

April 2024

THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association



MCBA Monthly Meeting April 15th, 2024

Medina County Library
210 S. Broadway, Medina OH 44256
Rooms A and B
Questions & Answers 6:30-7:00
General Meeting 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Topic - Beekeeping by the numbers
Speaker - Dr. Larry Connor

A discussion regarding key numerical relationships within the beehive. Including developmental rates for queens, workers, and drones and how this impacts mating behavior and bee behavior. Will also discuss egg laying rates and how this impacts buildup, swarming, splits, and honey production.

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April Speaker

Larry is one of the top beekeepers and bee experts in the country. He has been teaching for years, has authored many of the best bee books, including Increase Essentials, Bee Sex Essentials, Queen Rearing Essentials and most recently, Keeping Bees Alive. He completed, Package Bee Essentials in 2020.

Larry's wide range of experiences include being a hobby beekeeping as a 4-Her, bee researcher and educator, a commercial queen producer, and a lifelong teacher of practical beekeeping skills to thousands of beekeepers. He has traveled and lectured on bees and beekeeping in all states and many Canadian provinces. He has lectured in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, the Czech Republic, and Thailand.

Upcoming Events

April 13th @ 12 noon Celebration of Kim Flottum's life
Medina Community Church, 416 South Broadway Street,
Medina, Ohio

Earth Day - April 22nd, 2024. The Club looking for 3-4 volunteers.

May – Plant Exchange; World Bee Day

May – Apiary Registration Due

June – Pollinator week

July – Bee Festival

August – Club picnic, Medina County Fair

September – Ag Day

December – Christmas Party

MCBA May Meeting

Monday, May 20, 2024

Topic – TBD

Guest Speaker - TBD

Q & A 6:30 to 7:00 pm
Monday, 7:00 to 8:30 pm

Location: Medina County Library
210 S. Broadway, Medina OH 44256

Rooms A and B

MCBA Mission Statement

To promote beekeeping, broaden the knowledge and understanding of honeybees (and all pollinators) and the challenges they face in today's world, and educate by teaching best practices and techniques in apiary management.

President's Corner

By Peggy Garnes

April showers and warm temps are making the recipe for an early swarm season come to life... some members have already reported hives with many frames of capped brood! Get ready now with swarm traps, extra equipment, and keep inspecting your hives for swarm prep behavior.

The eclipse was interesting to experience firsthand watching the behavior of the honeybees at my home. I had set out some frames to clean out and the bees immediately started to work. As the eclipse moved closer to full, the bees waned their work and then disappeared back to their home hives only to return after several minutes of darkness. Even the chickens tried to get into their coop only to wander back into the fields when the daylight returned.

Earth Day is April 20th at Buffalo Creek Retreat from 10am-4pm. Volunteer members will share information with the public on our favorite topic of honeybees. Come visit the table and join in the conversation.

Ten Minutes with the Bees – The bee yard in April

By Paul Kosmos

The Bees Continue to Amaze Me!

Today is Monday, April 8th. Yesterday I popped the top on one of my hives to see if they had used the candy bricks. When I tried to lift the inner cover, it would not budge. I saw burr comb around the hole and slowly pried it up. The top bars were 100% covered with bees. What's more, the bottom of the inner cover was 100% covered with bees. In addition, there was a bunch of burr comb between the top bars and the cover. It was all drone brood. That means this hive needs some more room! Today I am going to inspect the hive and see if I can reverse the deeps. I also brought a super up to the house (to get it warm) in case I need to put it on.



A nice, strong hive!

I started with the top deep after removing it. There were still 4-5 frames of honey remaining, a couple frames with some brood, and a little open comb. I was impressed with how well this hive weathered winter. Next up, inspecting the bottom deep. Before I could do that there was also a lot of burr comb between the deeps. Again, all drone brood. I removed it all.



Lots of Bur comb....All Drone Comb

I found a couple frames of brood and quite a few frames of mostly open comb. That made it easy for me to decide to reverse the deeps. Reversing the deeps really does help by gaining the beekeeper some time to delay swarm fever for the hive. Open comb gives the bees more room to raise brood and they like to move up.

The bees in all my hives have been hauling a ton of pollen and nectar, so all of you can't be wrong. I've been hearing that many of you are finding similar issues in your hives. We have to keep a close eye on our hives, have a plan to control or catch swarms (especially our own), and be prepared to make a split if the inevitable happens.

Finally, I will add a super on this hive in a couple days. Give them more room to play!

Isn't this fun!!!

Adding honey supers, a guide for new beekeepers

By Clint Allen

A new beekeeper should consider placing honey supers on a Langstroth hive when certain conditions are met, indicating that the hive is strong and active enough to produce surplus honey for harvesting. Here are some key indicators to look for:

Population Strength: Ensure that the hive has a robust population of worker bees. A strong population indicates that the hive has enough foragers to collect nectar and produce surplus honey.

Nectar Flow: Monitor local nectar flows in your area. Honey supers should be added when nectar-producing flowers are abundant, providing ample resources for the bees to collect and store honey.

Brood Chamber Filling: Check the brood chamber for signs that it is becoming full of brood (eggs, larvae, and pupae). When the brood chamber is nearly full and the bees begin storing excess honey in the brood frames, it's a good time to add honey supers.

Weather Conditions: Consider weather conditions such as temperature and precipitation. Bees are more likely to forage and collect nectar on warm, sunny days. Avoid adding honey supers during periods of inclement weather when foraging activity may be limited.

Hive Strength and Health: Ensure that the hive is healthy and free from diseases or pests. Weak or struggling hives may not be able to produce surplus honey, so it's important to address any health issues before adding honey supers.

Observation: Regularly inspect the hive to assess bee activity, honey storage, and overall hive strength. Observing the behavior of the bees and the condition of the hive can provide valuable insights into when to add honey supers.

However, I found the task of monitoring nectar flow to be a little ambiguous. Monitoring flow involves observing the availability of nectar-producing flowers in your area and assessing their abundance and blooming patterns. Here are several methods a person can use to monitor nectar flow:

Visual Observation: Regularly observe the landscape surrounding your apiary for blooming flowers. Take note of the types of flowers in bloom, their abundance, and

the duration of their blooming period. Keep a journal or log to track changes in flower availability over time.

Bee Activity: Watch the activity of your bees as they forage outside the hive. Increased foraging activity, with bees returning to the hive laden with pollen and nectar, indicates a strong nectar flow. Conversely, reduced foraging activity may suggest a lull in nectar availability.

Weather Patterns: Monitor weather conditions, particularly temperature, humidity, and precipitation. Nectar flows are often influenced by weather patterns, with warm, sunny days generally promoting increased nectar secretion in flowers.

Local Knowledge: Tap into local knowledge from experienced beekeepers, botanists, or agricultural extension agents familiar with your region. They can provide valuable insights into typical nectar flow patterns, peak flowering seasons, and the types of plants favored by

Use of Nectar Maps: Some organizations and beekeeping associations provide nectar flow maps based on historical data and seasonal trends. These maps can help beekeepers anticipate when nectar flows are likely to occur in their region and plan hive management accordingly.

By paying attention to these indicators and factors, a new beekeeper can make informed decisions about when to add honey supers to a Langstroth hive, maximizing honey production while ensuring the well-being of the hive. It's also helpful to consult with experienced beekeepers or local beekeeping associations (MCBA) for guidance to your specific area and circumstances. Staying attuned to the natural rhythms of the environment, beekeepers can effectively monitor nectar flow and make informed decisions about hive management, including when to add honey supers and when to harvest honey.

Member Spotlight

Michael Mohn is not only a club member, but he is also our Medina County Bee Inspector!



Where do you live? Just outside of Medina city.

What got you interested in beekeeping? My cousin gave me an 8-frame setup and I've been in it, neck deep ever since.

How long have you been keeping bees? Since 2018

How many, and what kind of hives do you have? I've currently got 7 hives. One is a long Langstroth, one 8 frame Langstroth, and 5 10-frame Langstroth's.

Are you looking to add to your apiary? Always, the more the merrier

Do you share your beekeeping hobby with anybody else? Only my fellow beekeepers

What is your most memorable beekeeping moment? I was picking up a donor NUC from a friend just before dark one summer night and thinking I had just enough darkness to check on them before transport I cracked the lid to say hi. They all greeted without hesitation and started swarming me. Luckily there was a willow tree near by that I could briskly walk thru the vines to knock

them off. Only a few stings were collected, but the NUC colony is thriving and living their best now in my garden apiary.

What is the best and worst part of beekeeping? The best thing about beekeeping is the serenity I get from working with the bees. It's the most calming feeling I get, I like to refer to my apiaries as my Zen Gardens

What is your favorite food to add honey to? Coffee, and cornbread

Do you have any tips for beginner beekeepers? Get ready for a non-stop, event filled learning curve, and don't give up.

Other than beekeeping, do you have any other hobbies? I like to do woodworking, in the winter I tap maples for sap for syrup and sugar, gardening, and tending to my farm.

What do/did you do for a living? I work for Golden Days Heating and Cooling, formerly Sisler Heating and Cooling, as a geothermal HVAC install technician (I service, install, and repair geothermal furnaces and standard forced air systems), and I'm also the County Apiary Inspector

How long have you been the county Inspector? This will be my second season; I plan on continuing.

What got you interested in the Inspector job? Has the job made you a better beekeeper? I chose the inspectors position because I like getting out, seeing new faces, and educating people, all while learning from them in the process. I believe the things I've learned from everybody's different ways have helped me become a better beekeeper.

MCBA Meeting Minutes

MCBA monthly meeting was held at the Medina Career Center. One guest and 76 members were present, including seven board members. The club meeting began at 6:30 p.m. with a time for Q & A. Our featured speaker, Walt Wozniak, began his presentation at 7:00 p.m. and

spoke on the topic was “Catching bees”. There was much interest and discussion about the use of bait boxes to catch bees.

Following the presentation, we had a 10-minute snack break and resumed to a formal business meeting facilitated by the club president. The following updates were presented:

- The minutes from the February meeting were posted in the March newsletter for all members to read. They were voted on for approval – motion carried.
- Financial report: given by the treasurer.
- Beginner class: There were 36 students in attendance at the Tuesday classes. The class is going very well.
- Medina County Fair: Connecting the Fair’s WIFI for customer credit card payments is the goal and is being tested with great success so far. A volunteer sign-up sheet will hopefully be available in May.
- Club bee yard: Volunteers are still needed to help demonstrate hive inspections. A sign-up sheet has been posted on “Signupgenius”. The park district is renewing our contract for another three years.
- Bee Festival: Takes place at the Medina Library in July; volunteers will be needed.
- Club picnic: Will take place in August – time and location TBD.
- The mentor and mentee agreement has been completed and will be posted on our website soon.

New Business:

- Upcoming events announcement:
- Volunteers will be needed for the following events: Ag Day – September – education for 7-8th graders.

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.
Sharon Carpenter, MCBA Secretary

From Around the Web

Bee a boss: How to banish small hive beetles from your hives <https://www.honeybeesuite.com/how-to-banish-small-hive-beetles-from-your-hives/>

Hive Management

<https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/program/hive-management/>

Available at the April Meeting!

Drone Comb and Small Hive Beetle Traps will be available starting at the April Club Meeting. The club purchases in bulk and sells them at cost.

Drone Comb - \$3.75 SHB Traps - \$2.75

Honey Cake Recipe

For the members that were at the March meeting you were able to enjoy some tasty treats that were prepared for the club by students of the Medina County Career Center. Below is the recipe for the Honey Cakes they made for us!

Ingredients

- Cup Flour
- 1.5 tsp Baking Powder
- ¼ tsp Iodized Salt
- ½ tsp Cinnamon
- 1 tsp Orange Zest
- 6 oz Butter
- ¾ Cup Sugar
- 3 Eggs
- ¼ Cup Milk
- 1 Cup Sugar
- 1 Cup Honey
- ¾ Cup Water
- 1 tsp Lemon Juice

Instructions

1. Pre heat oven to 350 F
2. Grease and flour a 12-cup muffin pan.
3. Combine the flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and orange zest. Set aside.
4. In a stand mixer. Cream together the butter and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar until light and fluffy.
5. Beat in the eggs one at a time.
6. Beat in the flour mixture, alternately with the milk, mixing just until incorporated.,
7. Pour batter into prepared pan.
8. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean.
9. Allow to cool for 15 minutes.
10. Pour honey syrup over the cakes.

For the honey Syrup:

1. In a saucepan, combine 1 cup honey, 1 cup of sugar and $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water.
2. Bring to a simmer and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Stir in lemon juice and bring to a boil. Cook for an additional 2 minutes.

Beginner Classes

With the beginner classes finishing up for the season, the MCBA would like to thank all our suppliers for their generous donations and catalogs. With the help from our volunteer instructors along with Queen Right Colonies, Blue Sky Bee Supply, Betterbee Supply Mann Lake Supply and Dadant Bee Supply we had another successful year teaching new beekeepers about this great hobby!

Solar Eclipse



On April 8th at 3:15 PM Eastern Standard Time, many (if not all) of us were able to witness an awe-inspiring event, a total solar eclipse. The eclipse lasted just under 4 minutes and was an amazing event. The picture shown above, was taken by a member in Medina Township.

Ideas & Suggestions

This newsletter is for you, our members. If you have any ideas for content, format, corrections, or anything else, please, don't hesitate to reach out to me, Clint Allen via email.

Did you know that bees can fly up to 20 miles per hour?

Swarm Trap Plans

During the March meeting plans were available for building your own swarm trap. Using the plans below, 1 4x8 sheet of plywood can be used to build 3 Swarm Traps with Migratory Covers. The box that was displayed had a traditional cover vs. the migratory cover detailed out.

