

Would we starve without bees?

Video transcript for introduction video presented by Chris Packham

Our close relationship with bees dates back thousands of years and for good reason.

These little miracle workers are a vital part of the environment and the food chain.

Today the humble honey bee provides us with a significant proportion of the food that we eat, all thanks to its action as a pollinating insect.

And a large proportion of the world's food supply is directly, or indirectly, affected by honey bee pollination.

Here in the UK around 70 crops are dependent upon, or benefit from, visits by bees: think broccoli, think cabbage and the everyday apple.

But it's not just the fruit and vegetables that we eat that have been pollinated by the bees it's also the food that we feed to animals, which we in turn eat, that has been pollinated in a similar way.

And bees are important for many more reasons than just food.

Their responsible for the wax in our polish and the honey on our morning toast.

With one hive capable of producing more than 50kg of honey in a good season.

We all know that honey can help soothe a sore throat but now we also know that this stuff has anti-bacterial qualities too.

And of course bees play their part in pollinating the flowers that make our gardens come alive in the summer.

It really is worrying then that these very special insects are in decline.

Opening and closing image credit: Martin Gabriel / naturepl.com