

影响蜜蜂级型分化的主要因素研究进展*

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摘要 级型分化指社会性昆虫中, 性别相同的个体, 但它们的形态、职能和行为不同。蜂王和工蜂都是由受精卵发育而来的雌性蜜蜂, 二者的遗传物质完全相同, 但因食物营养和发育空间差异, 直接导致两者在形态、生理、社会职能和寿命等方面存在巨大差异。目前影响蜜蜂级型分化的因素, 主要包括食物营养、发育空间、蛋白质表达、基因表达及甲基化、激素调控等方面。本文就影响蜜蜂级型分化的主要因素研究进展进行了综述, 并提出了几点展望, 期望对广大读者有参考价值。

关键词 蜜蜂; 级型分化; 进展

Advances in research on the major factors responsible for honeybee cast differentiation

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Abstract Cast differentiation allows individuals with the same genome to develop different morphology and behavioral characteristics. Honeybee queens and workers have essentially the same genome, but develop distinctly different morphology, physiology, roles within the colony and life span, due to differences in nutrition and brood cell size during larval development. The major factors underlying cast differentiation remain unclear. This article reviews progress in research on the main factors affecting caste differentiation in honey bees, including nutrition, developmental space, protein expression, gene expression, methylation, and hormone regulation, and suggests directions for future research.

Key words honeybee; cast differentiation; advance

蜜蜂是自然生态系统中, 与人类关系极为密切的昆虫, 具有重要经济效益、社会效益以及生态效益(曾蜜等, 2023), 是一种重要的经济动物资源。养蜂业作为畜牧业中的特色产业, 在满足人们对美好生活的需求、促进农业绿色可持续发展、生态保护以及助力乡村振兴等方面具有非常重要的意义(曾蜜等, 2022, 2024; 曾志将, 2023)。蜜蜂是一种资源共享、分工精确和信息相互交流的典型社会昆虫, 蜜蜂社会的生物学特性一直是研究热点, 一是蜜蜂为农作物授粉增产

和维持生态系统中生物多样性发挥重要作用, 二是蜜蜂社会生物学研究对生物学具有重要影响(曾志将等, 2023)。

在社会性昆虫中, 级型分化是指性别相同的个体, 但它们的形态、职能和行为不同。蜜蜂、蚂蚁以及胡蜂等都存在级型分化现象, 级型分化是社会性昆虫实现生殖分工和劳动分工重要的生物学基础(Robinson and Barron, 2017)。蜜蜂级型分化是典型的多型非遗传性, 即在发育环境因素诱导下, 二倍体蜂王和工蜂

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个体间出现显著性差异变化(曾志将, 2020)。

蜂王和工蜂都是由受精卵发育而来的雌性蜜蜂, 它们的遗传物质完全相同, 但由于发育过程中得到的食物营养和发育空间差异, 造成了它们不仅在形态上差异显著, 而且在生殖、寿命和行为等方面迥然不同(Evans and Wheeler, 1999, 2001; He *et al.*, 2017; Wei *et al.*, 2019)。将工蜂幼虫放入王台中, 结果表明: 只有小于 3.5 日龄工蜂幼虫可发育成蜂王, 大于 3.5 日龄工蜂幼虫只能发育为过渡型雌性蜜蜂(Weaver, 1957, 1966; de Wilde and Beetsma, 1982), 这说明 3.5 日龄是蜜蜂级型分化的关键时间点。本文从食物营养、发育空间、蛋白质表达、基因表达及甲基化和激素调控等角度, 分析了影响蜜蜂级型分化的主要因素。

1 食物营养

幼虫期营养差异是引起蜜蜂级型分化的主要因素。早期研究发现, 蜜蜂幼虫的食物主要包含白色、透明状和黄色 3 种组分。白色组分和透明状组分分别来自于哺育蜂的上颚腺和下颚腺分泌物, 黄色组分主要来自于花粉(Graham, 1992)。蜂王幼虫整个发育时期食用的都是蜂王浆; 工蜂幼虫前 3 d 食用的是工蜂浆, 3 d 后食用的工蜂浆中添加了花粉和蜂蜜(Beetsma, 1979; Page and Peng, 2001; Chittka and Chittka, 2010)。

在食物的数量上, 蜂王幼虫获得的食物要远远多于工蜂幼虫(Haydak, 1970)。幼虫的摄食量提高, 可以刺激咽侧体分泌保幼激素, 进一步诱使 2-3 日龄工蜂幼虫发育为蜂王(Hartfelder *et al.*, 1993)。Buttsted 等(2016)认为蜂王浆和工蜂浆中的糖含量可能会影响幼虫的摄食量。蜂王浆水分降低或某些成分的颗粒沉淀等会降低适口性, 使幼虫摄食量大大减少, 发育成工蜂。用新鲜工蜂浆饲喂 2-3 日龄的工蜂幼虫, 不能培育出蜂王; 但增加新鲜工蜂浆中葡萄糖和果糖的含量后, 会刺激幼虫的摄食, 而培育出蜂王(Asencot and Lensky, 1985)。

食物质量对蜜蜂的级型分化也很重要。蜂王

浆中糖含量始终高于工蜂浆, 蜂王浆中高达 34%, 工蜂浆中仅为 12%(Page and Peng, 2001)。蜂王浆中糖类主要为葡萄糖, 工蜂浆中糖类前期也主要是葡萄糖, 但 3 d 后葡萄糖逐渐被果糖取代(Chittka and Chittka, 2010)。冷冻干燥后蜂王浆中 10-羟基-2-癸烯酸(10-HDA)含量为 6%, 而工蜂浆中 10-HDA 含量为 2.2%(Beetsma, 1979)。工蜂浆和蜂王浆中 10-羟基-2-癸烯酸(10-HDA)含量都随日龄的增长而降低, 但蜂王浆中 10-HDA 含量均高于同日龄工蜂浆, 2、3 和 4 d 工蜂浆和蜂王浆中 10-HDA 分别为 1.5%-1.8%和 2.2%-3.7%(Wang *et al.*, 2016)。同时蜂王浆中含有微量性激素和促性腺激素, 雌性幼虫通过摄取性激素和促性腺激素的量决定了级型分化(Seehuus *et al.*, 2006)。蜂王浆中 RNA 含量显著高于 DNA 含量(Zeng *et al.*, 2006), 且含有丰富的 miRNAs, 其中 miR-184 和 miR162a 参与调控蜜蜂级型分化(Shi *et al.*, 2012; Guo *et al.*, 2013; Zhu *et al.*, 2017)。蜂蜜和天然蜂粮作为工蜂的主要食物, 富含双香豆酸, 若在蜂王浆中添加双香豆酸可抑制蜂王幼虫卵巢发育(Mao *et al.*, 2015)。从茶花粉中提取出一种水溶性类激素物质, 它能显著影响蜜蜂幼虫卵巢发育, 导致卵巢管数减少, 从而抑制蜜蜂向蜂王方向的发育(张刻等, 2009)。蜜蜂幼虫食物中的蛋氨酸作为甲基供体, 其含量也对蜜蜂级型分化有调控作用(Chen *et al.*, 2021)。

2 发育空间因素

在正常蜂群中, 蜂王巢房(王台)与工蜂巢房大小及形状有比较大的区别。王台形状像杯状, 表面形状为近圆形, 底为圆形, 西方蜜蜂 *Apis mellifera* 王台内径为 8-10 mm, 东方蜜蜂 *Apis cerana* 王台内径为 6-9 mm, 王台唯一功能是用来培育新蜂王; 工蜂巢房为六柱形, 表面形状为正六边形, 底为三棱形, 西方蜜蜂工蜂巢房的内径为 5.2-5.4 mm, 东方蜜蜂工蜂巢房的内径为 4.4-5.1 mm, 工蜂巢房有培育工蜂和贮存食物等多种功能(曾志将等, 2023)。虽然王台大小可

以影响培育蜂王质量 (Wu *et al.*, 2018), 但在工蜂巢房中不能培育出蜂王, 同样王台中也不能培育出工蜂 (曾志将等, 2023)。

3 蛋白质表达因素

级型分化与蛋白质差异有关。同日龄蜂王幼虫和工蜂幼虫的蛋白质表达图谱存在显著差异 (吴静和李建科, 2010)。Kamakura (2011) 研究发现王浆主蛋白 1 (Mrjp1, 57 kD) 可以诱导蜜蜂幼虫往蜂王发育, 蜂王整个幼虫期食用蜂王浆诱使其发育成蜂王。但 Buttstedt 等 (2016) 认为 Mrjp1 不是诱导蜜蜂幼虫往蜂王发育的主要原因, 而主要是由蜂王浆和工蜂浆中的糖含量决定。

10-HDA 具有组蛋白去乙酰化酶抑制剂活性, 蜂王浆比工蜂浆更富含 10-HDA, 因此 10-HDA 可能调控蜂王发育 (Spannhoff *et al.*, 2011)。蜜蜂幼虫食物中 10-HDA 含量增加, 能显著下降蜜蜂初生体重, 但显著提高了组蛋白去乙酰化酶 3 (HDAC3) 基因表达水平 (Wang *et al.*, 2014)。蜜蜂幼虫体内 ATP-柠檬酸裂解酶, 能够将线粒体中的柠檬酸释放进入细胞质内, 与乙酰辅酶 A 进行反应, 促进了组蛋白乙酰化, 从而调控级型分化 (Wellen *et al.*, 2009)。

4 基因表达及甲基化因素

蜜蜂级型分化与基因差异表达紧密相关 (Chen *et al.*, 2012)。57 kD 的 Mrjp1 通过激活脂肪体中的表皮生长因子受体 (EGFR) 及其下游信号通路, 直接或间接激活 PI3K/TOR/S6K 信号通路, 蜕皮激素分泌增加, 刺激了咽侧体分泌保幼激素, 从而促进卵黄蛋白形成, 加速了发育 (Yamanaka and O'Connor, 2011)。对蜜蜂 *Egfr* 基因进行 RNA 干扰后, 发现蜜蜂表型接近工蜂 (Shilo, 2005); 对蜜蜂 *Vg* 基因进行 RNA 干扰, 会显著抑制蜂王幼虫发育成蜂王 (Zhang *et al.*, 2022); 对蜜蜂 *Dnmt3* (DNA 甲基转移酶) 进行 RNA 干扰, 发现干扰之后能够诱导工蜂发育成蜂王 (Kucharski *et al.*, 2008)。

蜜蜂级型分化也与 DNA 甲基化水平息息相

关, 即营养因素可以通过影响 DNA 甲基化水平来调控蜜蜂级型分化 (Kucharski *et al.*, 2008)。空间因素同样可通过 DNA 甲基化来调控蜜蜂级型分化 (Shi *et al.*, 2011), 工蜂甲基化水平随着幼虫日龄增加而提高, 而蜂王是先升高后下降 (Shi *et al.*, 2013)。应用 Illumina HiSeq™ 2500 测定了 4 d 蜂王幼虫和 4 d 工蜂幼虫的 miRNA 种类和含量, 首次发现: 工蜂幼虫 22 nt sRNA 含量显著高于蜂王幼虫。与工蜂幼虫相比, 蜂王幼虫有 17 种 miRNA 表达上调, 20 种 miRNA 表达下调 (Shi *et al.*, 2015)。此外, 相关研究表明发育过程中转录程序的建立、维持和调节依赖于染色质的可塑性。组蛋白 H3 上的第 27 位赖氨酸残基发生乙酰化 (H3K27ac) 已被证明是一种关键的染色质修饰, 且 H3K27ac 调控蜜蜂级型分化 (Wojciechowski *et al.*, 2018)。启动子区域的级型特异性组蛋白 H3 上的第 4 位赖氨酸残基发生甲基化 (H3K4me1), 内含子区域的 H3K4me1 可以诱导蜂王发育, 因此 H3K4me1 修饰可能是蜜蜂级型分化特异性转录程序构建和维持的重要调控因子 (Zhang *et al.*, 2023b)。

蜂王和工蜂在发育过程中存在十分复杂的 RNA 加工和修饰过程, 受到更为精确转录本表达差异调控, 同时发现跟随在每条转录本后面 Poly (A) 尾可以通过负调控转录本表达参与调控蜜蜂级型分化 (He *et al.*, 2022)。RNA m⁶A 甲基化在蜜蜂级型分化和幼虫发育中发挥了重要调控作用 (Wang *et al.*, 2021)。蜜蜂级型分化受多组学复杂的互作调控, 在幼虫发育初期, 表观遗传修饰较少, 且参与基因表达的调控程度较低, 所以 2 日龄幼虫发育具有可塑性; 当幼虫发育至关键阶段时, 多种表观遗传修饰协同互作, 对级型分化关键基因进行多重调控, 所以 4 日龄幼虫发育不可逆。(Zhang *et al.*, 2023a)。

5 激素调控因素

保幼激素 (Juvenile hormone, JH) 和蜕皮激素 (Molting hormone, MH) 能调控蜜蜂级型分化 (Wirtz and Beetsma, 1972; Ebert, 1980; Barchuk *et al.*, 2004)。JH 能促进卵黄原蛋白基因发生转

录,从而提高卵黄原蛋白合成速率,为卵巢生长提供所需物质 (Rachinsky *et al.*, 1990)。蜂王幼虫体内 JH 激素的分泌水平高于工蜂幼虫,而蜂王幼虫体内的甲基化水平低于工蜂幼虫 (Barchuk *et al.*, 2007)。JH 在蜂王和工蜂幼虫体内的滴度变化趋势存在显著差异,蜂王 JH 滴度显著高于工蜂。幼虫 JH 滴度超过阈值,幼虫将发育成蜂王 (Barchuk *et al.*, 2007)。MH 是在前胸腺中合成后,并分泌到血液中一种甾醇类化合物。蜜蜂幼虫咽侧体大小和活力高低直接影响保幼激素和蜕皮激素浓度,从而影响蜜蜂生长发育 (Rachinsky and Engels, 1995; Capella and Hartfelder, 1998; Pinto *et al.*, 2002; Schmidt Capella and Hartfelder, 2002; Boot *et al.*, 2006)。蜂王与工蜂表型差异还与胰岛素/胰岛素类似物 (IIS) 密切相关 (Wheeler *et al.*, 2006), 哺育蜂和采集蜂大脑和脂肪体中 IIS 中基因表达有差异,并且能影响工蜂行为发育和寿命 (Corona *et al.*, 2007)。Wheeler 等 (2006) 从西方蜜蜂基因组序列信息中预测 2 种胰岛素类似多肽基因 (*AmILP-1* 和 *AmILP-2*) 及受体基因 (*AmInR-1* 和 *AmInR-2*)。 *AmILP-2* 是蜂王和工蜂共同转录体,且工蜂 *AmILP-2* 表达水平比蜂王高 (de Azevedo *et al.*, 2008)。幼虫食物经过肠上皮和脂肪体辨别和代谢,信号分子通过 IIS 途径传递到大脑,刺激咽侧体细胞分泌 JH 激素 (Barchuk *et al.*, 2007)。

6 展望

综合现有研究表明,蜜蜂级型分化及其机理是一个热门领域。食物营养成分(糖类、激素、氨基酸和蛋白质等)、基因表达、甲基化、miRNA 和染色体构象等因素均可蜜蜂级型分化,但以上各因素并不独立作用,而是相互关联。蜜蜂级型分化关键基因有 *JH*, *Vg*, *Dnmt3*, *Hex70b* 和 *CYP450* 等,关键信号通路涉及有 mTOR, Wnt, MAPK, IIS, Notch, FoxO, Hippo, Hedgehog 和 EGFR 等。目前对影响蜜蜂级型分化的关键因素存在不同学术观点,且蜜蜂级型分化分子调控机理尚不明确。进一步开展蜜蜂级型分化主要影

响因素的研究,不但可以完善其分子调控机理,还可为蜜蜂资源保护与利用供新思路和方法,具有重要的理论和实际意义。

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