

# Mystery of the giant honeycomb built in a wood by thousands of bees in freezing FEBRUARY

 By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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If you go down to these woods today you are sure of a sweet surprise - bees swarming in sub-zero temperatures around a giant honeycomb.

Even Sir David Attenborough would be stumped by the discovery as thousands of bees have constructed the comb in an oak tree at Holly Hill Country Park, Fareham, Hants.

The hardy workers have created the giant two-foot long structure and have been spotted by walkers and winter wildlife spotters more used to seeing deer and badgers at this time of year.



Sweet success: The incredible honeycomb built by bees despite the freezing weather at Holly Hill, Fareham, Hampshire

Bees are hibernating creatures that cannot survive in cold temperatures, but the hard-working insects are proving they are made of stronger stuff by braving the big chill.

Bees are known to produce small honeycomb structures in trees during warmer summer months, but the enormous and strangely shaped structure is an unheard sight during January and February.

David Nield, vice chairman of the Hampshire Beekeepers Association, said: 'To see bees working like this during such extreme weather is incredible.'

'Wild bees as a species are normally very temperature conscious. They do not normally survive in the cold and would ordinarily be in hibernation waiting for when the weather warms up a bit.'




High honey: How the honeycomb is sheltered in the tree

'You only have to think about how often you see bees flying about when the weather is cold to realise how rare this is.'

Experts are struggling to find theories as to why the honeycomb, which is more than a foot high, has appeared, believing climate change could be behind the discovery or a decline in the numbers of wild bees in Britain meaning the insects have to work harder.

Amateur photographer Stephen Leff, who first discovered the enormous hive, added: 'I was just out for a walk with some family and friends on what was a very chilly day, a real winter's day.'

'I've seen some interesting fungi growing up trees before and that's what I thought this thing was when it first caught my eye. It was huge.'

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