

# Chris Harp



*Chris Harp is a full-time naturalist beekeeper and bee doctor.*

*"There are two ways to learn about bees. One is to listen to people and read books. The other one is to listen to the bees. I prefer to listen to the bees."*

As Chris Harp gently pulled a honey-loaded frame from the body of a trapezoid-shaped hive, a gasp of wonder and awe passed around the circle of onlookers. They were gazing at a tall, 47 year old man working the beehive with what looked like a safari hat perched on his full head of brown hair. In the large backyard of Chris Harp, you see seventeen beehives. Chris has many different species of bees, including Italian and Russian. But the thing that you notice most about Chris's yard is a sign hanging on a tree that says "No Trespassing, Honeybee Yard."

Chris Harp works at the Sustainable Living Resource Center where he educates people about bees and beekeeping. He also manages an organic farm in his backyard. He believes his job is important because he is helping people to understand the beauty of the honeybee and the earth in general.

Chris Harp has many personal opinions about his bees. The motto that we know he lives by is "the bees are not my slaves to make profit, but are the being that gives me food, so I reciprocate." He also believes that drones are not lazy, useless bees, but are Shaman for the hive. As a last remaining message, he quoted Einstein by saying, "no more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man."

Chris Harp calls himself a naturalist beekeeper. He not only is environmentally friendly to the bees, he also has his own chicken farm, compost, and doesn't use pesticides. He is a very hard working, dedicated beekeeper. Chris owns seventeen hives in his backyard and manages 250 in other states such as New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Vermont.

Chris's story about how he got started as a beekeeper is very interesting. He was getting his roof re-done when he discovered thousands of bees in his wall. He called an exterminator, who killed the bees. This is when he decided to start beekeeping. It has now been eighteen long and exciting years and he still continues to love his bees.

Chris calls himself a "bee doctor." He visits other people who have hives but don't want to keep them. Before he takes the hives and leaves, he talks to the owners and tells them what bees really do for us. He often convinces people to keep the bees. But if they are not convinced, Chris takes the bees home with him. Chris Harp also makes home visits to check up on the other hives that

people are willing to keep, but still need help with the actual beekeeping. By helping and educating a lot of people about bees, he is increasing the amount of people who want to help.

One very important and interesting thing that Chris does is he catches swarms. He says that 70% of natural swarms don't find a home and die. So, he tries to catch as many swarms as he can and tries to give them a good home. To have a chance at catching a swarm, he uses a drum and creates a beat. This calls the bees to his empty hive. Even though Chris is not able to catch every swarm, he gives the swarms he does catch a great home.

Overall, Chris Harp is a very caring, respectful and out-going person, as well as a successful beekeeper. We should appreciate all of the hard work he does with his bees because he is making a difference in our lives even if we may not notice it.



*Honey is a sweet reward for all of the hard work beekeepers do to make sure their hives are healthy.*



*Chris is always willing to share his knowledge of bees.*