



Bee BUZZ

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2023

From the President ...

Greets Beekeepers,

It was very nice to see everyone on the Fireside Chat and at the meeting. I hope you liked both. Pete did a great job presenting Treatment Free Beekeeping. When he had EFB for a little while I am sure he was second guessing his methods but has come out stronger.

We are looking into accomplishing a mass purchase for equipment this month and Dennis sent out a form to see what everyone wants. This is being done hastily to receive the equipment in time for spring. What I would like to

see for next year is a committee to accomplish this. I would like a volunteer to lead and three or four members to help. The goal is to come up with a list of items, price, and then manage the process from ordering to delivering. The officers don't have time to setup the class, do their duties and order equipment. I think it would be really beneficial to order NUCS and packages if there is enough interest next year. The club has enough fluid funds to help see this through until payment is collected but again, I'll stress that we need help to do this. Let me know if you are interested. Research and gather orders should be accomplished in

October/November especially if we decide to order bees.

Our Fireside chat for February has not been set. The next meeting is February 24th at the Madison County Farm Bureau and hope to see everyone there.

I also want to thank in advance Johnny, Tom, Katelyn, Charity, Dennis, Eleanor, Julie, and Sandy for the time they will give to make the class go well. Enrollment is closed with 51 students attending.

Tim Schartung
President

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Officers for 2023

- Tim Schartung – President
- Tom Cairns – VP
- Kaetlyn Hentrich – Secretary & Librarian
- Dennis Hessel – Treasurer & Public Information Officer
- ?????? – Program Director
- Frank Doris – Director
- Darla Hsaio - Director
- Johnny Murdoch – Director

*******DUES ARE PAST DUE *******

If you have not paid your 2023 dues by the time you receive this newsletter they are past due.

Club membership runs January through December, and the dues are \$20.00 a year and are due January 1st. Each year we ask that you submit a membership renewal form with your current information. On our website—www.stclairbees.com—click on Members Only in the top menu bar. On the next page you will be able to submit your renewal form and pay your dues.

You may pay your dues from the that page using PayPal or you may mail a check payable to SCBA to Dennis Hessel, 1720 Cloverdale Dr, Edwardsville, IL 62025.

Any member that hasn't paid their dues by February 1st will be dropped from the club's mailing list, email list, and Illinois State Beekeepers Association. We really want to keep everyone so please pay your dues before or at the January meeting.

Each year we purge the swarm, cutout, and mentor list to ensure we have the latest information. If you would like to be on one of these list you may submit your information from the Members Only page.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Dennis Hessel—Treasurer

Meeting Schedule for 2023

February 11th, 8:00 AM, Beginning Beekeepers Class at Madison County Farm Bureau

February 24^t, time 6:30 PM, membership meeting at Madison County Farm Bureau, Presentation - The Pollinator Partnership by Eleanor Shumacher

March 31st, time 06:30 PM, membership meeting at St Clair Farm Bureau, Presentation - Queen rearing by Johnny Murdock

April 30th, time 2:00 PM, Location -Tim and Linda Schartung Apiary, Presentation - Hive Inspections

May 21th, time 2:00 PM, Location - Katelyn Hentrich Apiary Presentation - TBD

June 25th, time 2:00 PM, Location – TBD Presentation - TBD

July 30th, time 2:00 PM, Location – TBD Presentation -TBD

August, 27th, time 2:00 PM, Location – Old 6 Mile Museum Presentation -TBD

September 24th, time 2:00 PM, Location - Rich and Darla Perkins Apiary Presentation - TBD

October 27th, time 6:30 PM St Clair Farm Bureau Presentation - TBD

November 12th Thanksgiving potluck and final meeting, Madison County Farm Bureau.

January meeting in pictures...

The first membership meeting of the year was held on January 27th at the St Clair Farm Bureau.

The presentation was about Treatment Free Beekeeping by Peter Hill.

Right: President Tim Schartung presents Dennis Hessel with the 2022 Beekeeper of the Year award.

Below: members listen to Pete Hill's interesting and educational presentation on Treatment Free Beekeeping.



January 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.

- ◆ By February, honey bee queens often have resumed egg laying, and the beekeeper may decide to further stimulate the queen by feeding pollen substitute and adding supplemental sugar if the honey stores are low.
- ◆ The decision to stimulate the queen early often depends on the goals of the beekeeper and year to year variations in the weather! Once stimulated, feeding pollen substitute must continue until natural pollen is available!
- ◆ If production of honey is the goal, a large increase in foragers will be needed about 5 weeks prior to the start of the main honey flow. Stimulating the queen too early can result in the hives swarming and depleting the hive of many foragers.
- ◆ A review of the beekeeper's records of overwintered colonies from the previous year is often helpful to aid in hive selection for breeding purposes or necessary treatments.
- ◆ If nucleus (nucs) or package bee production is desired, stimulation can be helpful to build colonies early, but beekeepers must watch for hives that may be preparing to swarm.
- ◆ Another reason you may choose to stimulate a queen to increase egg laying is if last year the cluster is too small, (under four frames). You need to stimulate early to generate new bees if the anticipated outside temps are warm enough. Waiting until natural pollen is available, may result in loss of the hive, as old overwintered bees die off and the cluster is no longer large enough to generate the temperatures needed for brood rearing.
- ◆ Beekeepers should continue to prepare new equipment for use in the spring, and repair old boxes, frames, and cull out old honey and brood combs as needed in stored equipment.
- ◆ New beekeepers should attend a new beekeeper course, if possible in February, and find an experienced beekeeper to act as their mentor.
- ◆ If temperatures in February allow, you should quickly inspect hives to determine the amount of honey stores remaining, and add supplemental sugar as needed.
- ◆ As brood rearing gets underway, the demand for honey increases rapidly and more hives starve in late February and March than any other time of the year.



As Spring approaches the chart below may help you determine what pollen is available.

Missouri Pollen forecast Calendar

(based on 2015-2018 pollen data provided by the St. Louis County Department of Public Health)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Plants												
Cedar/Juniper	Yellow	Red	Red	Gold								
Maple/Boxelder		Gold	Gold	Gold								
Elm		Red	Gold	Yellow	Yellow							
Willow		Yellow	Gold	Yellow								
Poplar/Cottonwood		Yellow	Gold	Gold	Yellow							
Sycamore		Yellow	Gold	Gold	Yellow							
Birch/Hop Hornbean		Yellow	Gold	Gold	Yellow							
Oaks		Yellow	Gold	Gold	Yellow							
Pine/spruce/ Alder		Yellow	Yellow	Gold	Yellow							
Ash			Yellow	Red	Gold							
Walnut/Butternut			Yellow	Gold	Gold	Yellow						
Grasses			Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Gold	Gold	Yellow			
Linden/Basswood				Yellow	Yellow	Yellow						
Pecan/Hickory				Yellow	Yellow	Yellow						
Sweetgum				Yellow	Gold	Gold						
Mulberry				Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow					
Sedge				Gold	Gold	Yellow	Yellow					
Dock/Sheep sorrel				Yellow	Gold	Yellow						
Chestnut					Yellow	Yellow						
Cattail					Yellow	Gold	Yellow	Yellow				
Plantain					Gold	Red	Red	Gold	Yellow			
Nettle							Gold	Gold	Yellow			
Ragweed							Yellow	Red	Red	Gold	Yellow	
Lambsquarter							Yellow	Gold	Gold	Gold	Yellow	
Hemp								Gold	Gold	Yellow		
Wormwood								Yellow	Gold	Gold	Yellow	
Goldenrod								Yellow	Gold	Gold	Yellow	

		Tree/ shrub	Grass	Weed
Red	Very high level	1500+	200+	500+
Gold	High level	90-1499	20-199	50-499
Yellow	Moderate level	15-85	5-19	10-49

Beekeeping in February

DISCLAIMER: The most important thing to remember is that the bees don't live by a calendar. Location, topography, climate, weather and, floral resource are all factors to consider when determining what tasks need to be completed

FEBRUARY AND THE BEES: Sunlight is becoming slightly longer and a few more warm days triggers the queen to start laying a few more eggs. Their cluster has worked its way upward into the top deep brood chamber. They are basically behaving the same as it January.

Assess your equipment. Make any repairs that are necessary and start building any new equipment February

February brings a hint of spring, although winter weather is still expected. During warmer years, the first maple and willow tree pollen may appear. The queen has probably started laying eggs. The hive is building brood and using up stored honey supplies to keep the brood warm. In our area it is time to:

Observations and Actions to take –

Cleansing Flights – Honey bees don't defecate inside the hives, if you have a sunny day, with lite winds and temperatures over 40 ° F, you may see some bees taking a quick, short flight to void feces or what's called cleansing flight.

Make sure the snow is not blocking the entrance to the hive

Dead Bees on the Ground - Although winter bees live longer than summer bees, many of them will die before spring. They drop and accumulate on the bottom board, because the worker bees are in the tight cluster. They will be removed from inside the hive on warmer days.

Don't panic when you see a lot of dead bees on the snow at the entrance of your hive.

Don't panic if you don't see a lot of dead bees on the snow at the entrance of your hive. It just means they haven't broken the cluster.

Tasks to Perform –

Determine Stores – Be sure your hives have enough stores. If you have a nice day, quickly open the outer covers and see if the bees are clustered and active around the inner cover hole. If they are low on food you will need to feed them

DO NOT Break up the cluster by pulling out the frames.

Place dry sugar on a newspaper inside the hive, a candy board, or fondant as food over the top of the cluster.

Check for dead-outs and take note which hives they are

Visit your hives - Check for wind or animal damage. Make sure the hive openings are clear so the bees can get in and out for cleansing flights.

Plan for your new beekeeping year.

Review your colony records from last year to determine any changes or additions you would like to make.

Place orders for any queens, packages of bees, or nucs that will be needed in the upcoming spring. Many sources sell out by the end of the month

Clean up your smoker, hive tool, and scrape frames and empty hive bodies

Prepare new equipment for use in the spring and/or to repair old boxes and frames, and cut out old comb.

Consider registering for a new beekeeper course

Plan what conferences you will attend. The Heartland Apicultural Society (HAS) conference is a great educational opportunity held in late June.

Read a good beekeeping book.

Catchup on watching You Tubes.

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FEBRUARY AND THE BEEKEEPER: On a warm day, 50 degrees or more, you can open the top briefly and look in on the hive. Do not remove any frames, as this will chill the bees and the brood. Upon inspection you can assess if the colony still has enough stored honey for food. If not, you may want to consider emergency feeding options.

Emergency feeding is just that...an emergency. So do whatever it takes to get some sugar in the hive. Dry sugar will work but only if the bees have warm enough days to fly out for water. There may not be many days warm enough in northern states for dry sugar feedings or hard candy feedings. Sometimes I have soaked sponges in heavy sugar water and jammed the sponge between the frames near the cluster. You can also place a plastic zip-lock bag full of sugar water directly over the cluster and poke a few holes on the top of the bag or make a slit in the bag. Do anything you can think of...after all it is better than letting the hive starve to death. Of course, if you have frames of honey available, that's the best way to feed them, but most of us have sold all our honey by now.

You might also consider placing a pollen patty on top of the upper deep box. This will really work well if the end of winter is extremely mild and there are many warm days. Pollen patties stimulate the laying of more eggs. However, if the weather turns cold again, then the bees may not be able to keep this early brood warm and fed. So it is a gamble this early for northern states.

Fireside Bee Chat

The Fireside Bee Chat Returns. This is a series of virtual meetings where a topic will be presented and then followed up with a question & answer period. This is a special event for members only. We have a Fireside Chat scheduled in January and March, the links are below.

February—at this time the presentation has not been determined. Watch for an email, FaceBook and Slack for details.

March 29th, Fireside Chat, , Queen rearing by Johnny Murdock, <https://uso2web.zoom.us/>



A Little Bee Humor

Q: Why did the bee get married?

A: Because he found his honey

Q: What do you call a bears without ears?

A: B's

Q: What do you call a wasp?

A: A wanna-bee!

Q: What's a bees favorite novel?

A: The Great Gats-bee!



Okay new guy, you will notice daylight is getting longer and the Robin's are back. Rest while you can, it's going get buzzy around here shortly.

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



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 indoors on February 24th , 6:30 PM , membership meeting at the Madison County Farm Bureau , 900 Hillsboro Ave Edwardsville, IL Presentation - The Pollinator Partnership by Eleanor Shumacher

QR CODE FOR MEETING PLACE

