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BEAUTY
HEALTH &
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VOGUE

editor: Sarah Brown



BUSY BEE
TED DENNARD
AND CO-WORKERS
IN THE WOODS IN
SAVANNAH.
PHOTOGRAPHED
BY STEVEN WHITE.

The buzz in Savannah:
a beekeeper's skin care, straight
from the hive.

the secret
life of bees

The first time I opened up a hive, there were thousands of bees, and all I could hear was that *whhhrrrrrr* . . . I was terrified," says Ted Dennard, a ruggedly handsome Savannah honey farmer with tousled blond hair and a lilting Southern accent. In his uniform of cowboy boots, jeans, button-down shirt, and regulation screened hat, Dennard has been reaching into hives bare-handed for the past 25 years—since he was just a kid. Since

BEAUTY HEALTH & FITNESS the beekeeper

then he's had thousands of bee stings, but he insists they're really not that bad. "If you accidentally squeeze a bee, that's when you get stung," he says. "But they don't want to do it. Honeybees are the friendliest kind, once you get to know them."

Dennard knows bees. Seven years ago, after a stint in the Peace Corps (beekeeping in Jamaica, no less), he set up camp—or, rather, a hive—on one of Georgia's small coastal islands and started his own business, the Savannah Bee Company. He began selling jars of his local crop, in varieties like tupelo, black sage, sourwood, and raspberry, as well as pure honeycomb cakes (which taste great on a baguette with creamy blue cheese or on a tart apple slice, he says). The first two years, he paid his rent in honey.

Dennard learned that he could cure his sore throat in 20 minutes with a single dose of propolis sap, and help to ease allergies by ingesting bee pollen. What he wasn't expecting was a beauty epiphany. But whenever he washed off his hands—covered in honey from



SOUTHERN COMFORT
CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:
THE SAVANNAH BEE
COMPANY BEESWAX HAND
CREAM AND BEESWAX LIP
BALM; FROM DENNARD'S
HIVES: EDIBLE BLOCKS
OF HONEYCOMB.

"amazingly soft." It was no coincidence: A natural preservative, antibacterial agent, and humectant, honey has been used in health and beauty rituals for thousands of years. Pliny the Elder called it the "sap of stars"; Cleopatra bathed in it; in the eighteenth century, England's Queen Anne coated her hair with it (for shine). When Alexander the Great died, it is said, his body was carried back to Greece in a golden casket filled with it.

So Dennard started dabbling in beauty. He made homespun beeswax candles and lip balms infused with essential oils, which were "creamy, not

a day with the bees—he noticed "they would come out squeaky clean and

tins, laced with authentically Southern ingredients (pecan and cottonseed oil, muscadine grapes) and hinged on the benefits of the beehive. Royal jelly—the age-defying superfood that gives a queen bee a life span up to 40 times longer than her female workers' and promotes skin elasticity in the rest of us—is the secret inside the Beeswax Hand Cream and Mint Julep Body Lotion. Propolis—the sticky sap bees use to seal cracks in the hive—does the same for parched soles in the Orange Mint Overnight Foot Treatment. Orange Blossom honey (Dennard's favorite: "It tastes candy-sweet, and I love the smell") provides the moisturizing base for the Clementine Body Wash and Sugared Honey Body Scrub. With more products on the way—and a baby due this summer—for Dennard, life is sweet. *At bathandbodyworks.com.*—YING CHU

waxy," he notes. Honey enthusiasts swarmed, and before he knew it, the beekeeper had a partner in Bath & Body Works. Together they designed a charming natural skin-care range packaged in gourmet jars and apothecary