



Bee BUZZ

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2023

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 coming quickly and with the temperatures we are having now may we see an early spring. If your name is not on the swarm list please go to our web site at stclair-bees.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:

1. You go get the swarm
2. You phone a friend
3. 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 that does not include one person controlling the list with no transparency.

Please remember the next meeting is at Madison County Farm Bureau.

Tim Schartung

President

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Welcome our new members ...

Mark Anderson, Darrell Baker, Richard Boone, B Bossert, Charles Busch, Regina & Jesse Chappell, Jim Crammer, Meghan DeGroot, Rachel Done, Vanessa Fillop, Donna Hanford, John & Lisa Hardy, John Hudnall, Jessica & Jackson Jones, Steve Kates, Scott & Renee Klohr, Jennifer Mersman, Christina & Madison Meyer, Joan Moulton, John & Amber Noud, Armando Orozco-Silva, Landon & Lora Sarver, Susan Schaberg, Rhett Shockey, Matthew Sketch, Paul & Kristin Stancil, Robert Stuckey, Ryan Taylor, Chris Yarber, and Rich Yarber

*******LAST REMINDER*******

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.

If you haven't paid their dues by March 31st you will be dropped from the club's roster, Face Book page, Slack, and loose other club benefits. Your membership in the Illinois State Beekeepers Association will also for your cooperation,

Dennis Hessel—Treasurer

Meeting Schedule for 2023 ...

March 31st, time 6:30 pm, Location - Madison County 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
Officer Elections

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

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

February meeting in pictures...

The February membership meeting was held at the Madison County Farm Bureau on February 24th. Vice President Tom Cairns ran the meeting and Eleanor Schumacher gave a presentation on the various Pollinator Projects she works with.



March 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.

- ◆ 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, and pollen and include at least 1 viable queen or swarm cell.



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 March

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

March is when most bee colonies perish for lack of food. As the queen starts laying eggs, the worker bees have to attend to larvae and brood and the need for resources increase. Outside sources are not yet plentiful so you may need to supplement them.

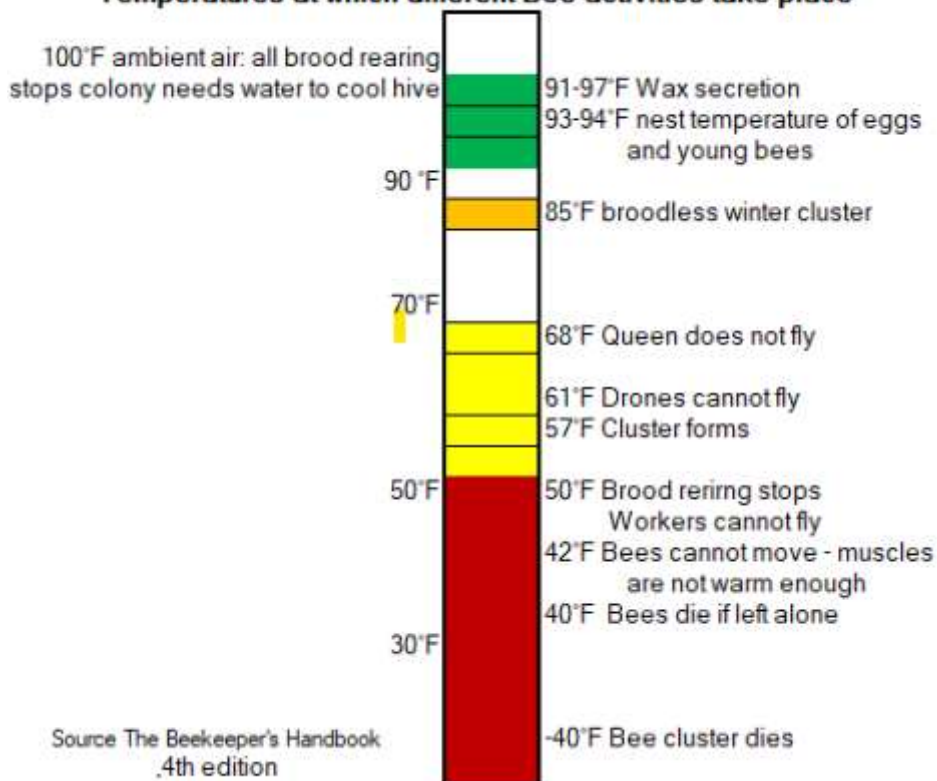
Observations and Actions to take –

- ◇ Foraging Flights – Some trees and plants are starting to bloom and you may see the bees bringing in pollen.
- ◇ Queen starts laying eggs – As the days grow longer and warmer the queen will start laying eggs again. Upon close inspection of your hive you should see eggs, larvae, and brood. If you don't you should find your queen to make sure she survived through the winter, and get a replacement if she didn't.
- ◇ Wear Protective Gear - The bees will be more aggressive coming out of winter until the colony gets back into its normal rhythm.
- ◇ Order Equipment - March is the busiest month in hive equipment and bee sales. Everyone calls and wants their hive yesterday! Order ASAP and not after you need it.

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.
 - ◇ Check for dead-outs and take note which hives they are.
- ◇ Consider Feeding Bees – . As the queen starts increasing the number of mouths to feed the stores in the hive will probably go faster than what is coming in. You may consider feeding your bees
 - ◇ 1:1 sugar syrup (if temperatures are above 55 at night) and pollen patties to supplement natural sources of food and encourage colony growth
 - ◇ Place dry sugar on a newspaper inside the hive, a candy board, or fondant as food over the top of the cluster.
- ◇ Clean out Deadouts – Clean out the hives that have died. Freeze the frames if you can to prevent wax moths. Scrape the hive bodies and prepare them for reuse during spring buildup or honey flow.
- ◇ Prepare for Swarm Season – Educate yourself about the signs of swarming. Make sure you have extra equipment ready to prevent swarming or for giving a captured swarm a home. If you are going to put out swarm traps make sure they are ready and you have your locations identified and permission received if necessary.

Temperatures at which different Bee activities take place



Fireside Bee Chat

We have a Fireside Chat scheduled in January and March, the links are below.

March 29th, Fireside Chat, , Queen rearing by Johnny Murdock, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81087073562?>



A Little Bee Humor

Q: What do you get if you cross a bee with a door bell?

A: A hum dinger!

Q: Who is the bees favorite singer?

A: Sting!

Q: Who is the bees favorite pop group?

A: The bee gees!

Q: What is a bee's favorite part of a relationship?

A: The Honeymoon period.



Okay new guy, it's going to start getting crowded in here and you are going to have to get back to work.

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

Resources for Spring....

Swarm season is almost here . Here are some resources to help you understand the swarming process, how to prevent it, and how to capture a swarm.

Swarming - reasons for and prevention

Don't Be Surprised By Swarms— by Meghan Milbrath

[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)

Randy Oliver from Scientific Beekeeper has an article about Understanding Colony Buildup and Decline and another about minimizing Swarms.

<https://scientificbeekeeping.com/understanding-colony-buildup-and-decline-part-7a/>

<https://scientificbeekeeping.com/understanding-colony-buildup-and-decline-part-7b/>

Managing Colonies during Spring Buildup Randy Olliver https://youtu.be/6N_1exUJnCc

[How to Stop Bees from Swarming - Carolina Honeybees](#)

In these videos Bob Binnie and University of Guelph explain how to split bee colonies.

How to Split Bees—Bob Binnie <https://youtu.be/nqhBJe-syns>

Splitting Hives University of Guelph <https://youtu.be/FwGWNoAyoFg>

Swarm Lure

On our webpage we have an article how to build Russian Scion, inexpensive swarm lure.

www.stclairbees.com/wp-content/uploads/2202/04/Russian-Scion.pdf

Catching a Swarm

www.stclairbees.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Catching-a-swarm.pdf

Installing a Nuc in a Nutshell

By IQI Director – Lonnie Langley

A nucleus hive, or nuc, is basically a starter colony of honey bees consisting of 5 frames. There are typically 2-3 frames of brood (eggs, larvae, and pupae), and frames of honey, nectar, and pollen, along with a queen and enough bees to cover the frames. It is highly recommended that you purchase your nucs from local sources within Illinois. Locally produced bees are more adapted to your area for disease and pest resistance, along with being adapted to the local environment (both climate and flora). In addition, you avoid any chance of obtaining bees with genetics from the Africanized Honey Bee.

All bees within the state of Illinois must be registered with the Illinois Dept. of Agriculture within 10 days of locating your hive, and there is no charge for registration and the inspection service the IDOA provides.

Equipment and tools you will need to have your new bees are: duct tape, utility knife, hive tool, gloves, veil, bee suit, a ten-frame hive, feeder, and pollen patties. The duct tape is recommended for transporting your bees. It is **not** recommended that you transport them within your vehicle. It is best to secure them in your trunk or the bed of a truck. Transport them immediately to their new location.

STEP 1: Do not leave your nuc(s) unattended in your vehicle. Remove them and place them in your bee yard in a shady well-ventilated area.

STEP 2: Your nuc should be transferred into your new hive late in the day before it gets dark. Have your hive set up at its permanent location with a syrup feeder and pollen patties ready. Have your smoker lit; a little smoke may be necessary when first removing the nuc's cover.

STEP 3: There are two methods for removing the frames from the nucs to transfer into their new hive.

FIRST METHOD: If your bees are in a cardboard nuc, use a utility knife to carefully cut two top corners on one side of the box. Fold the cardboard down to expose the top and sides of the frames for easy removal. Using your hive tool, remove the frames in the order that they are in the nuc to the center of your new 10-frame hive. Fill the empty space with frames of foundation. Frames of nectar, pollen, and honey should be outside the brood frames. If the nuc frames are completely filled, you may place a frame of foundation between the brood frames and the food reserves.

SECOND METHOD: After removing the lid from the nuc with your hive tool, slowly and carefully pry the frames apart being careful not to harm any of the bees. Lift each nuc frame straight up and place it in the order they are removed into the center of the new hive, arrange as in STEP 1, and if using a frame feeder, insert it outside the brood nest frames. A frame of foundation may be placed between the brood and reserve frames.

STEP 4: Begin feeding as soon as the bees are transferred to the new hive using a 50-50 sugar water syrup. There are several syrup feeders on the market and your nuc provider can assist in choosing which model works best. Pollen substitute patties may also be given at this time, placing them on the tops of the brood frames. These should be replaced weekly since Small Hive Beetles will want to lay eggs in them if the opportunity arises. You may want to use a beetle trap to help control this pest.

STEP 5: In about a week check your hive and start becoming familiar with the inner workings of a bee colony, especially the expansion process. As the brood nest expands, add more foundation frames between the brood and food reserves.

STEP 6: If all goes well and the bees fill out the first box a second box should be added. Bees will work upwards into the top box and begin filling out the frames. You can discontinue feeding when you see several frames filled with honey reserves or the bees stop taking the syrup from the feeder. Never use honey or frames of pollen from unknown sources to feed your bees as you run the risk of introducing unwanted disease/pests. If your bees fill the first two boxes and there is enough time before winter, a super may be added for honey reserves. There will need to be a sufficient quantity of sealed honey to get your colony through the winter.

Finally: Your nuc provider can act as a mentor and assist you with recommendations for the proper management of your bees.

SOURCES: Nucs are best obtained from local producers. Go to the Producer's Link on this website.

www.illinoisqueeninitiative.com



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 March 31st , 6:30 PM , membership meeting at the Madison County Farm Bureau, 900 Hillsboro Ave (rear), Edwardsville. The presentation for the meeting will be Queen Rearing by Johnny Murdock.

QR CODE FOR MEETING PLACE

<https://goo.gl/maps/jsXkn56Djj1HuJ6K7>

