the third class of honeybee. Several hundred drones live in each hive during spring and summer, but they're expelled for the winter months when the hive goes into a lean survival mode.

Bees live on stored honey and pollen all winter, and cluster into a ball to conserve warmth. Larvae are fed from the stores during this season and, by spring, the hive is swarming with a new generation of bees.

The honey bees on MoonTree Prairie are here thanks to Beekeeper Chad Gard of Hole in the Woods Farm, Culver IN.



**MoonTree Studios is the
Art, Ecology & Spirituality Ministry of
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9601 Union Road, Plymouth Indiana 46563
(574) 935-1712 ■ www.moontreestudios.org

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