



## ...PRESENTS: HAMUTAH COHEN WHS SCIENTIST IN RESIDENCE, 2014-2015

### Some stuff about me:



I study how human alteration of the environment impacts the health of bees. Bees pollinate flowers and are crucial to agriculture, but their populations are in danger. I research the parasites and diseases that impact bees.

- Age: 25
- Where I grew up: Los Angeles, California
- High School: Milken Community High School
- Favorite subjects in high school: English, Biology
- College (undergraduate): University of California, Berkeley (Go Bears!)
- Some of my favorite things: Surfing, burritos with extra guacamole, and people-watching.
- Something weird about me: I used to be so scared of insects and spiders when I was a kid. When I was in college, I forced myself to overcome my fears because I wanted to work for a specific professor because he was really cool – he also who happened to work with bugs! Now my research involves handling insects all the time! I sometimes still get anxious about spiders, though.
- What I think or do when I get frustrated: I usually eat some chocolate, complain to my cat, go for a run or surf, then re-approach the problem!



We built this "insect hotel" to attract wild bees to the University garden!



One of my interns is holding a queen bee that is surrounded by bee workers!



I became interested in bees after I started beekeeping in college!



Aerial view of one of the farms where my group conducts research!



### What I study

**What is the ecological relationship between bees and their parasites? How do the parasites spread disease? How does the loss of biodiversity, urbanization, and agricultural management impact the spread of disease for bees?**

These are some of the questions I'm interested in as an insect ecologist. My research aims to understand what characteristics of the environment and what human behaviors either protect bees or put them in danger. To study this, I collect bees in farms and gardens here in California and bring them into the lab! I look to see what parasites they have and using lab rearing techniques to learn more about the parasites. Bees are so fascinating - I am *buzzed* about working with bees!

I am excited to be a SCWIBLES Fellow this year at Watsonville High School! I can't wait to share my love of insects, the environment, and science!



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