

Bee-ware: bees keep African elephants at bay

November 22 2011



No need for big muscles or high-tech contraptions when it comes to protecting African plantations from elephants: a British biologist has discovered that buzzing bees will keep the beasts at bay.

No need for big muscles or high-tech contraptions when it comes to protecting African plantations from elephants: a British biologist has discovered that buzzing bees will keep the beasts at bay.

Lucy King, a researcher at Oxford University, was honoured Tuesday by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the western Norwegian town of Bergen for devising a wire fence connected to apiaries that begin to buzz when an elephant trips the wire.

The [African Savannah](#) elephant may be the biggest land animal on the planet, weighing in at some seven tonnes, but it is terrified of bees and makes off at the first hum of the insect.

Pachyderms may have thick hides, but bees are attracted to the sensitive areas around their eyes and inside their trunks.

King's discoveries have enabled several Kenyan villages to protect their [plantations](#) from herds of elephants which often ruin their fields and deprive the local populations of their livelihoods.

"Her research underlines how working with, rather than against, nature can provide humanity with many of the solutions to the challenges countries and communities face," UNEP executive director Achim Steiner said in a statement.

Bergen is this week hosting a conference organised by the Convention of the Conservation of [Migratory Species](#) of [Wild Animals](#), also known as the Bonn Convention.

(c) 2011 AFP

Citation: Bee-ware: bees keep African elephants at bay (2011, November 22) retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-11-bee-ware-bees-african-elephants-bay.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--