

We are western honey bees. Beekeepers bring us out when the Japanese horse chestnuts (*tochinoki*) start to bloom. Thanks to nectar-producing trees like these, we bees are able to raise our larvae and produce delicious honey for you humans as well. We hope you enjoy it!

Hollows in a Japanese horse chestnut's trunk and branches are home to various birds and animals. You'll meet all kinds of wildlife friends in and around the trees.

You might even meet a duck nesting in a tree! We bet you didn't expect to see that!

Japanese Horse Chestnut and Western Honey Bees

Horse chestnut honey originates in Towada. By a happy twist of fate, beekeepers introduced western honey bees to Japanese horse chestnut trees at the beginning of the Showa period (1926–1989), resulting in the first harvest of horse chestnut honey. Japanese horse chestnuts are now an important source of nectar for honey production. In national forests, the trees are accordingly protected from logging.

Western Honey Bees and Asian Black Bears

Asian black bears love honey, and have a disturbing habit of destroying commercial hives. Recently, some beekeepers have begun to surround their hives with electric fences, which has minimized bear damage.