

August 2025

THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association



MCBA Monthly Meeting August 18th, 2025

Monday, August 18
Monday, 6:00 to 7:30 pm

A fun evening with nothing to do but relax, eat good food, and visit with your fellow Beekeepers! Please bring a food dish or dessert!

Location: Buckeye Woods Park, 6335 Wedgewood Rd (162), Medina OH 44256

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MCBA August Meeting

Monday, August 21st, 2025

Time: 6:00 to 7:30 pm

Topic: Annual Club Picnic

A fun evening with nothing to do but relax, eat good food, and visit with your fellow Beekeepers! Please bring a food dish or dessert!

Location: Buckeye Woods Park, 6335 Wedgewood Rd (162), Medina OH 44256

Upcoming Events

August – Club picnic, Medina County Fair

August – Planted Flag Event. August 26 at 7 pm come early and buy yourself dinner and visit a great local brewery. This event will focus on Mead Making, so if your interested in learning the basics on how to turn your honey into the oldest adult beverage in the world please consider stopping by.

September – Ag Day

December – Christmas Party

MCBA September Meeting

Monday, August 15th, 2025

Time: 6:00 to 7:30 pm Q&A 6:00 to 6:30

Topic: All About Winter Bees

Speaker: Ray Wirt

Ray Wirt is with the OSBA's traveling speaker program. His talk will be all about getting your bees through winter.

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

With another fair under our belts, a huge “Thank you” goes out to the Fair Chairperson, Tim Moore and his team of volunteers. The weather was near impossible with horrible heat and rain the first few days but as luck would have it the bee booth was slammed the last of the week. All ended well- please check out the list of ribbon winners and the Best in Show bakery being awarded to our MCBA Director, Shari Baker.



The annual picnic is just around the corner and a tour of a local brewery to finish out our month of August. Such a busy month....



September is much quieter with Agriculture Day and an extraction demo at Krabill Lodge. Both of these events are in line with our mission of education with the public.

As the heat continues, please check your bees for protein, carbs, and the important mite check. We want healthy bees raising the bees, that raise the bees that go into winter.

Stay Healthy, hug your Family, and Enjoy your Bees!

Ten Minutes with the Bees — The bee yard in August

By Paul Kosmos

Getting ready for Winter. It's the middle of August and it's so hard to believe we will be talking about helping your bees get ready for winter. Yes, starting later this month, you will see changes in your hives as your bees begin their winter prep.

Let's start with what you will see when you inspect your bees. By late August or early September, you will see a fair amount of capped brood, but a much smaller amount

of eggs and larva. Why? The bees know to reduce the number of bees to reach a level capable of over wintering successfully.

In September we often hear from newer beekeepers that they think they lost the queen. No guarantees, but she is probably still there. The bees that are soon to be raised will be "Winter Bees". Winter bees have a much higher amount of fat stores to enable them to get through the winter. That is one reason they can survive so much longer than summer bees. Treating for Varroa. Which brings us to the next very important step, treatment for Varroa. You are all aware by now that mites feast on the fat of the winter bees. If you have high mite counts your bees will be weak going into winter. That is one reason why hives fail early, such as November-January. Review your treatment history and be prepared to treat if needed.



Robbing Screen

Checking for winter food stores. When you inspect your hives, make a special check of how much honey they have. A hive in our area needs at least 50-70 lbs of honey

to make it through winter. If light, you have September to hope for a good Goldenrod flow. A good flow can fill up a hive in a hurry. Unfortunately, despite the abundance of yellow flowers everywhere, sometimes they do not produce nectar. In that case be prepared to feed them 2:1 SS in LARGE QUANTITIES. If using quart jars, for example, put at least 3 jars on each hive that is low on stores. They need to store it and begin drying it as fast as possible. A full hive should be very heavy to lift and weigh 150 to 170 lbs. One other thing to watch for is robbing. The shortage of nectar can encourage strong hives to rob weaker hives. Left unchecked that can kill the hive being robbed. Use of robbing screens is very helpful in controlling the problem.

The same issue can occur with yellow jackets. They result in a lot of dead hives each year. There are easy to make traps to reduce the threat.

One last thing... for now! If you remove frames in the fall, such as after extracting honey, it is VERY IMPORTANT to check them several times for a short period. You may see tiny larva or white webbing. Or pop them in a freezer for two days if possible. Why? If there are any wax moth or small hive beetle eggs on a frame, they can hatch and destroy your frames while stored.

Helping your bees through the dearth

By Clint Allen

For beekeepers in our area, summer can be a tricky time. While spring brings a burst of blooming flowers and buzzing activity, and fall offers a second chance for nectar collection, the months of July and August often bring what's known as a "dearth." This is a period when nectar and pollen sources become scarce, and honeybees can struggle to find enough food. Understanding this seasonal challenge and knowing how to support your bees during the dearth can make a big difference in the health and survival of your colony.

The summer dearth happens for a few reasons. By mid-July, many of the spring and early summer flowers have finished blooming. The heat of summer dries up wildflowers and slows down plant growth. Lawns are mowed, fields are harvested, and gardens may not have enough variety to keep bees fed. Even though the weather is warm and sunny, the landscape becomes less generous to pollinators. Bees may fly out in search of nectar and return empty-handed, which can lead to stress in the hive.

During this time, bees may become more aggressive or anxious. One common behavior is robbing, where bees from one hive try to steal honey from another. This can lead to fights between colonies and even the collapse of weaker hives. Beekeepers might also notice their bees clustering near the entrance or flying aimlessly, a sign that they're searching but not finding what they need.

So, what can a beekeeper do to help their bees during the dearth? The first step is awareness. Knowing that July and August are lean months allows you to prepare in advance. Keep a close eye on your hives during this time. If you notice a drop in activity, signs of robbing, or a lack of stored nectar, it's time to step in.

Feeding your bees is one of the most effective ways to support them during the dearth. A simple sugar syrup made from white granulated sugar and water can provide the energy they need when nectar is unavailable. The standard mix is one part sugar to one part water, stirred until dissolved. This syrup can be placed in a feeder inside the hive to prevent attracting other insects or robbing bees. Some beekeepers also offer pollen substitutes to help with protein needs, especially if the colony is raising brood.

It's important to feed responsibly. Don't leave syrup out in the open, as this can encourage robbing and attract pests like wasps or ants. Always use feeders designed for bees and place them inside the hive or in a protected area. Monitor the hive regularly to make sure the bees

are consuming the syrup and that it's not fermenting or attracting mold.

Another way to help your bees is by planting flowers that bloom during the dearth. While many spring flowers are already gone by July, some plants thrive in the heat and continue to offer nectar and pollen. Consider adding late-blooming varieties to your garden or encouraging neighbors to do the same. Flowers like bee balm, coneflowers, black-eyed Susans, and goldenrod can provide valuable forage during the summer slump. Even small patches of wildflowers or herbs can make a difference.

Keeping your hives shaded and well-ventilated is also helpful during the hot months. Bees work hard to regulate the temperature inside the hive, and extreme heat can make this task more difficult. Make sure your hives have proper airflow and consider placing them where they get some afternoon shade. A nearby water source is also essential, as bees need water to cool the hive and mix with food.

Finally, stay patient and observant. The dearth is a natural part of the beekeeping cycle, and with the right care, your bees can make it through just fine. Use this time to check on the health of your queen, inspect for pests like mites, and prepare for the fall nectar flow. Once September arrives, goldenrod and asters will bloom, and your bees will get back to work storing honey for winter.

In Northeast Ohio, beekeeping is a seasonal dance with nature. By understanding the rhythm of the land and the needs of your bees, you can be a better partner to your colony. The summer dearth may be a quiet time in the hive, but with your help, it doesn't have to be a hard one.

From Around the Web

How to make yellow jacket traps

<https://www.thespruce.com/diy-yellow-jacket-trap-8655738>

Former K-9 Maple is busy as a bee sniffing out threats to Michigan State University colonies

<https://apnews.com/article/honey-bee-dog-pollinator-disease-9ced0273978573fd373b4f5d8a7130a1>

Hidden honey bee viruses alter flight distance and speed in different ways

https://phys.org/news/2025-08-hidden-honey-bee-viruses-flight.html#google_vignette

Honey bee hives at threat from deadly parasites

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c7vll5m9q54o>

Club Bee Yard Notes

Club Bee yard #1

August 9 (Shari & James)

Hive 1L - Did not see queen, saw eggs, and BIAS. Hive MUCH calmer than last time. Pulled 5 frames of mostly capped brood to boost Nuc 2. Replaced with blank foundation frames. Could use another super. Top box of honey could be harvested.

Hive 1R - Saw queen, caught, and marked blue. Saw eggs and BIAS. Mite check = 9 mites per half cup. Treat ASAP. Top box full of honey, could harvest.

Nuc 2 - Saw queen, eggs and BIAS. Queen and hive appear to have recovered from the fair stress. Gave 5 frames of mostly capped brood from Hive 1L. Added a hive top feeder and about 3 quarts of 1:1 syrup with Honey B Healthy, and a 2" square of pollen patty.

Nuc 3 - Added a hive top feeder and about 3 quarts of 1:1 syrup with Honey B Healthy, and a 2" square of pollen patty. Did not go into the hive.

Hive 4 - All frames drawn. Needs another deep brood box and hive top feeder added next time. Did not see queen, did see eggs and BIAS.

August 4 (Shari)

Returned the observation hives.

Nuc 2 (nuc on stand 2) - queen and frames from the small observation hive. Hive was struggling the last two days at the fair. No resources or brood left in the frames. Set up in a double deep nuc. Gave two deeps with capped honey, three frames blank foundation, and the three medium frames with bees from the library hive (Replace the top deep box with a medium nuc box.) Watch, may need to feed to get this hive built back up.

Nuc 3 (nuc on stand 3) - queen and frames from the large observation hive. Set up in a double deep nuc. Gave 2 frames capped honey and 4 frames blank foundation. Queen was active. May need to feed.

July 28 (Shari)

Hive 2 - pulled 4 frames and the queen for the large observation hive at the fair. Left the hive to requeen, giving them a brood break. New queen should emerge about July 9. Check for eggs about the 19th. Do a mite check at that time as well.

Hive 3 - pulled 2 frames and the queen for the small observation hive at the fair. Will plan to return her mid-week.

July 26 (Shari & 4 participants)

Hive 1R - Very large hive. Flighty and defensive. Consider splitting to reduce size. Saw queen, eggs, and BIAS. Mite check 14 mites per half cup of bees. Added 4 Varroxxan strips. 2 honey supers appear filled with capped honey.

Hive 1L - Calm, gentle hive. Did not see queen. Did see a few eggs. Backfilling frames with nectar. Queen has limited space to lay. Pulled 5 capped frames, replaced with blank foundation. Mite check 2 mites. No treatment at this time. Recheck mite levels in two weeks.

Hive 4 - calm hive. Did not see queen or eggs. Queen should have emerged about a week ago. Hive is too

calm for no queen. Check back in two weeks for eggs and brood.

July 25 (Shari)

Hive 3 - pulled 3 deep frames of capped honey from top brood box, replaced with drawn comb. Saw eggs, larvae, and capped brood. Did not go into bottom brood box, did not see queen. Honey super about half the frames are capped, half not completely drawn out. Moved capped frames to the outside and the ones they are working to the center. Bees were mostly calm, a few spritzes of sugar water kept them on the frames.

Hive 2 - pulled 3 deep frames of capped honey from top brood box, replaced with drawn comb. Saw eggs, larvae, and capped brood. Did not see the queen, did not go into the bottom brood box. Bees were flighty and a little defensive. Smoke calmed them.

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.

The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only and is not intended to guarantee your success as a beekeeper. While MCBA strives to offer accurate and up-to-date advice, beekeeping involves various factors beyond our control. Therefore, MCBA cannot be held responsible for any outcomes resulting from the application of the information provided. By using the advice and tips shared in this newsletter, you agree to hold harmless the MCBA, authors, publishers, and any affiliated parties from any liability, loss, or damage that could occur.