



# BEE BUZZ

JUNE 2022

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## From the President....

Greetings Members,

We kicked off the summer outdoor meetings with a meeting/meal at Scheve Park in Mascoutah and then went to the Silver Creek Apiary. All who attended the meeting were also at the apiary. I think we all learned something from Tom Cairns who inspected two hives and made a split. We also had two swarms to capture and everyone got a chance to watch this process.

This time of year can really test even the most experienced beekeepers. Swarms are a natural process the bees do to help build their numbers but the swarm process is less than ideal. When the queen and bees leave a new queen has hatched or about to. This leaves the hive without a laying queen and at great risk of failure. In less than a week you have no eggs or larvae and brood that is aging. You can only hope the new queen has good weather to conduct mating flights and she returns home where it then takes a few days before she starts laying. This whole process sounds simple but can take three weeks. During this time us beekeepers are trying to manage a hive by installing queens or moving eggs/larvae from other hives. Sometimes that does not work and really tests your patience. I have one hive now where I have a marked queen I purchased and she has been in the hive for 10 days. She is still not laying. Take time to learn about the queen reproduction process so you can make informed decisions because you do have several choices once a hive swarms.

The first and second week of May were swarm weeks. I know that I received several calls and all but two were posted to SLACK and FB giving everyone a chance to claim the swarm. These are the two communication methods we have today for swarm notifications, and we are always open to suggestions. Please remember that swarms are only one part of many that beekeepers need to learn to become proficient with our skills.

The next meeting is at Katelyn's Hentrich apiary and I am looking forward to getting together again. If you want to host a meeting then please let me or one of the board members know. It is your choice on what you want to provide. It could be just water to something like what Linda and I did at the May meeting. We all get together to enjoy talking about bees, share experiences, and sometime learn something by looking in hives. I hope to see you all there and let bees be bees.

Tim Schartung

President

## OLD TIMER'S WAY

Honey plants are one of my favorite subjects, so this month I will continue on plants.

In late April and throughout May, as you travel the countryside, you will see fields of solid yellow. These plants are called yellow rocket or wild mustard. These are two different plants, but related and similar so I will refer to both as mustard. I'm not sure if it's for nectar or pollen, but the bees work the plants with vigor. Once while walking through a field of mustard I noticed some bees buzzing me, and I was stung twice. Later on, I read where another beekeeper had the same experience. I heard where bees will become aggressive when working certain plants, namely soybeans. By now the mustard is either drying up or being tilled under.

Right now the blackberries are coming into bloom. If your hives are anywhere near these brambles the bees are sure to find them.

Ken Schaefer

## Meeting Dates for 2022....

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

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.

## WE ARE GROWING...

Welcome these new members that joined the club in May. Keith Baecht, James Barnett, Sean Daenzer, Andrew Havko, Jodi Isringhausen, Tom Mell, and Jim Randall Jr.

## June 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.*

- ◆ The latter part of June in Southern Illinois generally marks the end of the spring honey flow. Small roadside flowers like chicory may begin to bloom. The supers hopefully by now are full of nectar and once the moisture content of the honey has dropped to about 18%, the bees will start applying a fresh coating of beeswax known as cappings to seal the cells.
- ◆ Beekeepers use an instrument known as a refractometer to measure the moisture content to assure it has reached 18% or less moisture, as too much moisture can result in the honey fermenting!
- ◆ **IMPORTANT:** since small hive beetles arrived in Southern Illinois around 2006, beekeepers must extract honey combs removed from the hives within 48 hours or risk finding small hive beetle larvae contaminating the honey.
- ◆ Once the supers are ready to be extracted, the beekeeper will remove the combs to be extracted generally by one of four methods.
  - ◆ Manually brushing the bees from the combs with a bee brush.
  - ◆ Mechanical bee escape boards which when placed under the supers of honey prevent the bees from returning to the supers.
  - ◆ Chemical fume boards can be placed over the supers and the fumes will drive the bees downward and out of the supers.
  - ◆ Bee blowers use high speed air similar to a leaf blower to drive the bees out of the supers.
- ◆ Beekeepers should remember when extracting and bottling their honey crop that since 2010 the law in Illinois prohibits additives of any kind in honey and limits the amount of honey that may be sold in Illinois to 500 gallons (6000 lbs.) that was processed outside of a commercial kitchen.



Refractometer



Small Hive Beetle Larvae



Escape Board

## Around the Bee Yard

- Inspect twice this month for congestion, queen rightness, diseases, mites, and honey
- Monitor for queen cells to prevent swarming
- Make sure there are plenty of honey supers on to give them space to store honey
- Order any equipment you may need to harvest honey
- Order bottles and labels for your honey
- Here are some links to harvesting honey

[How to Harvest Honey From a Beehive - 8 Steps](#)  | EbeeHQ

<https://youtu.be/oaZ8F6fKVog> Harvesting Honey- University of Guelph

<https://youtu.be/YotHuimTurk> - How to Harvest Honey—David Burns

<https://youtu.be/MWBVxAmyt3o> Harvesting and Bottling Honey David Burns

## A Little Bee Humor

Q: What do you call bees buzzing in unison?

A: Stingalongs.

Q: what does a bee style his hair with?

A: a honeycomb

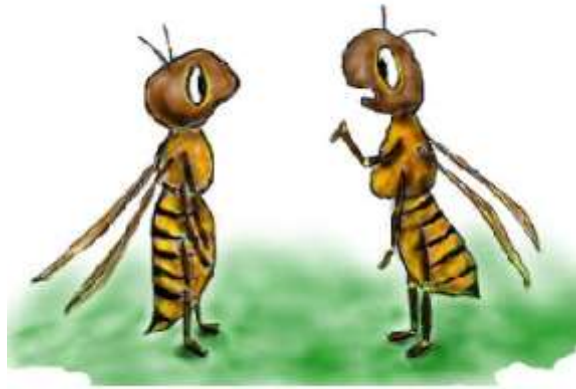
Q: What do you call a bee who's had a spell put on him?

A: He's bee-witched!

Q: Why do bees buzz?

A: Because they can't whistle!

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



**Okay new guy, swarm season is almost over so let's get busy making this place feel like home.**

## How to make an Escape Board

By Dennis Hessel

In the June issue of Bee BUZZ, Ken Kloepper's article, "June in Southern Illinois", mentions the use of an escape board to remove bees from your honey super before harvestings the frames. The escape board sits on top of your deep hive body right below the honey super the triangular maze facing down. The bees exit the honey super through the hole to go down in the hive and for the most part will not re-enter the super. If you have multiple hives it is a good idea to have an escape board for each hive or at least a fair number of them. You can then remove all of the supers on the same day.

**How it works:** Bees tend to travel always going to the right.. When a bee reaches an obstruction, it will always travel to the right and follow that obstruction till it can go no further.. In the case of the escape board, it is easy for the bees to leave, but they are unable to get back in. There may be some nurse bees in the honey super if there is brood present and they will not leave the brood, so when you open the honey super to harvest the honey there may be a few bees present.

**How to use:** You should have your escape boards with you when you are doing hive inspections near honey harvest time. If your frames of honey are capped and you want to harvest honey in the next 48 hours you can put the escape board on and come back the next day or the following day to gather the honey frames. Place the escape board below the honey super being removed. The side of the escape board with the triangles is the bottom and will be installed face down. Remove a queen excluder if present. Replace the honey super, inner cover and outer cover. Leave the escape board on overnight to allow the bees time to leave the super. Once the honey super is clear of bees, usually 12 hours later, it can be removed from the hive along with the escape board. Use your bee brush to remove any stragglers. Don't leave the escape board on for more than 48 hours or you run the risk of small hive beetles or wax moths in the super when the bees aren't present and some smart bees may find their way back into the super.



Top of escape board



Bottom of escape board

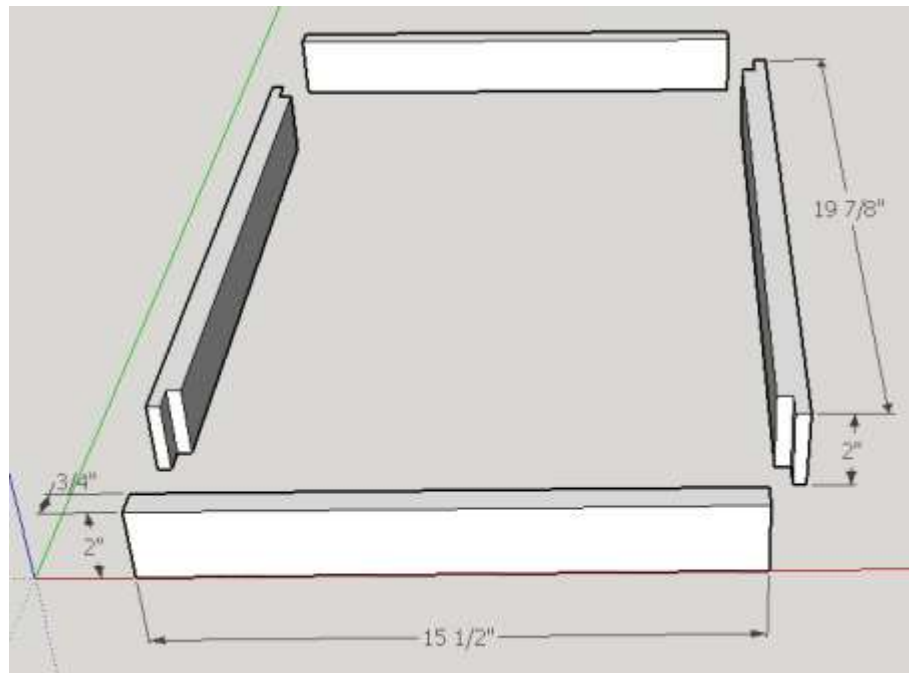
**Materials needed:**

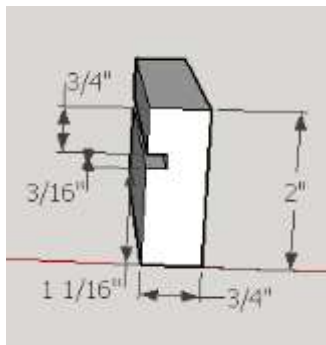
- 1x3x8'
- 1/4 " plywood or luan underlayment
- #8 hardware cloth
- Titebond III wood glue
- 4-1" screws
- 1/2" staples
  
- Optional—paint

**Tools Needed:**

- Table Saw
- Drill
- 1/8" and 1" drill bit
- Screw driver
- Staple Gun

1. Rip the 1 x 3 so that it is 2" wide.
2. Cut the 1 x 3 into two pieces 19 7/8" long, this will be the sides.
3. Cut the 1 x 3 into two pieces 15 1/2" for 10 frame hive or 13" for an 8 frame hive, this will be the ends.
4. Cut a dado in the end of each side piece 3/4" wide and 3/8" deep. You can cut this dado using a dado blade or making multiple cuts on your table saw. See drawing below measurements for 10 frame



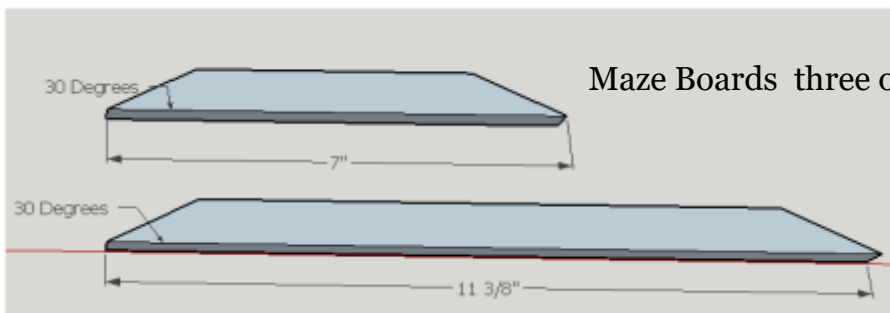


5. Cut a  $\frac{3}{16}$ " slot on the inside surface of the side and end boards  $\frac{3}{4}$ " for one edge of the board. The slot should be  $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep. On the side boards make sure the dado you cut is facing down when cutting the slot. This slot is for the Luan or plywood to fit in. You may need to adjust the width of the slot to match the thickness of your Luan or plywood.

6. Dry fit the sides and the ends together. The overall outside dimension should be  $19 \frac{7}{8}$ " by  $16 \frac{1}{4}$ " for 10 frame and  $19 \frac{7}{8}$ " by  $13 \frac{3}{4}$ " for 8 frames. Make adjustments to get these measurements. If they are not correct your hive bodies will not sit on the escape board properly.
7. Make sure the frame is square and then measure how big your plywood will need to be taking into consideration the depth of your slots. Should be in the neighborhood of  $19 \frac{1}{8}$ " by  $15 \frac{1}{2}$ " for 10 frames and  $19 \frac{1}{8}$ " by  $13$ " for 8 frames.
8. Cut your plywood to the dimension you got in step 7.
9. Draw a diagonal line from corner to corner to find the center of your plywood.
10. Drill a 1" hole at the X.
11. Dry fit the sides, ends and plywood together. The end pieces go into the dado you cut on the end of the side pieces. If everything fits you are ready to assemble it, if not trim to make adjustments to plywood. **NOTE: your finished outside dimensions must be  $19 \frac{7}{8}$ " by  $16 \frac{1}{4}$ " for 10 frame and  $19 \frac{7}{8}$ " by  $13 \frac{3}{4}$ " for 8 frames.**
12. Put the wood glue in the slots and dados on the side pieces. Put the plywood in the slot and fit the side and end pieces together. After making sure everything is square, use the brad nailer to tack the sides to the ends to hold everything in place until you can insert a screw.
13. Drill a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " pilot hole through the side piece into the end piece and secure with a 1" screw. Repeat for other three corners.

Now you are ready to cut the pieces the triangle or the maze.

1. Rip some pieces of wood from your scraps  $\frac{3}{4}$ " and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick. You will need three pieces  $11 \frac{1}{4}$ " long and three  $7$ " long at the longest edge. You will need to cut a piece off each end at a 30 degree angle. This can be cut with a small hand saw, a band saw, or scroll saw.



Maze Boards three of both sizes required.

2. Draw a line across the bottom side of the escape board. (the bottom has a side height of  $1 \frac{1}{16}$ "")  $5 \frac{1}{4}$ " up from the edge..
3. Spread glue on a piece of a  $1 \frac{3}{8}$ " maze board and place the long edge on the line you drew. Tack with a brad nailer.

NOTE: you must maintain the proper bee space between the maze boards. (Bee spaces is  $\frac{3}{8}$ "")



4. Now measure the dimensions of your triangle and cut a piece of #8 hardware cloth to cover the triangle.
5. Staple the hardware cloth to the maze boards. When you are done it should look something like this.
6. You can paint the outside of the escape board if you want.
7. The escape board goes between your deep hive bodies and the honey super.





### ***MAY Meeting in pictures ....***

The May Membership Meeting was held Sunday May 22nd. After a brief business meeting and a potluck lunch, everyone headed out to Tim Schartung's apiary for a demonstration on how to split a hive. Unexpectedly, when we arrived there was a swarm in a tree so we also captured a swarm. The hive that Tim had planned on using for the split demonstration swarmed.



Tom Cairns opens the hive and confirms that it is swarmed

Below everyone gathers in to get a closer look



Tom moves onto another hive to demonstrate a split. There were a lot of questions and up close viewing of the procedure and various things going on in the hive. Very educational.

## 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](http://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](mailto: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, June 26th at 2:00pm at the Katelyn Hentrich's Apiary, 13809 Schuler Lane, Dow, IL 62022 After the business meeting we will have a demonstration and discuss harvesting honey.



Link to Google Maps

