



[Home](#) > [Bee Boy: Clash of the Killer Queens](#)

Bee Boy: Clash of the Killer Queens

Books Reviewed:

[Bee Boy: Clash of the Killer Queens](#) [1]

Issue:

[228](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Stuart Dyer](#) [3]

~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

4

This is a comic adventure, but it is also a fantastic, scientific introduction to the world of bees and their importance for natural history. Melvin loves beekeeping and keeps a hive on top of his block of flats. Keeping bees does nothing for his popularity at school, and he struggles to stand up for himself against his tormentors. However, everything changes when an over-exuberant use of the smoker leads to Melvin being transformed into a bee himself and transported into his own hive!

As Melvin defends his fellow drones against killer moths and wasps within the hive, he also has to protect himself and his bees from angry neighbours and aggressive bullies in the real world. Melvin's social standing is fragile at best, and in constant danger of extinction, and in this way his fate runs parallel to that of the honey bee. This is not just a fun and exciting story, but an important message for conservation.

De Saulles celebrates the essential role that bees play in our environment, showing readers in fun and engaging ways how bees' endeavours produce a lot more than honey. He explains the wonder of the waggle dance, the power of royal jelly and the ruthless and violent way that new queens are elected. His accompanying illustrations are dynamic and funny and maintain an emotive use of black and yellow throughout.

Children will also learn the importance of teamwork from this book. For the bees, each has their own essential role to play if the hive is going to succeed and, for Melvin, the support of his friends and family is crucial - especially when wet weather and vandalism threaten to ruin Melvin's hive. The story's climax is exciting and dramatic, though the effect is lessened slightly by an overly obvious attempt to set up a sequel in the final pages.

Bee Boy is a great way to introduce children to the fascinating world of bees and would be an ideal gift to lovers of nature and non-fiction.

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[1] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/bee-boy-clash-of-the-killer-queens>

[2] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/228>

[3] <http://www.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/stuart-dyer>