

October 2014



# St. Clair Beekeepers Association

## *Bee Buzz*

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Monthly Newsletter of the St. Clair Beekeepers Association

### Special points of interest:

- November is our Thanksgiving party held in Belleville Friday 11-21
- No meeting or newsletter in December
- January we start back up in Edwardsville

### Monthly SCBA Meeting — October 2014

**Friday, October 24 beginning at 7:30 pm**

The meeting will be held at the Edwardsville Location:

**MadisonCounty Farm Bureau Building**

**900 Hillsboro Avenue**

**Edwardsville, Illinois**

Please bring a snack to share after the meeting

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## Feeding Frenzy

If you have been anywhere near your bees with anything sweet you know that they are crazy for food this time of year. You must see that your bees have enough food to keep the hive alive this winter. Although there was a decent nectar flow from the fall flowers, especially ragweed and goldenrod, most of us will find that the hives do not have nearly enough honey stored to make it through this winter.

We need to feed, feed, and feed some more. While it is still warm and the bees are flying, they will take a solution of 50% sugar, 50% water. It's recommended that before you start feeding at this time of year, you need to reduce the entrance to the hives. When bees smell the sugar syrup, they will be sending out scores of workers, all clamoring to get at the precious food. Don't be surprised if you see a lot of robbing. If you have a strong hive next to a weaker one, be very careful when feeding. We have had a few nucs robbed out because the bees were in an overwhelming robbing mode. Try to feed later in the day, don't keep a hive open any longer than absolutely necessary. When bees rob they tear up the combs to get to the food. Your already weaker smaller colony will have little chance of making it through the winter. Try not to spill any syrup. When it gets colder, switch to sugar bricks, loose sugar and or candy that we will talk about soon at our meetings.



## Presidents letter to the membership January 2014

Hello Everyone:

The days are beginning to cool as winter approaches. There seems to be somewhat of a controversy concerning just how severe the winter is going to be. One group of meteorologists are predicting up to five times as much snow as we have seen in the past and very cold days. Another group says the first group was a complete hoax using fictitious names and data and are predicting a milder than usual winter. It is my sincere opinion that we prepare for the worst. If the worst doesn't come, we won't be caught unawares as occurred last year.

I first noticed that the doves were flocking the first week in August. Usually the gathering of the doves doesn't occur before the first week in September. This past Tuesday I observed about 500 brown pelicans on the lake behind Cahokia Mounds. Later that evening I observed large numbers of pelicans in the Grafton, Illinois area. The pelicans make their summer home in North Dakota. They were just passing through on their migration to their southern winter homes. Due to the early snowfall the birds headed south a little earlier than usual.

For my nickel, I am taking these as signs of an early winter. Last winter brought us to our knees with losses averaging 53% across the association. My suggestion is to check your hives making sure enough stores are available. I would start feeding early, starting no later than the first frost. The more food you supply the longer their stores will last which will also help to insulate the hive. Currently I am feeding a 50-50 sugar solution using entrance feeders. 1 November I will switch over to a sugar block in a candy board frame. Whatever method you decide to use to feed the hive, always keep in mind how important ventilation is in the hive. Don't close 'em down too soon, and if using a candy board, make sure there is a vent hole somewhere in the block.

Hope to see you all for the October meeting on the 24th.

As always, if I can help in any way, don't hesitate to call.

Billy

618-910-3149 [bembam99@yahoo.com](mailto:bembam99@yahoo.com)

P.S. An aluminum folding lawn chair with the name "Spitz E" was left at our place during the July Meeting.



## Fall Beekeeping and Winter Preparation.

- Check to make sure that your hives are on a sturdy and safe surface, make sure the hive is level and not tilted backwards. It is good to have a slight forward towards the entrance. Any condensation that gathers inside the hive will flow out through the entrance. Too much moisture in the hive is a winter colony killer
- Make sure you have small vents in the top of the hive for moisture to escape. Just a notch at the top under the cover is all that is needed.
- Close up screened bottom boards. Slide a piece of plastic or other material over the screen to help the bees keep warm.
- What direction are your hives facing? South, southeast is recommended. If your bees are out in the open, consider putting up a wind break. It's recommended to have the windbreak to the north side of your hives.. Plant some tall ornamental grasses to give cover from nosy neighbors and blocks the cold winter winds too! You can also stack up bales of straw a few feet away from the hive bodies.
- If you have a warm day, check for queenless colonies. Join them with another if you have to. Remember, queens really cut back on laying when the days get colder and shorter. You're not going to find the huge brood patterns you saw in the summer.
- Reduce those entrances right away before the field mice move in. They would love a warm hive to hang out in for the winter. They make an awful mess.



E-Scrip reminders!. Don't forget to hand them your E-Scrip card before you hit the checkout at Schnucks. They even take it when you go through the self checkout. Lose your card? You can grab another one and ADD it to your cards. Just register it online by signing into their website ([www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com)). Go to my eScrip and sign in . Then go to cards and add another card. Now when we find an awesome sale on sugar at Schnucks the club will get credit! Online shopping for the holidays? We get credit from Amazon, Macys, JC Penney, Home Depot, Target and more! Need help? Contact Vickie at 618-978-4369

## Dues are Due!!

Secretary/Treasurer Vickie Piel will be collecting 2015 Dues at the October and November meetings.

Dues are \$20.00 which includes membership to the St. Clair Beekeepers Association and the Illinois State Beekeepers Association.



## St. Clair Beekeepers Association Officers

President	Bill Mattatall
Vice President	Kevin Wilke
Secretary/Treasurer	Vickie Piel
Public Information Officer:	Katrina Kloepper
Director 1st Year	Ken Schafer
Director 2nd Year	Ken Kloepper
Director 3rd Year	Debbie Zobrist

Happy Halloween! Beee Safe!



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## Pumpkin Honey Bread

From [www.honey.com](http://www.honey.com) The National Honey Board

### Ingredients

1 cup - honey  
1/2 cup - butter or margarine, softened  
1 can (16 oz.) - solid-pack pumpkin  
4 - eggs  
4 cups - flour  
4 teaspoons - baking powder  
2 teaspoons - ground cinnamon  
2 teaspoons - ground ginger  
1 teaspoon - baking soda  
1 teaspoon - salt  
1 teaspoon - ground nutmeg

### Directions

In large bowl, cream honey with butter until light and fluffy. Stir in pumpkin. Beat in eggs, one at a time, until thoroughly incorporated. Sift together remaining ingredients. Stir into pumpkin mixture. Divide batter equally between two well-greased 9 x5 x 3-inch loaf pans. Bake at 350°F for 1 hour or until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Let loaves cool in pans for 10 minutes; invert pans to remove loaves and allow to finish cooling on racks.



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Do you have beautiful pumpkins for Halloween? Thank the bees!! They are they best pollinators for pumpkins, squash and cucumbers.