Vergil's Baby Bees CAMWS 16 March 2016

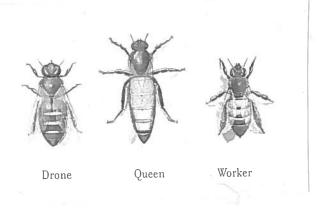
(1) The passage in question (Mynors 1969)

Illum adeo placuisse apibus mirabere morem, quod neque concubitu indulgent nec corpora segnes in Venerem solvunt aut fetus nixibus edunt:
verum ipsae e foliis natos, e suavibus herbis
ore legunt, ipsae regem parvosque Quirites
sufficiunt aulasque et cerea regna refigunt.
Saepe etiam duris errando in cotibus alas
attrivere ultroque animam sub fasce dedere:
tantus amor florum et generandi gloria mellis.
205
Ergo ipsas quamvis angusti terminus aevi
excipiat, neque enim plus septima ducitur aestas,
at genus immortale manet multosque per annos
stat fortuna domus et avi numerantur avorum.

Thus you will marvel at that custom pleasing to the bees, that they neither engage in sex nor lazily loosen their bodies in love nor bring forth offspring through childbirth: but they themselves gather children from leaves, from sweet herbs in their mouths, they themselves appoint the "king" and small Quirites and refashion the waxen halls and kingdom.

Often by wandering on hard rocks they have worn away their wings and finally given their lives beneath their burden: so great is their love of flowers and the glory of producing honey. Therefore, although the limit of their brief life receives them—for not more than a seventh year is lived—still their line remains immortal and through many years the fortune of the hive stands and the ancestors of ancestors are counted.

(2) Types of honeybees (Flottum, K. 2005. The Backyard Beekeeper. Beverly, MA: 50)



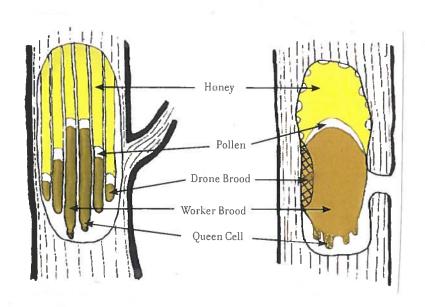
(3) Sources on honeybee generation:

Aristotle *HA* 5.21 Pliny *HN* 11.16 Columella *RR* 9.2.4 (and Varro *de Agr.* 3.16.4)

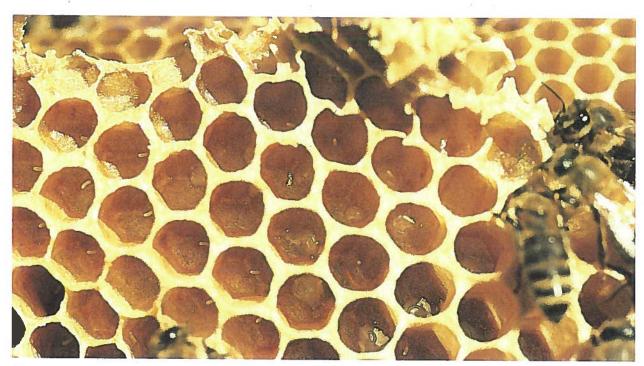
(4) How big (that is, small) is a millimeter?



(5) Hive cross section (Flottum, K. 2005. The Backyard Beekeeper. Beverly, MA: 59)



(6) Queen laying eggs in the brood nest (Flottum, K. 2005. *The Backyard Beekeeper*. Beverly, MA: 60)



The queen lays eggs in the broodnest. You can see them in the bottoms of these cells.

(7) On the origins of the Roman people (based on Quintus Fabius Pictor?):

Livy *AUC* 1.6, 1.8 Plutarch *Rom.* 9.2-3 Dionysius 1.85, 1.89