



Catch The Buzz

Memphis Area Beekeepers Association www.memphisbeekeepers.com

P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38183

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

MA
BA

MEETING DATE & TIME: April 9, 2018 at 7 pm – Clarence Collison, Emeritus Professor of Entomology and Emeritus Head of the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology at Mississippi State University. Dr. Collison has studied bees since the 1970s, and held academic positions at Michigan State University and Pennsylvania State University. He also wrote a monthly column for Bee Culture magazine, called A Closer Look, and published a book titled “What Do You Know?” in 2003.

Dr. Collison is known as a beekeeper’s beekeeper and will have more information to share than we can understand in one session. You will not want to miss this!

For the Swarm List update, you must be a current member. Yearly membership is always due April 1st of the given year, so **please renew ASAP for your membership and if you want to be included on the swarm list.**

APRIL AND THE BEEKEEPER

- The objective is for all colonies to be queen-right, healthy, and well-nourished so they can build up to maximum populations for the major nectar flow. This all needs to be done while keeping a fine balance between the growing population and the amount of space available so that the bees do not have the chance to think about swarming.
 - On a calm, warm day go through your hives and do a thorough inspection.
 - Remove mouse guards and replace poor quality frames or brood frames with new comb or foundation.
 - Move brood down (if you can), honey frames to the side, and empty comb over-head. Note: Both boxes will probably be filling up with brood by mid-April. In many cases, the queen may start heading down on her own to find more space to lay.
 - Clean up bottom boards.
- Is it time to make splits? Each split will require a new queen. Before your queen emerges, mature drones are needed. Drones are mature 8-10 days after they emerge and hang out on the edge of the brood nest. Queens prefer sunny, 75 degree days, with winds less than 10mph. Use the splits to replace winter losses or increase your hive numbers. If increasing your hive numbers, pick out your next location. Splits are a great way to create increase or replacement nucs. It also helps facilitate a robust honey crop and is a form of varroa control as it disrupts the brood.
- Consider adding disease free dead-out brood boxes to booming two-story hives in anticipation of making splits with them when your new queens arrive. It will relieve congestion and give these overly populous hives something to use and will make an excellent split later.



Catch The Buzz

Memphis Area Beekeepers Association www.memphisbeekeepers.com
P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38183
Meeting Location: 7777 Walnut Grove Rd # C, Memphis, TN 38120

MA
BA

- If you already have queen cells, what kind are they: swarm, emergency, or supersedure? Note: This can also indicate the timing is right to start making queens. What will you do with the queen cells?
 - Move them to make nucs or splits.
 - Try to cut them all out and keep rechecking.
 - Make a nuc with the queen mother.
 - Let the bees bee.
- Place swarm traps around mid to late April.
- If you want to give your hives a boost, feed with equal parts sugar and water.
- DISCONTINUE simulative sugar feeding before supering.
- The 'Rule of Thumb' for putting supers on hives is when the dandelions bloom.
- Wax moth activity dramatically picks up when the temperature rises, keep an eye on your stored supers – especially ones that contained pollen or brood.
- Leftover honey frames should be adding in to live colonies, or frozen before small hive beetle (SHB) moves in and ruins them.

Adapted from: <http://www.indianahoney.org/2016/03/Beekeeping-Tips-for-April.cfm>

3/23/2018 National Honey Board Report: <https://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/ams/FVMHONEY.pdf>

TENNESSEE: As the warm weather came in mid-February beekeepers started to inspect their hives for the first time in the spring. Overall beekeepers are reporting about an 80% loss. Losses in West Tennessee are reported to be 60%, Middle Tennessee is reporting 70% losses, East Tennessee is reporting 80% losses and Upper East Tennessee is reporting 85% losses. The colonies that are remaining have been collecting pollen and nectar from maples, elms, willows, henbit, witch hazel and ornamental plantings.

ARKANSAS: Pollen and nectar sources received in the month of February were from various trees. Colonies were in fairly good condition. Weather has seen below above temperatures with little rain. Supply is low while demand remains high.

MISSISSIPPI: The beekeepers are running about two weeks late this year due to excess rain and cold temperatures. Warm sunny days would be a huge welcome at this point, as nucs are slow to build up in the hives pushing sales of Queens and packages back. There is plenty of feed available if the bees can get out and about with clover, wildflowers and various trees in bloom.



Catch The Buzz

Memphis Area Beekeepers Association www.memphisbeekeepers.com

P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38183

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



BEEKEEPING READING LIST

- 1) [Our Native Bees](#) by Paige Embry, published by Timber Press, 2018

Imported European honey bees get all the press, but more compelling is the story of North America’s native bees—species essential to our ecosystems and food supplies. In her travels with farmers, gardeners, and scientists, Paige Embry examines the vital role these pollinators play. Along the way, she hunts for a bumble bee that may be extinct, houses hibernating blue orchard bees in her refrigerator, and investigates an unlikely place for pollinator habitat: golf courses. Filled with Embry’s discoveries, both sobering and hopeful, *Our Native Bees* offers a rare exploration of these underappreciated natives so crucial to our survival.

Read or heard of good, science-based beekeeping articles? Please let us know, we will get them into the MABA newsletter.

UNIT HONEY PRICES BY MONTH

Retail-Average Retail Price per Pound across all reporting regions - Data from <https://www.honey.com/honey-industry/statistics/retail-honey-price> used with permission. Based upon average price across all reporting regions. Assumes various sizes sold at the same rate.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2018	\$7.57											
2017	\$7.35	\$6.99	\$6.85	\$7.04	\$7.06	\$7.25	\$7.05	\$7.26	\$7.27	\$7.37	\$7.18	\$7.25
2016	\$6.74	\$6.91	\$6.79	\$6.79	\$6.72	\$7.12	\$7.01	\$6.88	\$6.88	\$7.12	\$7.04	\$7.39

Average Wholesale Case Price Per Pound across All Reporting Regions. Data from <https://www.honey.com/honey-industry/statistics/wholesale-honey-price> used with permission. Based upon average price across all reporting regions. Assumes various sizes sold at the same rate.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2018	\$5.30											
2017	\$5.25	\$5.32	\$5.38	\$5.27	\$5.13	\$5.46	\$5.39	\$5.35	\$5.44	\$5.27	\$5.19	\$5.31
2016	\$5.04	\$5.15	\$5.04	\$5.20	\$4.97	\$5.19	\$5.09	\$5.01	\$5.10	\$5.31	\$5.27	\$5.39

To subscribe to the National Honey board newsletter visit: <https://www.honey.com/signup>



Catch The Buzz

Memphis Area Beekeepers Association www.memphisbeekeepers.com

P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38183

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

MA
BA

Plan now for National Honey Bee Day 2018, which is Saturday August 18, 2018

To learn more about beekeeping in Tennessee visit the Tennessee Beekeepers Association website at:
<http://www.tnbeekeepers.org/>

Register you colonies with your respective state's department of agriculture:

Tennessee: <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/agriculture/documents/apiary/AgLicApiaryReg.pdf>

Mississippi: No apparent registration needed – please correct me if in correct

Arkansas: http://www.aad.arkansas.gov/Websites/aad/files/Content/5944113/Bee_Yard_Registration_Form.pdf

HONEY-BASED RECIPES

1. Honey-Bacon BLT – Servings – 4 sandwiches

INGREDIENTS

12 slices thick-cut bacon

1/4 cup honey

1/2 tsp. ground coriander

3/4 tsp. cayenne pepper

8 slices Sourdough bread, toasted

8 tsp. mayonnaise

8 pieces green leaf lettuce

12 slices Beefsteak tomato, sliced

4 eggs, fried to desired doneness

1/2 cup Avocado, mashed

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400° and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place bacon slices on prepared baking sheet.

Combine honey, coriander, and cayenne pepper. In increments of 20 seconds, heat in microwave until just melted.

Using a pastry brush, baste melted spiced honey over bacon slices. Flip and baste other side.

Roast for about 15 minutes until crisp (may be a bit shorter or longer depending on fattiness).

To Assemble:

On one slice sourdough toast, spread 2 tsp. mayonnaise.

Top with 2 pieces green leaf lettuce, 3 slices tomato, 3 slices Spicy Honey Candied Bacon, and 1 fried egg.

Spread 2 T avocado mash on second slice sourdough toast and place on top of sandwich to close.

Slice diagonally, serve.



Catch The Buzz

Memphis Area Beekeepers Association www.memphisbeekeepers.com

P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38183

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

MA
BA

Walk Away Split A method to increase colony numbers

READ MORE AT: <http://www.bushfarms.com/beessplits.htm>

"Walk away split" is an American term for splitting a colony and leaving it to raise its own queen. There are a number of ways of achieving this, but in simple terms a strong colony is split into two, with one part retaining the queen, the other part having eggs and young larvae from which the bees raise a queen by building emergency cells.

In the simplest form, and probably what happened originally, the two colonies are left alone for 4 weeks, after which the queenless part should have a laying queen, hence "walk away split".

By consulting literature or looking online you will find there are almost as many methods (and arguments!) as there are beekeepers. Some will simply split a colony into two, making sure both parts have eggs and young larvae. They don't even bother to find the queen, as they know that both parts are able to raise one from existing larvae. Other beekeepers will do it in a more controlled way, which probably gives better results. It doesn't seem to matter which part goes where. Some beekeepers move one part right away to another apiary, others keep both parts in the same apiary. Likewise, some put the part with the queen on the old stand, some put the part without the queen.

This simple method of increase has been used for a very long time. With little effort and cost it increases colony numbers and produces new queens to head them. When I started beekeeping in 1963 in Sussex, it was soon after the hard 1962/63 winter when many colonies were lost. Many beekeepers had good practical skills, but little knowledge. They had many hives to re-populate, so apart from catching and hiving swarms, this was their main method of making increase, but the term "walk away split" wasn't used.

I believe that walk away splits are more likely to be successful in countries where the climate is good, the foraging season long and the bees prolific, as in the U.S. If done early in the season, this gives both colonies the chance to build up quickly, so they both get a honey crop. We don't often get those conditions in the U.K. so I think this method is unlikely to be so successful. If anyone wishes to try it, I suggest leaving the queenless part on the old stand, so they retain the flying bees, making a stronger colony that will probably produce better queen cells. I would remove all queen cells bar one 8-9 days after splitting to prevent them swarming. This puts more control into the operation but takes away the meaning of "walk away split". It is also little different from an artificial swarm. Although largely successful I prefer to use a more managed way of making increase, if possible by rearing queens from selected stock, so you don't rely on emergency cells.

Roger Patterson.

The concepts of splits are:

- You have to make sure that both of the resulting colonies have a queen or the resources to make one (eggs or larvae that just hatched from the egg, drones flying, pollen and honey, plenty of nurse bees).
- You have to make sure that both of the resulting colonies get an adequate supply of honey and pollen to feed the brood and themselves.
- You have to make sure that you account for drift back to the original site and insure that both resulting colonies have enough population of bees to care for the brood and the hive they have.
- You need to respect the natural structure of the brood nest. In other words, brood combs belong together. Drone brood goes on the outside edge of the brood and pollen and honey go outside that.



Catch The Buzz

MA
BA

Memphis Area Beekeepers Association www.memphisbeekeepers.com

P.O. Box 38028, Germantown, TN 38183

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

The old adage is that you can try to raise more bees or more honey. If you want both, then you can try to maximize honey in the old location and bees in the new split. Otherwise most splits are either a small nuc made up from just enough to get it started, or an even split.

Making Splits

- **An even split.** You take half of everything and divide it up. Face both of new hives at the sides of the old hive so the returning bees aren't sure which one to come back to. In a week or so, swap places to equalize the drift to the one with the queen.
- **A walk away split.** You take a frame of eggs, two frames of emerging brood and two frames of pollen and honey and put them in a 5 frame nuc, shake in some extra nurse bees (making sure you don't get the queen), put the lid on and walk away. Come back in four weeks and see if the queen is laying.
- **A typical split.** Same as above, but you either introduce a queen you bought or walk away and let them raise their new queen. If you introduce a queen they will be three weeks ahead of the hive that is raising their own, so you will have to put them in a larger box than a nuc to start with.
- **Swarm control split.** Ideally you want to [prevent swarming](#) and not have to split. But if there are queen cells I usually put every frame with any queen cells in its own nuc with a frame of honey and let them rear a queen. This usually relieves the pressure to swarm and gives me very nice queens. But even better, put the old queen in a nuc with a frame of brood and a frame of honey and leave one frame with queen cells at the old hive to simulate a swarm. Many bees are now gone and so is the old queen. Some people do the other kinds of splits (even walk away etc.) in order to prevent swarming. I think it's better to just keep the brood nest open.

<http://beekeep.info/modern-honey-bee-management-a-treatise/management-tools/splitting-colonies-a-new-old-management-tool/>

It has been colder and wetter than normal this year, however the bee colonies are growing at the same pace as normal, so make sure your colonies have enough space. Add boxes if you need to. The first consistently warm and dry days will herald the swarm season. Have your equipment ready in your vehicle to respond to swarm calls, you never know when you will get a call!

SEE YOU AT THE APRIL MABA MEETING, PLEASE VISIT WITH YOUR MENTOR.