

Catch The Buzz

P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38183

Memphis Area Beekeepers Association

www.memphisbeekeepers.com

Meeting Location: 7777 Walnut Grove Rd # C, Memphis, TN 38120

Meeting Date & Time March 13th at 7pm

This Month's Speaker: Clay Guthrie from Dadant & Guthrie Naturals, Kentucky

Newsletter targeting NEW Beekeepers this month

New Beekeepers welcome to the Memphis Area Beekeepers

The bees have begun their work!!!!

March and the Bees: The unusually early warm weather has presented the bees with an opportunity to expand their population. This is the critical time for starvation as young bees are hatching daily and the size of the colony increases rapidly. The worker bees are foraging and drones cells hatch. As the days grow longer, the Queen increases her rate of egg production and **colonies wishing to swarm may start to raise swarm cells and colonies with failing queens may start supersedure** cells. These may hatch in 16 days if weather permits.

Club President Stuart Hooser knows of several early swarms due to calls from the public. Food stores are being consumed at a rapid rate. Natural Pollen is coming in along with nectar but cold, windy weather can affect nectar sources so check your colonies for food, do not let them run out. Experienced Beekeeper, Robert Hodum suggests that if you look and see that the bees need space, a Queen Excluder and Honey Super may be added since they are bringing in Nectar. Bees need space! Add supers, prepare to split and/or control swarming as necessary.

==BRING YOUR QUESTIONS WRITE THEM DOWN LEAVE THEM AT THE SIGN IN AND THEY WILL BE ANSWERED BY AN EXPERIENCE BEEKEEPER (Mentors will be assigned at this meeting)

March and the BEEKEEPER: 1) Monitor your hives, get your equipment ready. 2) Now is the time to treat with Terramycin or Tylan for American foulbrood (AFB) prevention. 3) Make nucs/splits. Check honey stores **Make sure all medications are removed as specified on label** **Attend Bee Meetings**

- When hive body is full of bees add Honey super
- Prepare and decide which colonies to Re-queen due to failing Queens
- Consider writing down what is blooming in your area as a local "Bloom Calendar"

ORDER YOUR BEES AND EQUIPMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!!!!!!

New Beekeepers Dadant, Kentucky will bring the orders & stack them neatly with an invoice with your name in large writing. Come prepared to load your equipment.

Dadant will also have "Pop Up Shop" for the that evening. Come early and try on bee-wear, browse and talk with other beekeepers. Someone will explain the use of any piece of equipment being considered for purchase.

If you require and Epinephrine Auto-Injector (2 choices)

1--EpiPen® (epinephrine) Savings Card | Save up to \$300 on a 2-pak

Mylan, the manufacturer of the EpiPen and EpiPen Jr is **offering a savings card for 2017** which can save you up to \$300 for each 2-pak. Not all insurance plans qualify, but if yours does, it is worth the time to visit the Mylan site at the below link to ascertain if your insurance does qualify

Save up to \$25 on Mylan's Epinephrine Injection, USP Auto-Injectors

2--The MyGenericEAI Savings Card can provide up you with \$25 in savings per auto-injector two-pack.

<https://www.my-generic-epinephrine-auto-injector.com/> or <https://www.epipen.com/copay-offer/>

Get savings offer*. *Eligibility restrictions apply. See **Terms and Conditions**. This offer is not valid for patients covered by Medicare, Medicaid or any other federal or state funded healthcare program or where prohibited by law. Mylan Specialty L.P. reserves the right to amend or end this program at any time without notice. A prescription from your doctor is **required** to obtain an EpiPen. Most doctors will write an EpiPen Rx for you if they are aware you are a bee keeper.

The Top 10 Mistakes Most Newbie Beekeepers Make

With so much to learn as a new beekeeper, missteps are as inevitable as bee stings. Yet failures do provide an opportunity for learning.

1. Assessing colony health based solely on the level of “bee traffic.”
2. Not recognizing queenlessness.
3. Leaving out frames or placing empty supers.
4. Harvesting honey too early or taking too much.
5. Not feeding new colonies.
6. Placing your hive in a troublesome location.
7. Not properly suiting up.
8. Not using your smoker.
9. Starting with just one colony.
10. Being satisfied with a limited knowledge of beekeeping.

Read more at . . . <http://modernfarmer.com/2016/06/top-10-mistakes-newbie-beekeepers-make/>

FYI the newsletter editor started with 1 colony and it was a package—what a year that was. Many mistakes.

First year beekeeping Beekeeping Through the Eyes of a Biologist

read more at <http://scientificbeekeeping.com/first-year-care-for-your-nuc/>

Updated 27 Feb 2017. This site provides some quick step-by-step notes for your first year of beekeeping, written specifically for those starting with a nucleus hive or package bees.

First, educate yourself! A honey bee colony is a living animal that deserves to be cared for properly. You are beginning beekeeping at a time in which honey bees are struggling to stay alive—beekeeping is more difficult than it was prior to the parasitic varroa mite (which invaded around 1990). Although honey bees are essentially wild animals living in a box provided by their “keeper,” bees are in the midst of an evolutionary struggle due to the introduction of varroa (which completely changed colony stress and virus dynamics), as well as that of *Nosema ceranae* (an opportunistic parasite that can cripple a stressed colony). In addition, the bee population now faces the additional novel stressors of persistent European foulbrood, loss of forage in many areas, the effects of climate change (shorter winters), and pesticide exposure.

Additional resources:

Productive Management of Honey-Bee Colonies by C. L. FARRAR* Entomology Research Division Agr. Res. Serv., U.S.D.A.**

Summary

The basic requirement for productive colony management in beekeeping are large food reserves of pollen and honey at all times and ample room for these food reserves, brood rearing, and the storage of surplus honey. Young productive queens from good stock are essential. The queen should be supported by a large population favorable to the time of the year. The object is to build maximum colony populations for the nectar flow and maintain them throughout the season. The most populous colonies produce not only the most honey per colony but the most honey per bee. Brood rearing is the basis of colony development and the maintenance of maximum populations during the flow. It is dependent upon: (1) the queen’s capacity to lay eggs, (2) the supporting population’s ability to maintain favorable temperature and feed the brood, (3) reserves of pollen and honey, and (4) space in the proper position for expansion of the brood nest.

Manipulations that maintain the most favorable organization of hive equipment for maximum brood rearing and honey storage will help to insure strong colonies and minimize swarming. The maintenance of a reserve of young productive queens in nuclei makes it possible to replace inferior queens promptly. The development of colonies inadequately provisioned with pollen can be increased by feeding pollen supplemented with 75 percent of soybean flour. Efficient management requires the proper timing of colony development so that maximum populations will coincide with the available nectar flows.

The beekeeper should be familiar with sources of pollen and nectar within his locality, their time of bloom, and relative importance. The selection of stock and equipment and the location and size of the apiary are individual problems subject only to the certain standards of principles discussed. An analysis of the economics of each beekeeping enterprise will

prove helpful in developing efficiency in management. The most effective means of lowering the cost of honey production is to increase colony yields.

Introduction

Successful bee management entails the skillful application of knowledge and practices that will fully utilize the productive capacity of the honey-bee colony, with productivity favorably balanced against capital, operational, and labor costs. Because there are individual colonies in most apiaries that produce three to four times more honey than the average colony, the opportunities for improving colony management are at least threefold. Management costs for low-producing colonies usually equal and often exceed those for the best colonies because they require more labor to correct deficiencies that should be avoided. By raising the average yield to equal more closely that of the higher producing colonies, the beekeeper is also likely to improve productivity of his best colonies.

The honey-bee colony is highly adaptable to a wide range of climatic conditions and is usually productive wherever man successfully cultivates forage, fruit, and vegetable crops. There are many areas where the natural vegetation provides abundant pollen and nectar resources that equal or exceed those present in cultivated areas.

The object of colony management is to coordinate the colony's development with all the natural plant resources available in order to have the maximum number of foraging bees when the major nectar producing plants are in blossom. Every colony will have its own maximum population and production level, but efficient management requires that the beekeeper recognize the different levels of productivity in honeybee stocks and keep only the best.

The principles of productive colony management are similar in all areas where bees are kept. Management problems in different regions vary only in the timing of colony development to coincide with the location's nectar and pollen resources as influenced by the climate and plant species available, including their abundance and period of bloom.

Honey bees are kept primarily for production of honey and wax, yet their role in pollinating seed and fruit crops contributes an economic return to agriculture many times greater than that derived from surplus honey and wax. Many thousands of colonies are kept or obtained through rental services for use in pollinating commercial seed and fruit crops. The need for pollinating bees has not yet been satisfied, and future requirements for this service can be expected to increase. Both pollination and honey production are dependent upon the number of bees that visit the flowers.

Management, which increases the colony's honey storing efficiency, will also improve plant pollination.

The normal, unrestricted colony is capable of surviving and producing honey from the arctic to the tropics if there are sufficient blooming plants that produce pollen and nectar to provide food for the colony. Man is the honey bees' worst enemy. He tends to leave insufficient food for the colony's use during dearth periods and fails to provide ample hive space for the colony to develop and store honey, forcing it to swarm. A colony that swarms is substandard in strength during the production period, and it may even store insufficient food for its own survival.

The abundant pollen and nectar resources available in the most highly developed commercial beekeeping regions have been more or less responsible for extensive beekeeping operations involving "thousands of hives" with a minimum of thought as to what constitutes a full-strength colony of bees. There may be as much difference between "hives of bees" and full-strength colonies as there is between a calf and a producing cow. The rapid changes taking place in all agriculture may be expected to shift the emphasis from hives in great numbers to well-managed colonies. It is doubtful whether there is any beekeeping location where more than a small fraction of the available nectar is harvested by the bees. This may not be true of the pollen resources required for developing high-producing colonies. There are management procedures, however, for minimizing a pollen deficiency. Pollen gathering like nectar gathering is balanced by the supply of pollen produced by the flora and the number of bees to gather it. It is possible that colonies are unable to capitalize on many early pollen sources because their populations are too small when these plants blossom. Read more at

<http://www.beesource.com/resources/usda/productive-management-of-honey-bee-colonies/>

Experienced Beekeepers expect more next newsletter:

Finding a Better Way to Fix Frames By: D.E. Bentley <http://www.beeculture.com/reframing/>

The frames, strung up between trees on clothesline, looked like an art installation with their cast shadows and deliberate arrangement.

I had hung them in the sun after ripping out rectangles of darkened comb, in the hopes it would soften the hardened on propolis and remnants of solidified wax while, perhaps, providing some beneficial UV. It was right about at this stage that I started fantasizing about a massive solar wax melter – supers full of spent frames dripping in the midday sun, pouring out a spout at the bottom like liquid gold. Shaking free from my fantasy, I opted for scraping. With hot weather settling in and basswood blooms opening, many of our colonies needed

growing room; they blanketed the fronts of the supers. We had left this task for far too long, and had an immediate need for new frames to rotate into colonies and make splits.

Knowing what the right thing to do is and doing it are two different things. I know that regular clean up and maintenance of woodenware and rotating older darkened comb frames out are crucial activities for keeping bees happy and healthy. Yet, after years of moving myself and my bees to our new home I found myself pawing through stacks of frame filled supers trying to locate the least dark comb, while mumbling apologies to the girls every time I gave them one of these frames to try and clean up and store honey on – some of which they wisely refused to work. Although offering colonies older frames allows one to quickly assess which hives demonstrate hygienic behaviors, as piles of debris rapidly accumulate at hive entrances, it is just bad beekeeping practice.

In an attempt to avoid the work at hand I had already ordered additional frames; it is more fun to assemble than to scrape. Still, if I left the older frames sitting around they would turn to wax moth mush – making the clean up even more unpleasant. Beyond the stockpile of stripped down frames that needed clean up and foundation for immediate use, there were many older frames in the honey supers that would need to be rotated out and cleaned up after extraction. Most of the older frames were still solid and could be reused, and I had foundation on hand.

I had run out of excuses.

Procrastination is the mother of invention: sometimes a short delay in action is all that is needed to come up with a better way of doing things. In the past, I often scraped frames on a tarp, shaking the pieces of wax and propolis periodically to the center then into a bucket. This had the benefit of catching the scrapings for later candle making, but put wear and tear on my knees and back. What I wanted was a standing scraping station that would provide a surface for scraping frames, and supers, while catching the scrapings for easy collection. Using an acquired nightstand and assorted odds and ends, I assembled a sturdy, albeit ugly, scraping table, then set to work scraping down frames and replacing foundation.

The scraping table proved to be a timesaving contraption that also saved on chiropractic fees. It holds a super for cleanup and provides an abundance of solid surfaces to rest frames on for scraping. The sloped sides feed most of the scrapings into a drawer for easy removal. I dump the collected scrapings from there into a trashcan. The bottom shelf provides a storage area for tools. Hanging bars on either side hold frames, allowing me to load un-scraped frames on one side and transfer them to the other once cleaned up.

As I scraped down frame, after frame, after frame, after frame, I thought about my decade of beekeeping experience and my decision to move the bees with me. I had transferred colonies first to some vacant acreage an hour from where I was staying, and then to their new permanent location – as my new beekeeping and life partner photographed from the sidelines. This movement of colonies gave me a brief glimpse at the life of a migratory beekeeper, and reaffirmed my commitment to keep my bees, and me, stationary – I like to be attached to a piece of land where I can plant things and watch them grow.

Pollinating crops was the prime objective when I first started keeping bees. I still value the bees' function as pollinators, but have realized that I now keep bees because I enjoy keeping bees. Beekeeping is a lot like martial arts-you have much to learn, grasshopper. As with martial arts, in beekeeping one must be prepared for the unexpected, move with calm deliberate actions and conquer fears. Likewise, there is the acceptance that what we know is a miniscule drop in the ocean of knowledge. The meditative time working the hives, the challenges associated with keeping bees alive (and well), watching the bees fly to and fro or flit about on flowers, exploring the world of honey plants and even the related tasks of maintaining equipment and extraction still holds me captive. Even the mundane task of scraping frames has some hidden allure, although I did sketch out preliminary plans for a solar wax melting unit, which I plan to construct in the “near future” – a flexible timeframe, as any beekeeper is aware.

It has been suggested that it is our love for bees and beekeeping that pushes us along on our quest.

See you at the meeting Monday Night!!!!