



BEE BUZZ

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From the President....

Bee Club Members,

Several members worked really hard over the last three month to organize and teach the beginners beekeeper's course. We had 54 students who registered and most of the students attended the class. All the instructors and volunteers made the day a success. Students who turned in surveys rated the class as very good and that was the highest level on the form. We only had a few suggested comments for improvement. I floated around the room helping where I could, attempting to keep the schedule on track. I watched dazzled student leave the classroom full of knowledge stuffed into their minds wondering how they will ever keep bees. I really appreciate the work accomplished by all the volunteers who pitched in to make the day so successful. Thanks

Now we set our sights on Spring. We all are starting to prepare equipment and wondering how well our bees made it through the winter. We have a guest speaker for the next fireside chat coming up on March 16th that you don't want to miss. The details should be in this newsletter.

Also, we are looking to provide continuing education to our NEW BEE's who joined the club after the class. Starting March 3rd a member of the board will open up a ZOOM session at 7 PM. We will continue to do this every Thursday at 7PM until the end of April. I am going to call this "New Bee's Corner" and it's geared toward 0-2 year beekeepers who want to know more or just reassurance about what they are doing or want to do for the next few weeks.

On March 19th at 2 PM we are planning a visit to Pierre Marquette Visitor Center to deliver the teaching hive and to take a look at the observation hive. The club will have refreshments and all members and guests are invited. We chose this date because any later into spring we will all be busy bees.

In closing, I hope your bees are doing well and that you are ready for the spring explosion of bees as they do what they do best, being bees.

Tim Schartung
SCBA President

Around the Bee Yard

From Ken Kloepper's presentation at the Introduction to Beekeeping Class

Normally in Southern Illinois, pollen from spring flowers like henbit and purple dead nettle as well as from trees like junipers, (such as red cedar & bald cypress), elm, and maple, will begin to appear. Butterweed, wild mustard, and yellow rocket are soon to follow.

This influx of fresh pollen and nectar will result in a rapid increase in brood rearing in preparation for the spring honey flows. Beekeepers should begin regular hive inspections every 10 days to 2 weeks once daytime temperatures reach 60°F. Brood at these temperatures can chill easily, so inspections should be kept short (10-15 min) and brood frames returned to their box as quickly as possible.

Beekeepers may want to reverse brood boxes or balance brood nests in order to control swarming and allow bees to utilize equipment efficiently.

No discussion of March hive management activities would be complete without discussing swarm preparation, and swarm management.

Swarming is a natural impulse for colonies of honeybees to reproduce and is usually strongest in the spring months of April and May but can occur at almost any time the temperature is warm enough for the bees to fly out of their hives.

As the colonies build up in spring, the increase in adult bee population and lack of space for the queen to lay eggs will usually prompt the worker bees to make preparations to swarm. They will start constructing swarm cells which are intended to produce a new daughter queen as the replacement for the mother queen that will ultimately leave with the swarm.

With the warming temperatures, incoming nectar, and fresh pollen starting to become available in March, workers will often construct anywhere from one or two cells to dozens of queen or swarm cells as they prepare to swarm.

Swarms will usually issue from hives and normally only fly a short distance, (perhaps 25-250 ft.) before landing on a tree limb, bush, tall grass, or even on the side of a car or under a mailbox and is then known as a bivouac or temporary swarm. This swarm then will send out scout bees to look for a new permanent home and once one is selected, will leave their temporary bivouac and fly to their new home inside a tree or the wall of a structure.

Beekeepers may often use these frames with queen cells to make nucs or splits in order to increase the number of colonies they manage. These splits usually consist of 3 to 5 frames of brood combs, honey, & pollen and include at least 1 viable queen or swarm cell.

2022 Introduction to Beekeeping Class



Speakers from top left clockwise—Ken Kloepper, Charity Davis-Woodard, Tom Cairns, Marc Mayhew, Dennis Hessel, and Elanor Schumacher

The SCBA held its annual Introduction to Beekeeping Class on February 19th at the HALL in Edwardsville. There was six speakers, 2 vendors, and 44 attendees. The topics covered included: Equipment You Will Need, Bee Biology and Colony Behavior, Your First Hive -Acquiring Bees and Hive Setup, Opening and Inspecting Your Hive, The Beekeeping year: Seasonal Management Activities, and Pest Management and Apiary Rules.

We would like to thank Jane Sueme from Isabee's and Tim and Anna Lindley from Big T's Honeybee Farm for offering their merchandise for sale and providing door prizes., and all the speaker and members that helped to host this event.

DUES ...

The annual dues of \$20.00 are due the 1st of January each year. Per Article X section 3 of our bylaws “when any member shall be in default in the payment of due for a period of three months from the beginning of the period for which such dues become payable his/her membership may thereupon be terminated by the Executive Board in the manner provided in Article 1 Section 3 of these bylaws.” **Members meeting this criteria will be dropped from our roster March 31, 2022. If you have not paid your dues for 2022, please do so before March 31st.**

March Fireside Bee Chat....

March 16 2022 at 7:00 pm

Very Special Guest Presenter: **Bob Binnie**, co-owner of Blue Ridge Honey Company

Bob has been involved in beekeeping for 40 years, starting in Oregon and working commercially in 10 states before establishing his business with wife Suzette in Northeast Georgia. Through their business they retail and wholesale honey, pollen, beeswax products, nucs and queens. Bob maintains bee yards in Northeast Georgia, South Georgia and western North Carolina, and yet makes time to generously share his knowledge through speaking engagements to bee clubs and at educational events nationwide as well as making many videos to illustrate his and other beekeepers' methods of managing bees. With his easy, down-to-earth style Bob excels at communicating the practical aspects of beekeeping along with his significant understanding of the science of apiculture.

Don't miss this opportunity to welcome Bob and let him know how much we appreciate his making time to join us for a [Fireside Chat](#). There will be plenty of time for questions, so come prepared to ask and learn from a Master!

Registration for this event is required and is open to non-members.
You may register from the members only Face Book page or from a link on our website.



A Little Bee Humor

Q: What did the spider say to the bee? A:
Your honey or your life!

Q: What did the bee say to the other bee
when they landed on the same flower? A:
Buzz off.

Q: Who is a bee's favorite painter?

A: Pablo Beecasso!

Q: What did the bee tell the other bee in summer?

A: Swarm here isn't it!

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



Okay new guy, get ready it's going to get crowded in here. The Queen is going crazy laying eggs.

New Bees Corner

You may be asking yourself - I picked up my NUC now what do I do? How do I make 1:1 sugar syrup? How often should I check on my bees? Why can't I keep my smoker going? What are these little black bugs and how do I get rid of them? Bring your questions and no question is too simple.

The club is starting a new weekly ZOOM meeting called the New Bees Corner. This program is designed for people that have been keeping bees for less than threes. Aim. For the next 9 weeks we will meet on Thursday evenings at 7:00pm for one hour. These sessions will be an open Question and Answer session. Attend them all or whenever you can.

ZOOM in and stay as long as you like. Be sure to have a pen and note paper handy.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84847034027?pwd=RHpmZnJSZG9OYklNc0lZODJnTXE1QT09>

Meeting ID: 848 4703 4027

Passcode: newbees

To listen on your phone

Dial +1 312 626 6799 Meeting ID: 848 4703 4027

Passcode: 9744641

Be Sure to save this invite since it can be used for the remaining meetings.

Pictures from February meeting.



OLDTIMERS' WAY

By Ken Schaefer

Probably the most disheartening moment for the beekeeper is when they come across a dead hive. Rather than just walk away, the first thing the beekeeper should do is try to figure out what caused the hive to die.

STARVATION: Because of little or no food reserves the bees died while sticking, head first, into the cells. Sometimes there is plenty of honey but in a cold spell there are too few bees to form a large cluster unable to move over to the honey. Did the beekeeper provide a form of sugar feeding, fondant, candy boards, etc.?

EXCESS MOISTURE: Heat from the cluster forms moisture on the bottom of the inner cover and the water drips down on the cluster. Mold forms in the hive and it smells bad. A quilting box containing some sort of absorbent material such as paper, cardboard, or wood chips can be placed on top. A small hole should be provided at the top, not only for ventilation but also serving as an upper entrance should the main entrance be clogged.

ILL OR INFECTED: Hives with large counts of varroa mites or small hive beetles are weak and stressed, and probably will not survive the winter.

FOULBROOD: Foulbrood has a host of many symptoms; shotgun brood pattern, misshaped, dull, discolored larvae and sometimes a foul smell, and a stick inserted in the larvae comes out ropey. You may want to call the apiary inspector to identify the disease and recommend treatment.

Sometimes bees die for no apparent reason. You may want to save the hive bodies, top, and bottom board. Remove all dead bees, as they can become moldy and smelly if left in the hive. Frames that are old and dark, pollen bound, and mostly drone cells can be discarded. If you don't mind the labor, bad combs can be cut out and the frames scraped and saved. Good frames can be stored and be used to jumpstart packaged bees or swarms. An old frame of comb can be placed in a bait hive to help attract a swarm.

Many hives survive the winter but succumb to starvation in March and even April. Brood rearing increases and with more mouths to feed stores become depleted and the bees starve. It's still too cold for feeding syrup, but fondant and even dry sugar should be available as emergency feeds.

Ken Schaefer, (618) 975-8025

EDITOR'SNOTE: The use of pollen substitute, pollen patties, and liquid syrup to stimulate brood development depends on what you are trying to accomplish. Stimulating lots of brood before the weather stays warm can put the brood at risk if we have a cold snap, and not enough workers bees to keep the brood warm. You only want to feed if there are insufficient stores in the hive to sustain the colony.



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 Friday, March 25th, at 7:00 pm at the St. Clair Farm Bureau, Belleville, IL. A brief business meeting will be followed by a program discussing How to install packages and NUCs.

