



**MEDINA**  
beekeepers

# THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association – January 2023  
[www.MedinaBeekeepers.com](http://www.MedinaBeekeepers.com)

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Join the MCBA to hear a great lineup of live and virtual speakers. Start or renew your membership [online](#), or send in the membership form at the end of the newsletter.

**Monday, January 16**  
**NOTE NEW MEETING LOCATION**  
**Medina County District Library**  
**210 S Broadway St, Medina, OH 44256**  
**Meeting Room A and/or B**  
**Speaker: Tom Nolan**  
**Topic: *Treating Bees for Varroa***

*Question and answer period begins at 6:30PM*  
*Presentation 7PM-8:30PM*

*Meeting will be in person and via Zoom. If the weather is bad, check your email – we'll notify you if we move to Zoom-only.*

Tom Nolan is the founder and president of the Urban Toronto Beekeepers' Association, member of the Elm Grove Organic Collective, and owner of Black River Bees — a small batch producer of 100% natural honey, using natural and organic beekeeping methods. Tom has turned his passion and love for bees and the beekeeping industry into a full-time career as the North American Sales Representative for NOD Apiary Products.



## Ten Minutes with the Bees

by *Paul Kosmos, MCBA President*

### The Bee Yard in January

**Success as a Beekeeper.** “Success in Beekeeping depends upon a proper exercise of the knowledge of colony organization, growth, and behavior in relation to environment as affected by seasonal changes regarding nectar and pollen bearing flora. In beekeeping it is not possible to use fixed rules or exact routines. No two seasons are ever alike and the beekeeper who has the truest understanding of the habits and activities of bees and the reaction of the colony to its environment is the one who is most likely to succeed.

“In the intelligent management of a colony of bees, there are practices which do not come in any natural succession in a season but may be necessary to employ when conditions require their use. Each of these practices is important to the well-being of the colony and to the production of a maximum crop.”

The above is from *The Hive and the Honey Bee*, as written by G.H. Gale in the 1950’s or 60’s. I have two reasons for quoting Mr. Gale.

**The First Reason** is to help newer beekeepers understand why there are numerous answers to every question they ask. And why we sometimes hem and haw while trying to answer those questions. As Gale states, there are numerous ways to handle things for the bees, and different circumstances that dictate which way might be best at the time the question is asked.

Should you prepare to prevent robbing? What if they don’t rob this year? Should you feed your bees? If so, what time of year? And what if it’s a great year for pollen and nectar? What if there is a dearth? Should you make a split? But what if the colony is not strong enough? You start to get the point. The answer to such questions depends on so many details regarding what is happening at the time the question is asked.

Over time, the answer will surely echo Gale’s remark about “the beekeeper who has the truest understanding of the habits of the bees and the reaction of the colony to its environment that is the most likely to be successful”.

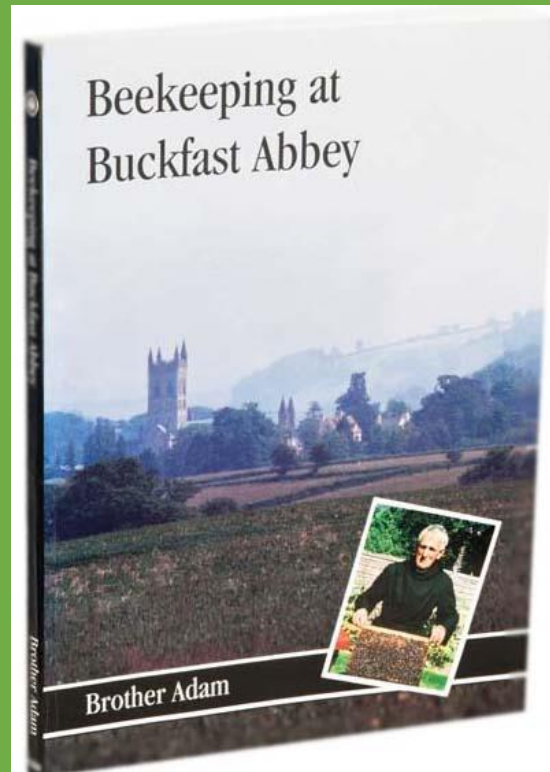
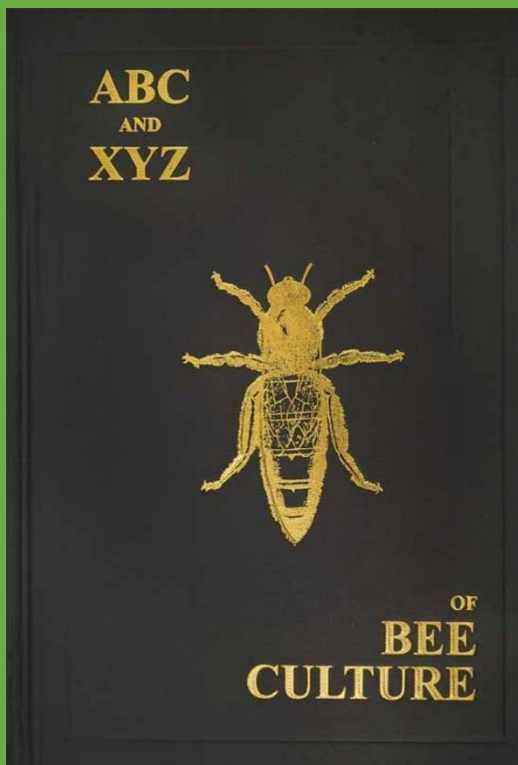
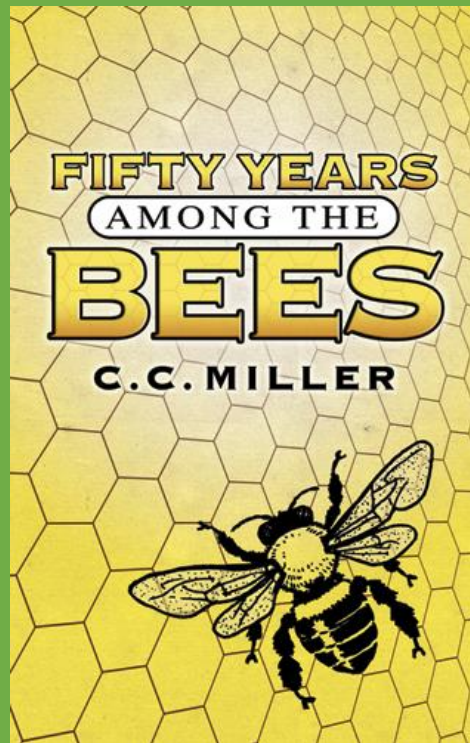
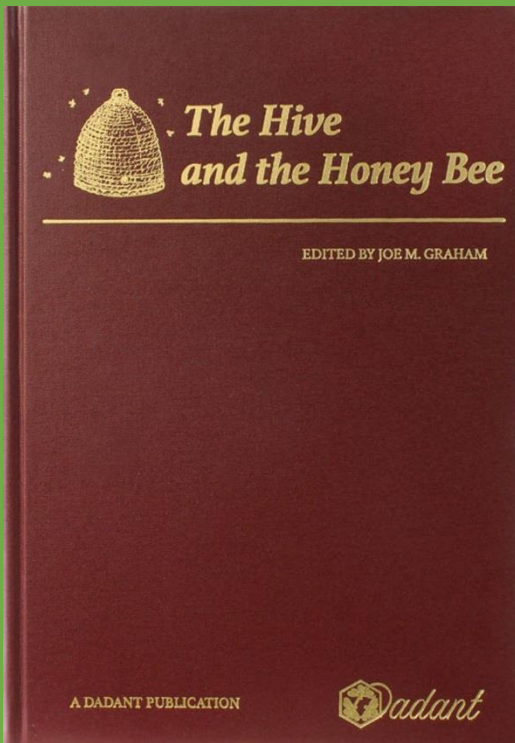
What does such wisdom mean for a beekeeper? Learn everything that you can about the bees and their surroundings. What are they doing right now? Bringing in pollen or nectar? Sitting around on the front porch?

When is the last time you walked your property to see what flora is there? When does it bloom? Are there early bloomers like Skunk Cabbage, Silver and Red Maples, and Willows to name a few? Your knowledge of such flora will dictate when and what you do with your bees. What’s more, if one year some of those flora don’t bloom, you’ll know what to do because you’ll know what your bees are missing... and what to do to fix it.

**The Second Reason** is to share with readers the vast amount of knowledge in some of the older books on Honey Bees. Many people today take the easy way out. They Google topics and watch YouTube videos. It’s fun and entertaining, but often shallow (or doesn’t apply where you live).

I encourage you to read classics such as **The Hive and the Honey Bee, Fifty Years among the Bees, Beekeeping at Buckfast Abbey, and The ABC and XYZ of Beekeeping**. These, and others are timeless in their wisdom. They give you the knowledge and tools to be successful in your endeavor.





## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Special Presentation co-sponsored by Medina County Beekeepers Association & Stark County Beekeepers Association**

**Thursday, January 19, 2022 – note new date  
7PM-8:30 PM**

**Zoom only – you must [register](#)**

Kaira Wagoner, Ph.D., is the CEO and cofounder of Optera LLP, located in Greensboro, NC. The focus of Kaira's work is hygienic behavior and development of a pheromone based test to measure colony Varroa and disease resistance. Check out some of her research online:

***BEE BUSINESS - From a grad school discovery to launching a company, two UNCG alums take a big swing for bees***

*Research Magazine, UNC Greensboro*

***Inside the Hive TV**  
Summary – YouTube*

***Inside the Hive TV**  
Live interview and discussion – YouTube*

Kaira Wagoner is graduate of Guilford College, earned her masters and doctorate degrees from the University of North Carolina Greensboro (UNCG), and served five years as a post-doctoral fellow in the UNCG social insect lab. Dr. Wagoner currently serves as a Research Scientist, splitting her time between UNCG and Optera, a Greensboro-based start-up focused on improving honey bee health that was co-founded by Dr. Wagoner in 2020. Dr. Wagoner's research focuses on honey bee pests and diseases, particularly as they relate to the immune mechanism hygienic behavior, the ability of adult honey bees to detect and remove unhealthy brood from the hive. Dr. Wagoner is currently using natural honey bee stress signals to develop novel tools to facilitate apiary management and improve selection of disease and pest-resistant honey bees. When not in the lab or apiary, Dr. Wagoner enjoys traveling, playing games, and spending time in the great outdoors with her husband and two nature-loving boys.

## MCBA February Meeting

**February 20, 2023**

**Q&A 6:30PM-7PM**

**Presentation 7PM-8:30 PM**

**Topic:** Long Hives – Glenn Turner

Glenn Turner, a member of MCBA has been keeping bees for years using only Long Hives. Long Hives are used to keep bees in one long hive, avoiding the need to lift heavy deep boxes and/or supers. This interesting presentation will share Glenn's methods and his reasons for using long hives.

## MCBA Beginner Classes

Saturdays, February 11 & 25, 10AM -5PM

or

Tuesday evenings February 21, 28, March 7, March 14, March 21

All classes held at Medina County District Library

[Click here](#) to register for Saturday classes

[Click here](#) to register for Tuesday classes

Do you have a friend that is interested in beekeeping? Are you a beekeeper that wants to review the basics? Members of MCBA are welcome to attend – just pick your preferred date and register using one of the links above.

## MCBA March Meeting

**Monday, March 20, 2023**

**Medina County District Library**

**210 S Broadway St, Medina, OH 44256**

**Meeting Room A and/or B**

**Q&A 6PM-7:30; presentation 7PM-8:30 PM**

**Topic:** Swarm Panel

Join a panel of experienced beekeepers as they share their methods for managing their bees during the main spring swarm season. In addition to sharing techniques that have worked for them, you will be able to ask questions to help you understand what leads to swarm fever and best practices to stay ahead of the swarms. To top it off, March 20 is the first day of Spring!

The 2022 MCBA Christmas Party was a good time had by all!





But best of all was the wonderful feeling when we saw all the donations piled high on the tables. I was just able to get them all in my SUV!!! They filled an entire bin over at Feeding Medina! A heartfelt Thank You to everyone!



***“Thank you very much, thank you very much, that’s the nicest thing that anyone’s ever done for me!”***

## Moisture Management in the Bee Colony

James Tew had an interesting article in the December 2022 issue of *American Bee Journal* about moisture management in the hive (excerpted below and online, [click the link to view](#)).

When is the last time another beekeeper asked you, “Did your bees get a good crop of water this year?” I will hazard a guess that the answer to that question will be, “I have yet to be asked that management question.”

In bee colony management circles, water is much like air. To stay alive, bees must have both water and air. Without both, our bees are dead. There’s seemingly not much else to be written on the subject. Wrong. Water is as important to the bees as it is to the beekeeper.

Even so, water is one of those subjects that never gets its own bee book chapter. The water topic maybe has a few paragraphs in the bee biology section where brood production is discussed. In another chapter, water needs are discussed when instructions are being given about confining colonies on hot days or, in yet another chapter, water issues are a topic for wintering bees when it is thought that hive ventilation is needed.

### A COVID moment in my beekeeping

As has everyone else during the past few pandemic years, I have spent more time at home than I would normally have spent. On those quiet days, to keep my bit of remaining sanity, my bees became a significant distraction for me — a few bees in particular.

On one particularly cool mid-December day, when walking by my traditional water source (a bird waterer mounted on a cast iron pedestal), there were about 20 water foragers trying to collect water from the basin. ABJ readers, I need to say that these bees were cold. The temperature at the time was 37°F (2.8°C). Some of the foraging bees were actually frosted over.

This observation undermined everything I had been taught about bees and cold weather. In the perfect bee textbook world, bees begin to cluster at 57°F (About 14°C). For the record, that fact is seemingly true. Bees do seem to begin forming a cluster near that temperature — except for these few foraging bees that were bonkers for cold water. They were ignoring all the textbook information. I asked myself, “How critical could that tiny bit of collected water be to the wintering cluster back in the warm colony? These bees, nearly suicidal, could only be collecting a few drops of water on such cold days.” I could not answer my own question.



Thanks to member **Clint Allen** for sharing [this article](#) on a new vaccine for American Foulbrood

***A biotech firm says the U.S. has approved its vaccine for honeybees***  
– **NPR, January 6, 2023**

## 2022 MCBA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

MCBA offers webinars and lectures, a monthly newsletter, the opportunity to sell honey at the county fair, and email updates. \$20 for emailed or \$25 for a printed, mailed newsletter. Membership includes one family member in activities other than voting.

Renew your membership [online here](#) or complete the form below, make a check payable to **Medina County Beekeepers Association**, and mail to Medina Beekeepers, PO BOX 1353, Medina, Ohio 44258.

**Membership Form** - Please complete so that we have current roster information for the newsletters!

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email address (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ (Optional) # of colonies \_\_\_\_\_