



The Stinger

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALABAMA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



Swarm
Season
Is
HERE!

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Next issue 6/15/2019
Submissions due by 6/1/2019 (FIRM)

Bee Food

Bee Plants to Buy Now *by Jason Powell, Petals from the Past (Jemison, AL)*

Beekeepers statewide are travelling to see our display gardens this time of year, plus many of our plants for sale are labeled as “bee friendly” to make selection easier. My recommendations are: **Salvia Nemorosa “May Night”** (photo at right) for a low growing evergreen for sunny spots. It blooms early, is low maintenance, and bees love it and the deer hate it. Of all the nectars converted to honey, salvias are LEAST likely to crystallize. **Agastache (anise hyssop)** also likes dry sunny places, is low maintenance and the deer hate it. It blooms from April through summer’s end. **Late blooming camellias** (April & May) are a good choice for a larger visual impact and can be planted in shady locations. Such varieties can be planted in the Spring. **Old-style roses** are kicking into bloom now. Their open petal design make it easy for bees to reach the nectar and pollen, and it also makes them disease resistant and maintenance free. Options include shrubs, climbers and ground covers. Finally, don’t forget human edibles with the **blackberries**, that are opening right now. They require a small amount of maintenance, but the rewards are glorious!



Bee Supplements



Thank you, Gary Farmer, for sharing your recipe for a homemade supplement to add to one gallon of sugar syrup. The bees love it!

- 1-2 teaspoons of “Vitamins and Electrolytes Plus” by Agrilabs
- 4 teaspoons organic apple cider vinegar
- 4 teaspoons “Real Lemon Juice” that comes in a bottle
- 1/8 teaspoon ascorbic acid (Vitamin C crystals with no additives)
- 1/4 teaspoon citric acid

Table sugar is a form of sucrose. Bees cannot digest sucrose, but they do have enzymes in their stomachs that break down sucrose into glucose and fructose, which they CAN digest. The citric acid in the formula helps break down the sucrose before the bees consume it, which allows them to consume more efficiently.

The vinegar and lemon juice reduce the pH of the water, preventing mold from forming.

Ascorbic acid neutralizes the chemical chloramine, which is used to chlorinate city water supplies. Cities previously used chlorine, but that evaporated quickly in open air. Chloramine remains stable and has to be neutralized with something else, such as ascorbic acid. Without the harsh chemical taste of chlorinated water, bees are more willing to take the sugar syrup.

May/June Reminders

Mother's Day is May 12

Memorial Day May 27

Father's Day June 16

Crystal honey jars and a gift of honey make great presents for June weddings.



May/June "To Do" List

Let new colonies "rest" for a few weeks before checking them.

Watch for signs of swarming such as teacup cells being prepared for a new queen and drone cells for upcoming mating needs.

Make sure colony has plenty of room, which will deter swarming.

Update local co-op office if you want to be on their list for swarm calls.

Inventory honey supplies and inspect extraction equipment. Repair or re-order.

Teacup cells (above) are prepared just in case a new queen will be needed.

Monitor them to see what happens and if an egg is placed inside and then capped. This is an early sign of swarming to come.

Swarm cells are placed vertically on the outside edge of the comb.

Supercedure cells, for an ailing queen, will be placed vertically in the middle of the comb. That is to hide them from the queen who will be killed and replaced.



Don't forget the annual Spring Picnic!

Association News

<p>President Bill Evans</p>	<p>“Please support the vendors who help us with research, free advice, and give-aways at conferences. They are usually well-represented at our Spring Picnic. If you need to order supplies, ask if they be will present on May 4th and can deliver your order at that time, saving you the shipping costs.”</p>
<p>Secretary Heather Sinyard</p>	<p>“I have been working on getting prices for new T-shirts made of a new softer material and new colors and plan to have them ready for purchase at the picnic. I have also been working on getting a new shelf built to display our attire at all our meetings.”</p>
<p>Treasurer Wynelle Milstead</p>	<p>“We are committing \$500 of Association funds for a Young Beekeeper Scholarship. Local clubs should begin identifying candidates and working with them for the submission process. Deadline of June 15 for local portion, July 15 for state portion. Details on the ABA website, or contact Roslyn Horton.”</p>
<p>Master Beekeepers Kathy Coleman</p>	<p>“We’ve been working really hard on updating and clarifying the classifications for honey judging, and on the rules. You can see some of the results with our full-page article on Page 8. Give us a try, even if you are a newbie! We’d love to welcome you to our family!”</p>

Alabama Master Beekeepers History

The Alabama Master Beekeepers (AMB) Program was conceived at the February 2010 ACES Symposium. At that event, ABA President Philip Garrison announced the formation of an exploratory committee regarding the possible need for a state program. After help from many sources, it was launched with Apprentice classes at the 2010 ABA meeting, and repeated again in 2011. Over several years, it continued to evolve and grow.

In 2014, the ABA Board officially recognized the program with a Charter for the AMB. It would operate under the ABA and subject to its supervision and oversight. Among other things, it helped everyone focus that Master Beekeepers were the "Leaders in Beekeeping" and expected to give back to the community that trained them, as well as assist in educational efforts at the local level for consumers and for other beekeepers.

To ensure consistency of standards for education and messaging, the ABA decided to implement rigorous testing requirements before candidates could be certified at the various levels—Apprentice, Journeyman, and Master. The testing was a joint collaboration between Dr. Jim Tew and Jerry Hayes. It attempted to provide a balance among recollection of information, analysis and solution of problems, and practical skills. Question difficulty levels were meant to ensure that only the most dedicated and knowledgeable candidates could be our ambassadors to the state and trusted by the population!

As AMB Chair Kathy Coleman said recently, “The Master Beekeeper Program makes an average beekeeper become extraordinary. The title is a true honor for a very special group of beekeepers.” The program also serves as a model for other states, who want to duplicate what we have accomplished. Congrats to all!!

Nominations

We will elect Officers and two Directors at this year's Fall Conference. One Director will be from the Northern Area and one from the Central Area of the state. If you have suggestions for a nominee for any position up for election, please contact one of your area nomination committee members.

North Alabama Region

Patti Butler
JimmyButlerBz@gmail.com
 Home 205-695-6448
 Cell 205-695-3779

Mike W. Price
mike.w.price08@gmail.com
 Cell 256-783-4226
 Preferred contact is email

Central Alabama Region

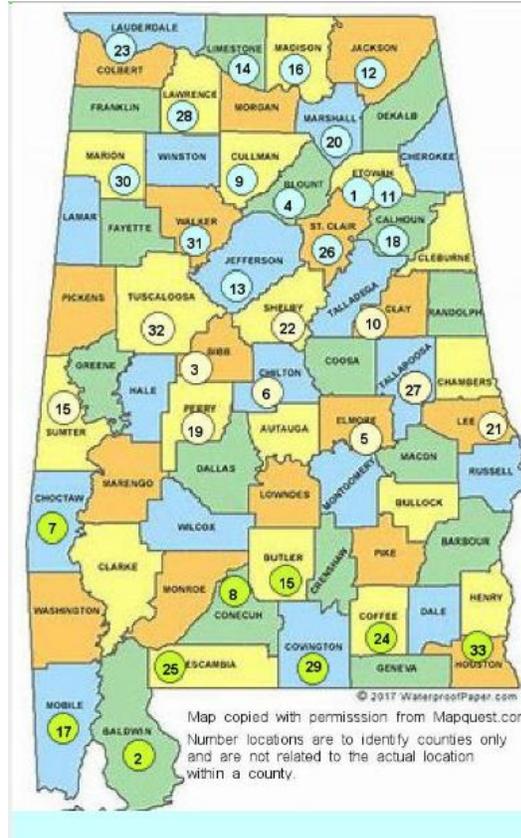
Larry Wyatt
 Nominations Committee Chairperson
Larry2660@centurytel.net
 205-660-3040 (h) 205-602-3514 (c)

Chuck Allen
Chuck@chuckallen.us
 205-202-0501

Southern Alabama Region

Pat Noonan
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 251-404-3794

Billy Blair
blairmobileva@yahoo.com
 251-236-3774



Director's County Responsibility

NORTHERN COUNTY DIRECTORS Marshall Standifer and Ray Latham

-NORTHERN COUNTIES-
 Lauderdale, Colbert, Franklin, Marion, Lamar, Fayette, Winston, Lawrence, Limestone, Morgan, Cullman, Walker, Jefferson, Blount, Marshall, Madison, Jackson, DeKalb, Etowah, Cherokee, St. Clair, Calhoun, Cleburne.

MIDDLE COUNTY DIRECTORS Vince Wallace and George Baldwin

-MIDDLE COUNTIES-
 Pickens, Sumter, Marengo, Greene, Tuscaloosa, Hale, Perry, Dallas, Autauga, Chilton, Bibb, Shelby, Talladega, Coosa, Elmore, Macon, Tallapoosa, Clay, Randolph, Chambers, Lee, Russell.

SOUTHERN COUNTY Rebecca Fritschle and Troy Latham

-SOUTHERN COUNTIES-
 Choctaw, Washington, Mobile, Baldwin, Clarke, Wilcox, Monroe, Conecuh, Escambia, Covington, Butler, Lowndes, Montgomery, Crenshaw, Bullock, Pike, Coffee, Geneva, Dale, Barbour, Henry, Houston.

Buying Packages or Nucs

Before deciding between packages or nucs, confirm that your vendor complies with State law and does not run the risk of spreading disease. Tell all such vendors, "Before I order, I must see a copy of your current year's Inspection Health Certificate from the Alabama Apiarist." This is a reasonable and easy-to-fulfill request. Some sellers do not obtain annual inspections and certifications and are violating the law. Your entire bee yard could be at risk because of such irresponsible people.

That warning aside, "Packages or Nucs?" is a common question this time of year. Nucs contain a laying queen and brood, and are more expensive than packages of bees.

Packages include a separately caged queen who is unrelated to the workers and might or might not be accepted by them when she is released. Packages cost less than nucs. Sometimes the choice boils down to simple economics.

Buzzworthy Fun

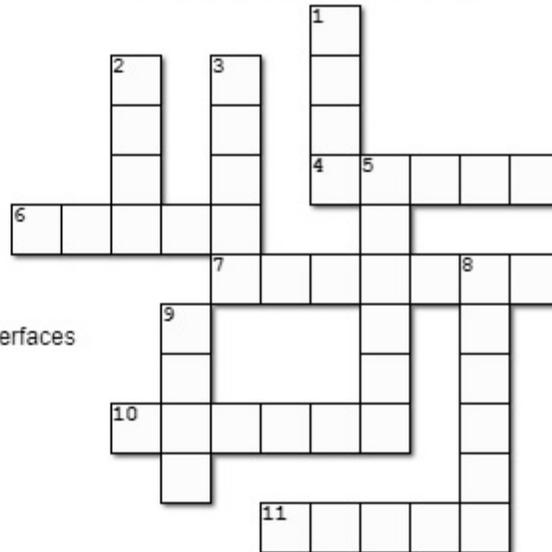
Double Duty

Across

4. Pirates, Upon a Ship
6. Chess power player
7. Vanilla Flavoring
10. Specialty Train Car
11. Sulk or Mope

Down

1. Multiple Application Programming Interfaces
2. Rash
3. Murmur or hum
5. Karl Marx Favorite
8. _____ and Gowned
9. Mantilla Accessory



May/June Bee-Guiling Facts



May was once considered an unlucky month to get married. June was lucky because named after the Roman goddess Juno, protector of women, especially in marriage and childbearing.

Weddings are a \$72B per year industry in the US, with average cost of \$20,000. Queen bees spend less. Royal princesses spend more. Prince Henry and Meghan Markle racked up almost \$44M but they saved money with free venues at Westminster Cathedral and Buckingham Palace.

The May birthstone is emerald. June has three—pearl, alexandrite and moonstone. That's fair because emeralds are worth a lot more.

May is Hamburger Month, Salad Month and Salsa Month. That means it must be taco salad month, right?

June is Candy Month and Doughnut Month. More fun than May.

May dates in history: 1431: Joan of Arc burned at the stake. 1796: Edward Jenner successfully tested smallpox vaccine. 1873: Levi Strauss patented copper-riveted jeans to prevent tears. 1991: The final episode of "Dallas."

June dates in history: 323 BC: Alexander the Great died. 455: Vandals sacked Rome. 1509: Henry VIII married first wife Catherine of Aragon and promised "Till Death Do Us Part." She was lucky he merely broke his promise and not her neck. 1956: Elvis released "Hound Dog."

Resources



Info about local Beekeeping Associations, Click [HERE](#)

T and A Bee Farm: Italian Packages Ready for April 4th Pickup

Selling nucs, packages, ventilated suits, supplies and equipment. Ted and Angie LeMay of Russellville, AL, ship to all locations <http://www.TandABees.com>, or call 256-331-2337

Jr. Beekeeping Camp (ages 9 - 18) in Wetumpka June 20th and 21st

8 am to 3:30 pm, at Wetumpka Elem. School. Attendees must provide own sack lunch. Cost is \$35, scholarships available. Register at www.al.4honline.com Deadline June 13th. Contact Allyson Andrews at 334-799-2254 for more info, or email Allyson.Andrews@icloud.com

New Beekeeping Nuc Bag

Breathable zip bag made in USA for transporting bees or collecting swarms. More info at www.ZipNetBags.com or email Info@ZipNetBags.com or call 281-556-6798 (Houston,TX)

Spring NUCs for sale.

Limited number of nucs available for sale. Please call for additional information. Henry Rollins 256-859-1747

30-Frame Extractor for Sale (Used)

30 frame,electric, ex-large galvanized tub, in great condition. \$3500.00 text or call Cindy Turner at 256.557.1138 for more information and pictures

Crossword Puzzle Answers

Across: 4 Swarm; 6 Queen; 7 Extract; 10 Smoker; 11 Brood

Down: 1 Apis; 2 Hive; 3 Drone; 5 Worker; 8 Capped; 9 Comb

Honey Show

The Alabama Honey Show Committee is excited to announce the Honey Show Classes for the 2019 State Honey Show September 20-21. It is time to start preparing. This is the optimum time to get great cut comb or the full frame comb honey entries. The competition will be intense if last year is any predictor. Here is a preview of the classes:

HONEY (H) CLASSES

- H1a: Light Extracted Honey
- H1b: Amber Extracted Honey
- H1c: Dark Extracted Honey
- H2: Varietal Extracted Honey
- H3: Creamed Honey
- H4: Chunk Comb Honey
- H5: Cut Comb Honey
- H6: Section Comb Honey
- H7: Full Frame Comb Honey
- H8: Black Jar

BEESWAX (W) CLASSES

- W1: Beeswax Block
- W2: Beeswax Candles

BEVERAGE (B) CLASSES

- B1: Meads

ARTISAN (A) CLASSES

- A1: Artwork Related to Beekeeping
- A2: Crafts Related to Beekeeping
- A3: Notions, Potions, & Lotions
- A4: Photography
- A5: Beekeeping Gadgets

CHILDREN'S CLASSES

- C1: Children's Artwork Related to Beekeeping
- C2: Children's Essay Related to Beekeeping

Rules will be posted on the
Alabama Beekeepers
Association page.

This show happens at the
Fall State Meeting.

Snail mail recipients can write to
Kathy Coleman for more info:

385 Mullins Rd
Eclectic, AL 36024



Varroa Report

By Bill Evans, President

Now is the time to check for varroa mite infestation. Everybody has their own “economic thresholds” where it does not make sense to treat if the mites are below a certain level. Many people say 1% or 2% in a sample is acceptable but should be monitored. Almost everyone agrees that levels above 3% should be treated.

Many experts recommend Integrated Pest Management techniques that incorporate rigorous testing schedules, selection of varroa-resistant breeds, use of screened bottom boards, removal of drone brood, and rotational use of different types of miticides.

To test, you want about ½ cup of bees, which is around 300 test subjects. Try to shake them off a frame into a box and then scoop up. Scaping them off a frame might result in honey transfer onto the bees, which will make your test inaccurate.

Put the bees into a jar and then top with a piece of screening. Sprinkle a good hive tool full of powdered sugar into the jar. It will be around 2 tablespoons. Gently roll it to coat all the bees. Make sure you don't tip it upside down. **REALLY REALLY IMPORTANT:** Now, let the jar rest in a cool place for 2 minutes, to give the mites time to release.

After two minutes, **VIGOROUSLY** shake the jar into a white plastic tub. You want to shake hard enough to get all the mites. Add a small amount of water to dissolve the sugar so you can see the mites easily. Now you can count them. Skimping on the 2-minute wait or the vigorous shaking could result in false counts that are too low.

Treatments fall into three categories, which should ideally be rotated.

Synthetic chemicals such as Apistan (fluvalinate) and Checkmite (coumaphos) are discouraged because of resistance. Apivar (amitraz) is acceptable but should never be used during honey production.

Essential oils such as ApiGuard and ApiLife Var are fumigants. ApiLife Var is effective in a narrow temperature range of 65° to 85°, can taint honey taste, and can cause bee mortality and absconding if used when the weather is consistently warmer than that. ApiGuard reports effectiveness to temperatures of 105°

Acids such as Mite-Away Quick Strips, Formic Acid and FormicPro are fumigants, Other acids such as Oxalic Acid and HopGuard work on contact. Oxalic acid vapors are harmful to brood and should be used only when numbers are low. Mite-Away and Formic Pro can be used during honey production. The others cannot.

Inbreeding is bad for humans and other species, but great for varroa mites. And, they inbreed like crazy...

Varroa miticide resistance is a mutation. Unlike other species, varroa mutations spread rapidly. That is because a mother mite will enter a brood cell and lay one male egg and many female eggs. The male then mates with his sisters. This inbreeding causes pairing of normally recessive genes, such as miticide resistance. Paired genes become “operational” and provide protection for the mites.

Varroa is here to stay, and will become more challenging in years to come. The only true solution is to keep abreast of current strategies through state and local beekeeping associations and self-education, and then to implement those strategies.

The Stinger
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