



Special issue on stingless bees

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EDITORIAL



Special issue on stingless bees

Stingless bees (Apidae: Meliponini) are the largest and most diverse group of social bees. But despite their diversity, they are much less studied than honey bees in the genus *Apis* or bumble bees. With their predominantly tropical distribution, stingless bees collect pollen and produce honey from a diversity of tropical and subtropical plant species, thereby providing crucial pollination services in these habitats. As is true for many other insects today, stingless bees are facing new anthropogenic challenges including climate change, habitat destruction, and new pests and diseases, all of which are urgently calling for increased research efforts to safeguard these important pollinators.

At the *Journal of Apicultural Research* we have recently observed an increasing number of submissions of manuscripts, as well as a growing interest among the research community, regarding stingless bees. These two factors inspired the production of this special issue. In 2021, our journal announced a call welcoming creative contributions on all species of stingless bees from across the world (Figure 1). Forty-five abstracts were submitted, sixteen were selected for full manuscript submission to go through the standard peer-review process, and finally, eleven were accepted for this issue. These papers were selected based on their scientific relevance and novelty, and because they covered a large geographic range as well as different species. Additionally, a few good quality papers on stingless bees previously submitted out of the call were selected to be included in this special issue.

The articles of this special issue cover different aspects of stingless bees biology including Behaviour, Evolution, Ecology, biogeography and conservation, Pollination, as well as Meliponiculture. Articles on bee hive products were not the focus of this call for submissions.

We hope that by dedicating this special issue to stingless bees we inspire and support the field of stingless bee research, and we encourage researchers in the field across the globe to submit manuscripts on this understudied group of social bees to our journal.



Figure 1. Call of abstracts for the special issue on stingless bees.

The *Journal of Apicultural Research* publishes special issues on timely topics in apiculture once a year. Suggestions for special issues topics of high interest, as well as guest editors are welcome.

Finally, we would like to thank all authors that responded to our call, the reviewers, the International Bee Research Association (IBRA), and Taylor & Francis for their support and contribution to this special issue.

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