



BEE BUZZ

MAY 2022

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From the President....

Greetings Members,

I hope all of you have had a chance to look in your hives and they are all thriving. Spring is in full force and we are starting to see a lot of swarms. If your name is not on the swarm list please go to our web site at stclairbees.com then select members only There you can fill out the form to add your name to the list.

There continues to be some confusion on the use of the list. No one is managing the list other than adding your name to it and what cities you cover. We don't control who gets a call and the list is randomly generated per city so the person who was #1 on the list for Edwardsville may be #5 on the list next week. We also are not controlling who gets the next swarm. The person with the swarm can call anyone on the list and they can continue to call until someone responds. We do ask that if you are the first person to take the call that you use one of the four options below:

You go get the swarm

You phone a friend

You post the notification on SLACK AND/OR Facebook Member page

Last resort is to ask the person to call someone else (hoping this is last resort but know we all have busy lives)

The board has worked hard to make a huge member benefit as easy as we can while giving all a fair shot at capturing swarms. We are always open to suggestions.

May is the busiest month for beekeepers making sure the bees have room to grow, store honey, and stay healthy. Take the time to look in each hive at least every two weeks and have a empty NUC available to make a split or capture a swarm.

Our May 22nd meeting will be at Scheve park in Mascoutah with Linda and I hosting. The plan is to smoke some pulled pork as the main dish and ask that everyone bring a side dish. After the business meeting and program we can go to my hives for a look. I can host about 10 cars at the hive location and they are about 10 miles north of Mascoutah. The hives are spread out so there is room for two or three experienced beekeepers to take a few newbees through the hives so you can learn. We hope to see you at the May meeting.

Tim Schartung SCBA President

Earth Week presentations ...

Our club was asked to make presentations to students at two schools in celebration of Earth Day April 22nd. The presentations covered the basic biology of bees, caste of bees in the hive, equipment, pictures from our teaching hive, and questions and answers. The student sampled honey and were given seed packets with honey bee friendly flower seeds to plant.

On Tuesday, April 19th, Dr. Vicki York and Dennis Hessel made a presentation to the 5th-8th grade students of Ms. Taylor Wilkin's at the Grant Middle School in Fairview Heights,

On Wednesday April 20th Julie McKinney and Dennis Hessel presented to Ms. Debbie Carter's students at the Bell Garden School in Belleville.



Dennis Hessel and Julie McKinney



Julie McKinney with teaching hive

WE ARE GROWING...

Welcome these new members that joined the club in April.

Terri Clifford, Steve Frederick, Penny Eby, Ed & Debbie Knox,
Andrea Darr, and Elliott Joseph O'Claire.

May in Southern Illinois by Ken Kloepper

DISCLAIMER: The most important thing to remember is that you cannot manage honey bees by a calendar. Location, topography, climate, weather, floral resources, and management goals are all factors to consider.

- ◆ During late April and throughout May in Southern Illinois, honey bees are usually busy collecting the main honey flow of the year.
 - ◆ Beekeepers should monitor their hives for adequate super space above the brood nest for the bees to store nectar. A strong colony of bees can easily fill several supers of honey in a two-week period during a strong honey flow.
 - ◆ In most areas, the main honey flow has begun and consists primarily of nectar from, dandelions, white Dutch clover, fruit trees and honeysuckle. The bees will add fresh white beeswax to the tops of the brood combs and this whitening is a sign the flow is starting.
 - ◆ In some areas, black locust trees may also provide a significant honeyflow starting about the 1st of May. However, it is very unpredictable due to the sparse location of trees, and unfavorable weather conditions. On average, black locust will only produce a large crop of prized honey about one year in four.
 - ◆ Weather factors that affect the black locust nectar flow are late season frosts, storms and high wind speeds that knock the blossoms off the trees, and rainstorms that dilute and wash the nectar from the flowers.



Black locust



White Dutch Clover



Honeysuckle

- ◆ Beekeepers should monitor Small Hive Beetle levels and set traps as needed.
- ◆ Beekeepers may want to install purchased queens, rear their own queens, or make splits during May as mature drones are generally plentiful for mating. These hives need regular feeding to optimize growth. Reduce entrances until nucs have sufficient guard bees to avoid robbing.
- ◆ Mow around the hives as needed!



St Clair Beekeepers Swarm List Procedures

One of the most enticing benefits of joining the club is the have access to catching swarms by adding your name to the swarm List. The swarm list has served this club very well over the years. Social media has allowed all members to communicate quickly but has also allowed non-members the ability to receive the notification about swarms. This has caused issues because non-members essentially are hijacking the club's hard work for their own use. Non-members who are allowed to catch swarms may cause the club a black eye because we have people representing the club who are not members. It is in the best interest of the club and it's members to keep swarm notifications within club communication's channels.

The following rules are now in effect for Swarms.

The official location of the swarm list is on the St Clair Beekeeper Association Web Site at <https://stclairbees.com/bee-removal/>

- You must be a member in good standing to be added to the swarm list
- Each Member can add 12 zip codes (cities) to the swarm list
- If a board member is called about a swarm we will advertise the swarm in two locations on social media: SLACK and Facebook: Member Page for St Clair Beekeepers Association
- Please keep swarm notifications within the club. This allows for all members the opportunity to catch a swarm.
- If you receive a call for a swarm and cannot catch the swarm please be respectful and notify another club member or place the post on the club's social media locations.

To be added to the list you need to go to <https://stclairbees.com/swarm-signup/> and complete the form. The status of your membership will be checked and your name will be added to the Swarm list and posted on our website within 3 days.

Meeting Dates for 2022....

Below are the meeting dates for 2022. They are subject to change.

May 22nd - 1st Outdoor Meeting – Scheve Park, Mascoutah, IL.

June 26th - Outdoor meeting location, Katelyn Hentrich's Apiary

July 31st - Outdoor meeting location TBD

Aug 28th - Outdoor meeting 6 Mile Museum, 3279 Maryville Rd, Granite City, IL

Sept 25th - Outdoor meeting location, Rich and Darla Perkins, Freeburg

Oct 28th - St Clair Count Farm Bureau, Belleville

Nov 18th - Madison County Farm Bureau, Edwardsville

Dec – no meeting

If anyone would like to host the July 31st meeting at their apiary please let

Program Director, Marc Mayhew, know.

CATCHING A SWARM OF HONEY BEES

Tools needed – you can never have too much

- 8' Step Ladder
- 2 -30-gallon trash cans
- 8' tarp or white bedsheet
- a couple buckets
- 10' ratchet strap
- spray bottle w/water
- spray bottle w/sugar water
- loppers, and hand pruner
- stapler
- one eighth hardware cloth
- duct tape
- lemon essential oil
- Lysol spray
- Bee brush
- pheromone optional
- queen catcher
- Smoker
- Bee vacuum if you have one just in case you need it
- 50-100' electric cord
- 12-15' telescoping fiberglass painter's pole.

Questions to ask

Are you sure they are honeybees?
Can landowner take a picture and send it by text or e-mail?
Where are they?
Are they a swarm or a cutout?
Hanging on a limb or a swing set, mailbox, etc.
How high are they?
How long have they been there?
How big is the swarm? As big as a football, bigger or smaller.
Be sure to get a name, address, phone number, directions. Is electric accessible?
Are they on your property?
Will someone be home?
Ask them to look again just to be sure before you leave.
Ask them to call you if the bees leave.
Ask if anyone has sprayed them? If so, forget it you're done.

The Process

1. Position your ladder safely and level.
2. Lay down tarp or sheet with weights on corners to keep from blowing in wind. Put it fairly close to swarm and ladder.
3. Lay ratchet strap down on tarp then center bottom board over strap.
4. Next place hive body or nuc box with frames over ratchet strap.

The Process continued...

5. A frame of drawn comb is a plus. Queen can start laying right away. Open brood is even better.
6. Spray frames and foundation with sugar syrup one at a time and replace leaving one or two out. Now you are ready.
7. Light smoker and put on your jacket, veil, and gloves.
Note: I almost never cut branches if possible. I like to spray the bees with water.
8. Set spray bottle on spray and spray them on all sides. It causes them to snuggle tighter together. It reduces the flying when shook into the trash can.
9. Climb the ladder with trash can and hold it under bees to see if you are comfortable with the location of ladder or need to tweak it a little.
10. Take one moment to look at setup. All is ready. This can all be done in about ten minutes if you have done a few swarms. Don't rush. Safety first. Check for bystanders, etc.
11. Carry a trash can and water bottle up together. Spray the cluster with water and hang bottle on side of ladder or small branch.
12. Hold trash can about 18 inches directly below the bees. Get a good grip on the branch above or below the bees depending which is easiest and will dislodge them the best.
13. Give it a good hard shake and then quickly do it one more time before quickly and safely going down the ladder. One hand on ladder and the other on the handle of trash can.
14. Aim for center of hive and gently dump them into the center of the hive body and frames. If you have to shake the limb a second time I like to dump them right on the front porch against the front of hive.
15. Primary swarms hive fairly easily. The leftover frames can be gently added in a few minutes. Allow the bees to move out of the way as the frames are gently added. You will find that bees yield to gentle pressure. Gently slide on the inner cover starting in rear when possible.
16. Next you can put on the telescoping cover and wrap the hive with the ratchet strap tightly.
17. Take a couple small handfuls of grass and push it in the entrance with your hive tool leaving a small opening about a half inch.
18. The bees are now ready to transport to their final location. You can leave the hive overnight and pick up the next morning or evening if you want, however, you should put them in the hive and place them as soon as possible.
19. Put in back of truck and tie off so hive doesn't slide around. **Note:** If using a box or vacuum system be sure to keep them cool. They can easily overheat. You can lose bees in the shade to overheating in less than 2 hours. Spring swarms are very motivated and build quickly.
20. Early the next morning remove the grass and the bees will take their orientation flight.
21. Over the next few days be sure to give them plenty of sugar syrup as feed until they get established. In a week to ten days you can check for eggs, or larva to determine if you have a viable queen. Possibly a little longer if she was a virgin.

One benefit of joining SCBA is you are able to join our Swarm List and pick 12 cities you will service.

Around the Bee Yard

- Inspect twice this month for congestion, queenrightness, diseases, and mites
- Monitor for queen cells to prevent swarming
- Divide strong colonies or requeen if planned;
- Install package bees;
- Remove all drugs four week before main nectar flow
- Check for adequate stores.
- Unite weak colonies
- Set out swarm traps
- Here is a link to an excellent article about preventing swarms

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56818659c21b86470317d96e/t/5f6377800bc35c48bb2bc95a/1600354289754/Milbrath-article April2020 Feb27-335PM.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56818659c21b86470317d96e/t/5f6377800bc35c48bb2bc95a/1600354289754/Milbrath-article+April2020+Feb27-335PM.pdf)

A Little Bee Humor

Q: What is a bee's favorite classical music composer?

A: Bee-thoven!

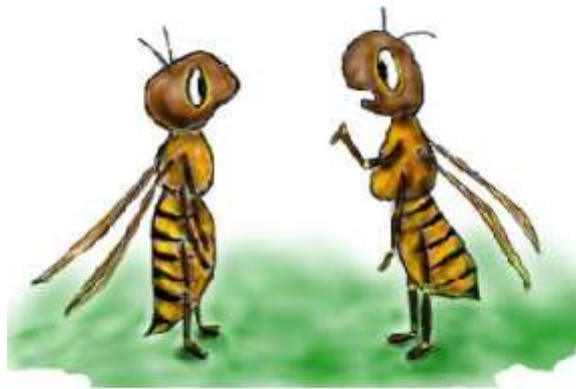
Q: Who writes books for little bees?

A: Bee-trix Potter!

Q: Why did Jimmy's parents scream when they saw his grades?

A: Because he had a bee on his report card

<http://jokes4us.com/animaljokes/beejokes.html>



Okay new guy, it's time to go get fresh nectar and pollen. You won't have to eat leftovers much longer.

The Beekeeper's Calendar –May by David Burns, Master Beekeeper

MAY AND THE BEES: Bees are in full operation now that it is May. You can stop feeding strong hives now because they are bringing in lots of nectar and pollen. The hive is expanding rapidly. The brood chambers are filling up fast and becoming crowded and congested.

MAY AND THE BEEKEEPER: RED ALERT!! BEES SWARM IN MAY You will have to implement a [swarm control strategy](#). Keep in mind that bees swarm as a way of multiplying. It is not a sign of being a poor beekeeper. However, there are some important steps to implement to try to prevent swarming. Review the link above. Keep in mind that you must provide room for your hive to expand. And, you should put on honey supers in May. Put on as many as you'd like. I think it is good practice to have a minimum of two honey supers on all hives during the nectar season. Three or four supers are even better. Don't wait to add your supers or you may miss particular nectar flows. Get all supers on by May 1st! Consider having an extra, empty hive on hand so you'll be able to capture a swarm. You will want to capture your own swarms or you will probably receive phone calls once your neighbors learn you are a beekeeper. We receive several calls each week all Spring and Summer

[Beekeeping in 2021: The Beekeeper's Calendar Of Important Events \(basicbeekeeping.blogspot.com\)](http://basicbeekeeping.blogspot.com)

OLD TIMERS' WAYS

When talking honey plants, White Dutch clover would probably be considered the king. As a kid you probably looked for a four leaf clover. If you were like me, in the summer shoes were only worn to church. An occasional sting on a bare foot was expected when playing in a yard with clover in bloom. Clover is a legume; that is, it fixes nitrogen in the soil and fertilizes the soil. Most people would mix clover in with grass seed to keep the yard fertilized.

I use the term yard rather than lawn as a yard contains other broadleaf plants, mainly dandelions. In the 1950's there were few all green manicured lawns since gas fired mowers and herbicides were just coming into use. Until then most yards were cut with a reel type push mower which I contest was no fun.

Back to the subject of clover. About the same time, a chemical company came out with a product to kill dandelions which everyone hated. The problem was that it also killed the clover. The chemical company came out with an ad campaign convincing the public that a lawn should be all green without the ugly yellow dandelions or white clover.

Today, because of power equipment, chemical fertilizers and herbicides, large green lawns have become the norm. White clover is persistent though and still can be found in less maintained lawns, lots, roadsides, etc.

There are other clovers, Sweet Yellow and White, Red, Alsike, Ladino and Crimson. I won't go into these as they are best grown in set-aside ground.

Ken Schaefer, (618) 975-802

April 29th Membership Meeting in pictures



Johnny Murdock spoke about how to properly assemble frames.

Left: He talks about how to install wax foundation in a frame.
Right: He demonstrates how to add wax to plastic foundation.



March Mayhew spoke about how to make comb honey. Left he talks about the frames and foundation he uses. Right he shows how he uses the comb cutter in his had to cut out the honey and comb.



Julie McKinney spoke about making and packaging comb honey. She uses Ross Round frames. She explained how the special frames work and how she packages and markets her honey and wax products.



Ross Round frames



Finished product

The HAS Beekeeping Conference returns this year.



Enrollment is open for the HAS Beekeeping Conference. This event is three days packed with many sessions talking about beekeeping. This event is held in Evansville, Indiana, Tuesday, June 28 – Friday, July 1, 2022.

On-campus lodging is available through registration or you can choose hotel options.

Featured speakers will include Randy Oliver, Jerry Hayes, Dr. Brock Harpur – Purdue University, and Dr. Dewey Caron – Oregon State University.

Go to www.heartlandbees.org for all of the details and topics covered.



St. Clair Beekeepers Association

Promoting interest in bees and beekeeping in Southern Illinois.

Email: stclairbees@gmail.com

The purpose and function of the St. Clair Beekeepers Association is the promotion of interest in bees and beekeeping by such means as encouraging...

- Good beekeeping practices
- The utilization of bees for pollination of agricultural crops
- The dissemination of information about bees and beekeeping

NEXT MEETING DATE

Our next membership meeting will be held outdoors on Sunday, May 22nd at 2:00pm at the Scheve Park in Mascoutah,. We will meet at the pavilion near the swimming pool. Turn off N Sixth Street on Park Drive and watch for signs. After the business meeting we will head over to Tim Schartung's api-



Link to Google Maps

