

From: **Susan Rudnicki** <susanrudnicki@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Feb 5, 2014 at 9:49 PM
Subject: Sensationalistic Nat Geo on "Killer Bees"
To: Councilmember.Parks@lacity.org

Mr Parks----

As a urban beekeeper, I am in receipt of your note, copied here---

Item #2 ALLOWING BEEKEEPING IN R1 ZONES on 2/4/2014 Agenda CF# 12-0785 WAS# BEEKEEPING ON TODAY'S AGENDA THERE WAS AN ITEM THAT REQUESTED A REPORT BACK FROM PLANNING AND ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTS ON ALLOWING BEEKEEPING IN R1 ZONES. THE ITEM WAS DEFERRED TO 2/12/2014. I AM REQUESTING THAT AS PART OF YOUR RESEARCH THAT YOU VIEW THE BELOW LINK **WHICH IS A DOCUMENTARY ON THE DANGERS OF BEEKEEPING**. THIS 1 HOUR PROGRAM WAS SHOWN ON THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL. ALSO, I AM REQUESTING THAT THIS INFO BE ADDED TO COUNCIL FILE MANAGEMENT UNDER THE ABOVE CF# . <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciiSN5v3QFI> Bernard C. Parks Councilmember 8th District

In a strong effort to educate you with a much more rigorous, scientific and thoughtful film about beekeeping (and one not so dated as the program above, which is 8 years old) I recommend you watch two documentaries ---"Vanishing of the Bees" and "More Than Honey" They may be seen on NetFlix or even downloaded for free.

The sad fact of the National Geographic programing, which is emblematic of so much of television programing in this day and age, is that it has become sensationalistic, fear mongering, and driven by ratings for the largest advertising profits. For a program carrying the venerable, erudite name of the well known magazine, the TV programing is a shameful reflection of digging for the most money and the cheapest theatrical scripts. In a quote from a marketing manager re-making the image of another similar program with a solid, fact based profile, this is what Nat Geo delivers-----

The goal is to move from being perceived by viewers as paternalistic, preachy, and observation-based to being seen as active, entertaining and edgy. That means targeting adults 25-49, rather than full families, with less voice-over narration and more visceral imagery and sounds. Think of it as swapping a drab narrator saying that a lion is about to kill its prey for the blood-curdling scream of the doomed creature as it meets its demise.

The fact is, Sir, we are using these bees with African genetics extremely satisfactorily here in Los Angeles, and they are doing NONE of the behaviors the hyperventilating narrator describes in his film. The Nat Geo piece is so sensationalized and hysterical, it would be funny if we were not well aware of the public's tendency to fall prey to this kind of hyperbole.

For example, we hear from the voiceover ---"stingers pierce his flesh---kidneys fail---organs break down---throughout the Amazon, armies of killer bees are hatching out---moving into a neighborhood near you---billions of killer bees have moved into CA---in Florida, the killer bees join a host of dangerous characters already here---scorpions, pythons, alligators-----Dave Marder is on the front lines against the toughest enemy he has ever faced!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" And on and on..... Never mind, sir, that Mr Marder is ripping out a perfectly healthy, unaggressive roof hive, the likes of which I have taken many times and re-homed to a perfectly manageable and thriving situation. He is working that job in ordinary surgical gloves and his ankles are hanging out, uncovered. A truly aggressive hive of bees would be ramming stingers through those gloves handily and shredding his bare ankle skin. But, this is the danger of knowing nothing about a subject and falling for a hyper-aggressive rendition of the "facts".

The advantages of the bees we now have, in the face of the many invasive pests and diseases that global trade and shipping has foisted on the beekeeping community, is that the wild bees we are keeping have developed the strong immunity and diverse genetics that serve both us and them very well. Those "gentle European" bees the narrator kept extolling are the ones dying like crazy in the Colony Collapse Disorder the world is hearing about in the media. Those poor bees have been so heavily genetically

manipulated by "wise humans" that they are the bee equivalent of the puppy mill dogs that have every medical malady imaginable.

No, Mr Parks, your superficial examination of the beekeeping craft needs a lot more work than this "Killer Bee" documentary. One of the things I ALWAYS have told my sons---"just because a information source is on TV or in a magazine does not make it honest and credible. Be critical, be circumspect, be informed by many sources of study."

You should start with the two films I list above.
Rudnicki, Manhattan Beach, CA

Sincerely, Susan