



## Bio-digital Integration and Cyber-physical Sensing Systems for Real-time Monitoring of Pollinator Health, Behavior, and Physiological Status: Advanced Technologies and Decision Support Frameworks for Sustainable Agricultural Ecosystems

Elena G Vance <sup>1\*</sup>, Sarah J Kent <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bio-Robotics Laboratory, Delft University of Technology, Netherlands

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Agri-Robotics and Automation, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

\* Corresponding Author: **Elena G Vance**

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### Abstract

Pollinators provide critical ecosystem services valued at billions of dollars annually, yet populations face unprecedented decline due to habitat loss, pesticide exposure, pathogens, and climate change. Traditional monitoring approaches rely on manual surveys lacking temporal resolution and failing to capture dynamic physiological and behavioral responses to environmental stressors. Bio-digital integration—combining biosensors, wearable tracking devices, Internet of Things platforms, and artificial intelligence—offers transformative capabilities for real-time assessment of pollinator health at individual and colony levels. This review examines cyber-physical systems designed for pollinator monitoring, emphasizing miniaturized biosensors for physiological parameter measurement, radio-frequency identification and radar-based tracking technologies, edge computing architectures for distributed data processing, and machine learning algorithms for pattern recognition and anomaly detection. Applications span precision agriculture, where real-time pollinator activity data inform crop management decisions, and conservation biology, where early warning systems detect disease outbreaks and toxicological exposures. Despite technological advances, challenges persist in device miniaturization, energy autonomy, data interoperability, and ethical deployment. Future systems will require standardized protocols, multi-stakeholder engagement, and scalable architectures balancing ecological sensitivity with agricultural productivity.

**Keywords:** Bio-Digital Systems, Pollinator Health Monitoring, Cyber-Physical Agriculture, Biosensors, IoT Edge Computing, Precision Pollination

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### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Importance of Pollinators in Agro-ecosystems

Insect pollinators contribute to reproduction of over 75% of globally important crop species and 90% of wild flowering plants <sup>[1, 2]</sup>. The economic value of pollination services exceeds \$577 billion annually across agriculture systems worldwide <sup>[3]</sup>. Managed honeybee colonies and wild pollinator communities—including bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies, and hover flies—collectively determine reproductive success in crops ranging from almonds and apples to cucurbits and oilseeds <sup>[4, 5]</sup>. However, pollinator populations have experienced dramatic declines over recent decades. Honeybee colony losses average 30-40% annually in North America and Europe, while wild bee diversity has contracted by over 25% in agricultural landscapes <sup>[6, 7]</sup>. Causal factors include neonicotinoid and organophosphate pesticide exposure, parasitic mite infestations, viral and bacterial pathogens, nutritional stress from monoculture farming, and synergistic interactions among these stressors <sup>[8, 9]</sup>.

## 1.2. Limitations of Traditional Pollinator Health Monitoring

Conventional pollinator monitoring employs manual techniques including visual colony inspections, pan trap surveys, transect counts, and laboratory bioassays [10]. These methods provide valuable population-level data but suffer from critical limitations. First, temporal resolution is inadequate—weekly or monthly sampling intervals fail to capture acute stress responses or sub-lethal effects of toxicological exposure [11]. Second, spatial coverage is restricted; labor-intensive surveys cannot scale across heterogeneous agricultural landscapes [12]. Third, observational approaches lack mechanistic insight into physiological processes underlying health deterioration, preventing early intervention [13]. Laboratory-based assessments offer mechanistic detail but disconnect organisms from ecologically relevant field conditions [14].

## 1.3. Scope and Objectives

This review examines bio-digital integration technologies enabling continuous, automated, and minimally invasive monitoring of pollinator health and behavior. We focus on cyber-physical systems combining biosensors for physiological measurement, digital tracking technologies for spatial behavior analysis, IoT architectures for distributed data acquisition, and artificial intelligence methods for pattern recognition. The objectives are to synthesize current capabilities in pollinator-specific sensing technologies, evaluate data integration frameworks supporting real-time health assessment, analyze applications in precision agriculture and ecosystem management, and identify technological and ethical challenges for field deployment.

## 2. Bio-digital Technologies for Pollinator Monitoring

### 2.1. Biosensors and Physiological Monitoring

Miniaturized biosensors enable direct measurement of physiological parameters indicative of pollinator health status (Table 1). Electrochemical sensors implanted in honeybee thoraxes monitor hemolymph glucose, lactate, and oxidative stress biomarkers with micromolar sensitivity [15]. These microelectrode arrays fabricated through MEMS techniques operate continuously for 48-72 hours before biofouling degrades signal quality [16]. Temperature microsensors embedded in bee abdomens track thermoregulation patterns, revealing colony-level fever responses to pathogen infection and individual hypothermia preceding pesticide-induced mortality [17]. Respiratory monitoring employs micro-respirometry chambers integrated into hive entrance tunnels, measuring CO<sub>2</sub> production and O<sub>2</sub> consumption as proxies for metabolic rate [18]. Optical sensors detect wingbeat frequency modulation—changes in flight motor patterns correlate with sublethal neurotoxic exposure [19]. Acoustic sensors capture buzzing frequency shifts indicative of *Varroa* mite parasitism and *Nosema* fungal infection [20]. Recent advances include flexible polymer substrates hosting multi-parameter sensor arrays attached to bee thoraxes via biocompatible adhesives [21]. Electroantennography sensors measure antennal electrophysiological responses to volatile organic compounds, assessing chemosensory function and detecting neurological impairment from pesticide exposure [22].

### 2.2. Digital Tracking and Localization Systems

Radio-frequency identification systems track individual pollinator movements with millimeter-scale spatial

resolution (Table 3). Passive harmonic radar tags weighing 12-16 mg attach to bumblebee and honeybee thoraxes, enabling tracking over 100-900 meter ranges depending on transmitter power and antenna configuration [23, 24]. Active RFID tags with onboard batteries extend range to several kilometers but increase tag mass to 150-300 mg [25]. Automated optical tracking employs high-framerate cameras positioned at hive entrances, coupled with computer vision algorithms that identify individual bees via thorax patterns or attached visual markers [26]. Deep learning models achieve >95% accuracy in bee detection, trajectory reconstruction, and behavioral classification [27]. Radar-based tracking systems detect insect flight patterns across agricultural landscapes, differentiating bee species based on wingbeat modulation signatures and estimating pollinator flux into crop fields. Emerging technologies include miniaturized GPS units for large bee species and hybrid systems combining inertial measurement units with RFID for indoor/outdoor tracking continuity.

## 2.3. Integration with IoT and Edge Computing Platforms

Pollinator monitoring systems generate heterogeneous data streams requiring robust cyber-physical architectures (Figure 1). IoT platforms employ hierarchical sensing layers: sensor nodes attached to individual pollinators or distributed within hives; gateway devices aggregating data from multiple sensors; edge computing nodes performing local preprocessing; and cloud servers executing computationally intensive analytics. Communication protocols balance energy efficiency with data throughput. Bluetooth Low Energy enables 100-meter range transmission at <15 mA current draw, suitable for battery-powered wearable sensors. LoRaWAN supports multi-kilometer communication at ultra-low power, ideal for distributed environmental sensor networks in agricultural landscapes. Edge computing nodes execute lightweight machine learning models for real-time anomaly detection. Sensor fusion algorithms combine temperature, acoustic, and accelerometer data to classify behavioral states without cloud connectivity. Local preprocessing reduces bandwidth requirements by 80-95%, transmitting only summarized features or anomaly alerts to central servers.

## 3. Real-time Data Analytics and System Integration

### 3.1. Signal Processing and Data Fusion

Raw sensor data require preprocessing to extract biologically meaningful features while rejecting noise (Table 4). Temperature time series undergo Savitzky-Golay filtering to preserve circadian rhythm structure while removing high-frequency electronic noise. Wavelet transforms decompose acoustic signals into frequency-time representations, isolating queen piping events and worker bee communication patterns from ambient noise. Multi-modal data fusion integrates complementary information streams. Kalman filtering combines noisy GPS positions with IMU acceleration data to reconstruct smooth flight trajectories. Bayesian networks merge biosensor measurements with behavioral features to estimate integrated health scores. Feature extraction transforms raw sensor data into compact representations suitable for machine learning, including spectral analysis of wingbeat audio and kinematic parameters from video tracking.

### 3.2. AI-driven Health Assessment and Anomaly Detection

Machine learning algorithms enable automated health assessment from multi-parameter sensor data. Random forest classifiers trained on labeled datasets achieve 88-94% accuracy in disease detection from acoustic signatures, outperforming manual inspection. Support vector machines classify pesticide exposure levels from flight kinematics and foraging duration patterns with 85-91% sensitivity. Deep learning architectures process high-dimensional sensor streams. Convolutional neural networks analyze thermal imagery from hives, detecting abnormal temperature distributions indicative of queen loss or brood disease. Recurrent neural networks model temporal dependencies in time-series biosensor data, predicting colony collapse events 2-4 weeks before manual detection. Autoencoder architectures learn normal behavioral patterns, flagging statistical outliers representing stress responses. Transfer learning adapts models trained on laboratory data to field deployment contexts. Anomaly detection algorithms identify deviations from baseline patterns, with isolation forests detecting outlier sensor readings and change-point detection recognizing abrupt shifts in foraging activity preceding colony failure.

### 3.3. Cloud-Edge Architectures for Real-time Monitoring

Hybrid cloud-edge architectures optimize the trade-off between local responsiveness and centralized analytical power (Figure 2). Edge nodes execute lightweight inference models providing <500 millisecond latency for time-critical alerts, such as detecting acute pesticide exposure requiring immediate hive relocation. Cloud servers perform computationally intensive tasks including model retraining, population-level pattern analysis, and integration with external data sources. Real-time dashboards visualize pollinator health metrics for farm managers and researchers, displaying colony-level summaries alongside individual-level trajectories and physiological time series. Geospatial visualization layers overlay pollinator movement patterns on crop field maps, identifying under-pollinated zones and optimizing hive placement.

## 4. Applications in Agriculture and Ecosystem Management

### 4.1. Pollination Efficiency and Crop Productivity

Real-time pollinator monitoring enables precision pollination management in commercial agriculture. RFID tracking data quantify individual bee flower visitation rates, revealing that optimal pollination requires 4-8 visits per flower for crops like almonds and blueberries. Spatial analysis identifies field zones receiving insufficient pollinator activity, guiding supplemental hive placement or habitat enhancement. Integration with crop phenology models synchronizes pollinator deployment with peak bloom periods. Thermal imaging monitors bloom progression across orchards, triggering hive introduction when 20-30% of flowers open. Economic optimization models combine pollinator monitoring data with crop yield predictions and pollination service costs, recommending cost-effective strategies balancing rental honeybee colonies, wild pollinator habitat provision, and pesticide timing restrictions.

### 4.2. Early Detection of Stress, Disease, and Exposure Risks

Continuous physiological monitoring detects sublethal stress

responses hours to days before visible symptoms emerge. Elevated hemolymph glucose and lactate concentrations indicate metabolic dysregulation from neonicotinoid exposure 12-24 hours before flight impairment manifests. Acoustic signature changes precede visible *Varroa* mite infestations by 1-2 weeks, enabling earlier acaricide application when treatment efficacy is highest. Machine learning models trained on multi-parameter sensor data predict disease outbreaks, combining temperature variability, foraging activity decline, and acoustic pattern shifts to achieve 76-82% accuracy in forecasting American foulbrood infections 10-14 days pre-symptomatically. Pesticide exposure monitoring integrates application timing data from precision agriculture platforms with pollinator foraging patterns, generating alerts when foraging bees enter recently sprayed fields.

### 4.3. Decision Support for Conservation and Farm Management

Integrated decision support systems synthesize pollinator health data with environmental and agricultural management information. Multi-criteria optimization frameworks balance pollination services, crop productivity, pesticide use, and biodiversity conservation objectives. Adaptive management protocols incorporate real-time monitoring feedback, automatically recommending interventions including adjusting irrigation to extend bloom duration, delaying pesticide applications, or introducing supplemental pollinator species. Long-term monitoring datasets inform landscape-scale conservation planning, identifying critical habitat corridors and optimal locations for pollinator-friendly cover crops. Citizen science integration expands monitoring coverage by engaging farmers and landowners in data collection through mobile applications that guide non-experts through sensor deployment and interpretation of automated health assessments.

## 5. Challenges and Future Perspectives

### 5.1. Miniaturization, Power, and Durability Constraints

Current biosensor and tracking technologies face significant engineering challenges (Table 5). Tag mass represents a critical constraint—devices exceeding 15-20% of body mass impair flight performance and foraging efficiency. Achieving sub-100 mg total system mass while integrating sensors, wireless communication, and batteries requires continued advances in MEMS fabrication and flexible electronics. Battery life limits continuous monitoring duration, with active sensors typically operating 3-7 days before replacement. Energy harvesting from solar cells, thermoelectric generators, or piezoelectric elements could extend operational lifetime but adds mass and complexity. Environmental durability remains problematic, with outdoor deployment exposing devices to temperature extremes and mechanical stress. Biofouling of implanted sensors by hemolymph proteins degrades electrochemical sensor performance within 48-72 hours.

### 5.2. Data Privacy, Ethics, and Ecological Impact

Bio-digital monitoring raises ethical considerations regarding animal welfare and ecological intervention. Sensor attachment procedures require anesthesia, introducing stress and potential injury. Long-term device carriage may impair foraging success or alter social interactions within colonies. Ethical frameworks must balance scientific knowledge gain

against individual welfare costs]. Data ownership and access present governance challenges, with commercial platforms potentially restricting data access or aggregating information across farms without individual consent. Open-data frameworks promoting transparent sharing must balance privacy concerns with collective benefit from regional-scale ecological intelligence.

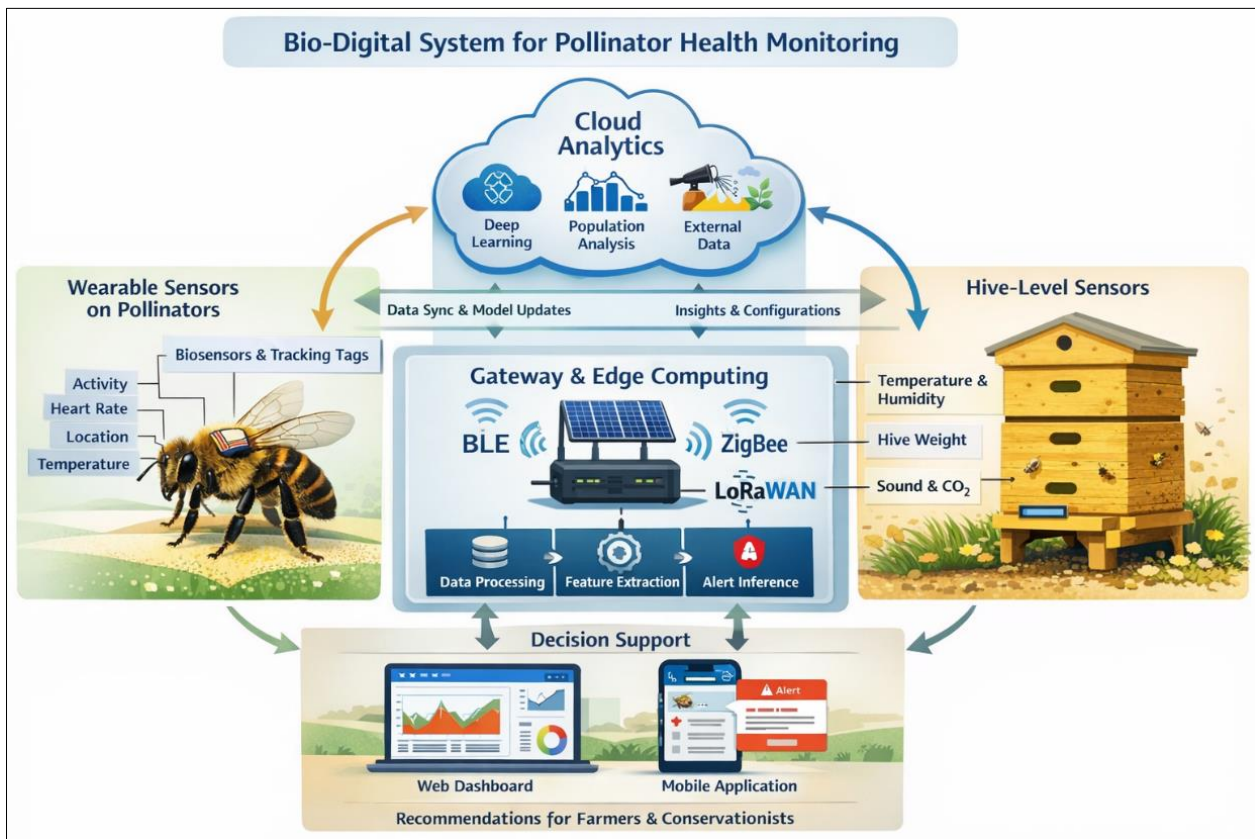
### 5.3. Scalability and Long-Term Deployment

Scaling bio-digital monitoring from research prototypes to operational agricultural systems requires addressing economic, technical, and institutional barriers. Per-colony monitoring costs currently range from \$500-5000, prohibitive for widespread adoption in commercial beekeeping. Standardization of data formats, communication protocols, and analytical methods is essential for interoperability across platforms and geographic regions. Long-term maintenance and calibration requirements challenge sustained deployment, with sensor drift necessitating periodic recalibration against reference standards. Institutional capacity for data interpretation and management response limits practical value, requiring training for farmers and land managers in dashboard interpretation and evidence-based decision-making.

## 6. Conclusion

Bio-digital integration technologies offer unprecedented capabilities for real-time, multi-scale monitoring of pollinator health and behavior in agricultural and natural ecosystems. Miniaturized biosensors, digital tracking systems, IoT platforms, and artificial intelligence collectively enable continuous assessment of physiological status, behavioral patterns, and stress responses undetectable through traditional approaches. Applications in precision agriculture support optimized pollination management, early disease detection, and pesticide exposure mitigation, directly contributing to crop productivity and pollinator conservation. Despite remarkable technological progress, challenges in device miniaturization, energy autonomy, data standardization, and ethical deployment require continued interdisciplinary collaboration. Future systems will integrate multi-species monitoring, incorporate genomic and metabolomic biomarkers, and leverage distributed sensor networks providing landscape-scale ecological intelligence. As pollinator populations face intensifying environmental pressures, bio-digital monitoring systems represent essential infrastructure for evidence-based conservation and sustainable food production, transforming reactive crisis management into proactive ecosystem stewardship.

## 7. Figures



**Fig 1:** Bio-digital system architecture for real-time pollinator health monitoring.

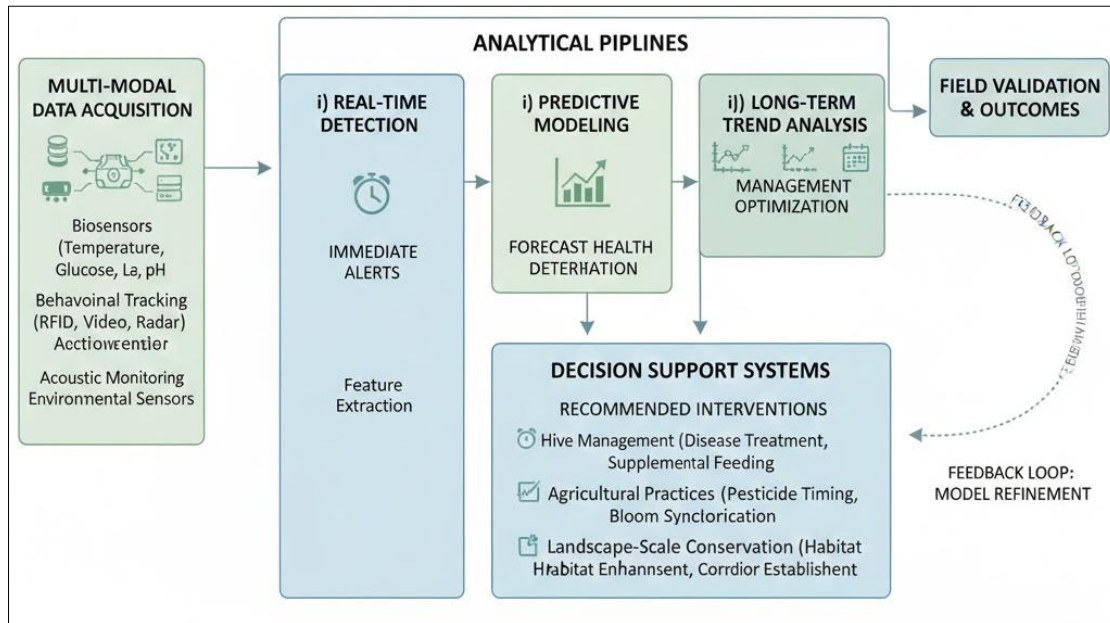


Fig 2: Integrated workflow combining biosensing, digital analytics, and decision-support for pollinator management.

8. Tables

Table 1: Key pollinator species and health indicators measurable using bio-digital technologies

Species	Body Mass (mg)	Primary Health Indicators	Biosensor Compatibility	Tracking Technologies
<i>Apis mellifera</i> (Honeybee)	80-100	Hemolymph glucose, lactate, temperature, wingbeat frequency, foraging duration	High – thorax attachment suitable for multi-sensor arrays	RFID, harmonic radar, optical tracking, GPS (queens)
<i>Bombus terrestris</i> (Bumblebee)	200-400	Temperature, flight kinematics, foraging efficiency, nest attendance	Moderate – larger tags tolerated but colony size limits sample numbers	RFID, harmonic radar, miniaturized GPS
<i>Bombus impatiens</i> (Common Eastern Bumblebee)	150-250	Metabolic rate, thermoregulation, pesticide-induced flight impairment	Moderate – similar to <i>B. terrestris</i>	RFID, harmonic radar, video tracking
<i>Osmia lignaria</i> (Mason bee)	30-50	Nesting behavior, provisioning rate, developmental timing	Low – mass constraints limit sensor options	Passive RFID (minimal mass tags), optical nest monitoring
<i>Megachile rotundata</i> (Alfalfa leafcutter bee)	40-60	Cell provisioning rate, parasitism incidence, emergence timing	Low – primarily behavioral metrics via nest monitoring	Optical tracking, nest-box sensors (temperature, humidity)

Table 2: Biosensors and wearable/implantable devices used for monitoring pollinator physiology and behavior

Sensor Type	Measured Parameters	Detection Principle	Mass (mg)	Operating Duration	Validation Status
Electrochemical microsensor	Glucose, lactate, oxidative stress markers	Enzymatic reaction generating current signal	15-30	48-72 hours (biofouling limited)	Laboratory validated; limited field deployment
Thermocouple/thermistor	Body and hemolymph temperature	Resistance change with temperature	5-12	Continuous (passive) or months (active with battery)	Extensively field-deployed
Optical wingbeat sensor	Wingbeat frequency, amplitude modulation	Reflected infrared light modulation	20-35	3-7 days (battery)	Field validated in multiple studies
Acoustic sensor (on-body)	Flight buzzing, communication signals	Piezoelectric or MEMS microphone	25-40	2-5 days (battery)	Prototype stage; promising initial results
Accelerometer/gyroscope (IMU)	Flight kinematics, activity state	MEMS inertial measurement	30-50	3-7 days (battery)	Laboratory and field validated
pH microsensor	Hemolymph acid-base status	Ion-selective electrode or optical fluorescence	10-20	24-48 hours	Laboratory validation only
Flexible multi-sensor array	Temperature, pH, electrolytes (Na <sup>+</sup> , K <sup>+</sup> )	Polymer substrate with integrated sensors	40-60	48-96 hours	Early development; proof-of-concept

**Table 3:** Digital tracking, communication, and data acquisition technologies for pollinator monitoring

Technology	Spatial Resolution	Range	Individual ID Capability	Data Throughput	Power Consumption	Primary Applications
Passive RFID	1-5 cm	0.1-2 m	Yes (unique tag ID)	Low (presence/absence)	None (passive backscatter)	Hive entrance/exit monitoring, nest box tracking
Active RFID	1-10 cm	10-1000 m	Yes	Moderate (ID + timestamp)	10-50 mW (limits battery life)	Landscape-scale foraging tracking
Harmonic radar	5-50 cm	100-900 m	No (unless multiple frequencies)	Low (position only)	Passive tag + external transmitter	Flight path reconstruction, foraging range studies
Optical tracking (computer vision)	<1 mm	0.5-10 m (camera field of view)	Yes (via visual markers or morphology)	High (video streams)	Moderate (camera + processing)	Behavioral ethograms, hive entrance activity, flight kinematics
Miniaturized GPS	2-10 m (open sky)	Global	Yes	Moderate (coordinates + timestamp)	100-300 mW (major constraint)	Large bee species, long-distance tracking
Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) beacons	1-5 m	10-100 m	Yes	Moderate (ID + RSSI proximity)	1-10 mW	Indoor/outdoor transition tracking, hive proximity monitoring
LoRaWAN	N/A (connectivity, not positioning)	2-15 km	Yes (node ID)	Low (suitable for sensor data)	<50 mW	Environmental sensors, remote hive monitoring

**Table 4:** Data analytics and AI methods applied to pollinator health assessment

Method Category	Specific Algorithms	Input Data Types	Outputs	Computational Requirements	Deployment Location
Classical machine learning	Random forest, SVM, k-NN	Extracted features (foraging rate, temperature statistics, acoustic features)	Binary classification (healthy/diseased), exposure level	Low-moderate; edge-compatible	Edge and cloud
Deep learning – CNNs	ResNet, MobileNet, EfficientNet	Images (thermal, visible, nest box cameras)	Object detection (bees, parasites), health classification	High; typically cloud or GPU edge	Cloud (training); edge (inference with optimized models)
Deep learning – RNNs/LSTMs	LSTM, GRU, Temporal CNNs	Time-series sensor data (temperature, accelerometer, biosensors)	State prediction, anomaly detection, collapse forecasting	Moderate-high; edge deployment feasible with quantization	Cloud and optimized edge
Autoencoders	Variational autoencoders, denoising autoencoders	Multi-modal sensor streams	Anomaly detection, dimensionality reduction, missing data imputation	Moderate	Cloud and edge
Bayesian methods	Bayesian networks, Gaussian processes	Multi-sensor fusion, uncertain measurements	Probabilistic health scores, confidence intervals	Low-moderate	Edge and cloud
Signal processing	Wavelet transforms, Fourier analysis, Kalman filtering	Acoustic, temperature, acceleration time series	Feature extraction, noise reduction, trajectory smoothing	Low; highly edge-compatible	Edge
Clustering & dimensionality reduction	k-means, DBSCAN, PCA, t-SNE	High-dimensional sensor data	Behavioral state segmentation, pattern discovery	Low-moderate	Cloud (exploratory); edge (predefined clusters)

**Table 5:** Advantages, limitations, and ethical considerations of bio-digital monitoring systems for pollinators

Dimension	Advantages	Limitations	Ethical Considerations
Temporal resolution	Continuous monitoring (seconds to months); captures acute stress responses and circadian patterns invisible to manual surveys	Battery life and sensor durability restrict long-term continuous operation; data gaps during device failure or maintenance	Continuous tracking may constitute excessive surveillance; balance information gain against animal welfare
Spatial coverage	Scalable to landscape level via distributed sensors; tracks individual movements across heterogeneous environments	High deployment costs limit density; communication range constrains spatial extent; GPS ineffective indoors/under canopy	Potential habitat disturbance during sensor installation; electromagnetic pollution concerns
Physiological insight	Direct measurement of biomarkers (glucose, lactate, temperature) reveals mechanistic stress responses	Invasive sensor attachment; biofouling degrades performance; limited biomarker panel compared to laboratory analysis	Anesthesia and attachment procedures cause stress and potential injury; long-term device carriage may impair fitness
Behavioral detail	High-resolution tracking of foraging, social interactions, navigation; quantifies sublethal pesticide effects	Video analysis computationally intensive; optical tracking limited to restricted spaces; RFID requires proximity to readers	Marked individuals may experience altered social status; potential for differential survival biasing population inferences

Early warning capability	Predictive models detect disease and stress days-to-weeks pre-symptomatically; enables proactive intervention	Prediction accuracy depends on training data quality and representativeness; false positives may trigger unnecessary actions	Premature or excessive intervention could disrupt colony homeostasis; balance precaution with ecological autonomy
Data integration	Combines multiple information streams (physiological, behavioral, environmental) for holistic health assessment	Data heterogeneity complicates integration; lack of standardization hinders cross-platform compatibility	Data ownership ambiguities; commercial platforms may restrict access or monetize farmer/researcher data without consent
Automation & scalability	Reduces labor compared to manual inspection; AI enables analysis of massive datasets infeasible for humans	Requires technical expertise for deployment and interpretation; infrastructure costs (edge/cloud computing)	Digital divide may exclude small-scale or resource-limited stakeholders; risk of technology reinforcing inequalities
Real-time decision support	Immediate alerts enable timely intervention (pesticide exposure mitigation, disease treatment, hive relocation)	Communication latency in remote areas; over-reliance on automated recommendations may undermine expert judgment	Responsibility attribution when AI recommendations lead to negative outcomes; need for human-in-the-loop decision frameworks

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