

August 2024

THE BEE HERDER

Published by the Medina County Beekeepers Association



MCBA Monthly Meeting August 19th, 2024

MCBA Annual Picnic

Monday, 5:00 to 7:00 pm

Location: Buckeye Woods Park
6335 Wedgewood Road Medina, OH 44256

Association Officers

President: Peggy Garnes 330-723-6265
president@medinabeekeepers.com

Vice President: Kimberly Carey
330-416-3701
vp@medinabeekeepers.com

Secretary: Sharon Carpenter 330-723-8492
secretary@medinabeekeepers.com

Treasurer: Kate Reusch 330-416-0284
treasurer@medinabeekeepers.com

Newsletter Editor: Clint Allen
allencli@zoominternet.net

Webmaster: Paul Kosmos
webmaster@medinabeekeepers.com

Refreshment Coordinators:
Elle Jisa - ejisa@roadrunner.com
Sheila Mauer - spmaurer01@gmail.com

Directors:
2024: John Vrtachnik
jvrtachnik@windstream.net
2025: Larry Watson
mcbalarry@aol.com
2026: Shari Baker
Shari.Baker.MCBA@gmail.com

Medina County Bee Inspector:
Michael Mohn 330-591-5035
mohnandsonsfarm@gmail.com

State of Ohio Inspector:
Brad Deering
<https://agri.ohio.gov/divisions/plant-health/apiary-program>

August Speaker

Monday, August 19th, 2024

Our MCBA Annual Picnic will be held at Buckeye Woods Park. Come join us for an evening of chatting with friends and fellow beekeepers. Our Grill Masters will prepare hamburgers, hot dogs, and possibly brats. We ask that you bring a side dish or dessert of your choice.

Location: 6335 Wedgewood Road Medina, OH 44256

Upcoming Events

September – Ag Day

December – Christmas Party

MCBA September Meeting

Topic: Preparing Your Hives for Winter

Speaker: Dave “Red Beard” Nolan

Dave Noble began breeding and keeping honeybees quite by accident just over 28 years ago when he was trying to get some extra credit for a college course while majoring in Plant Pathology at OSU. He ended up working at the Universities' Honeybee Research Lab for almost a decade. There he discovered a true passion for honeybees as well as developed a joy for teaching others how to care for, and appreciate, these magnificent little beasts. He is the owner, operator of Red Beard Bees, a business dedicated to breeding better bees and training better beekeepers.

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

General Session - 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

As the fair draws to a close, I want to thank Tim Moore, Fair Chairperson, for a “Fairtastic” job and all the volunteers who made the booth successful. Thank you to the sellers who provided a wide variety of products this year. The club truly appreciates the dedication and support.

We are finally receiving some long-needed rain and the bees are settling back down. Some members contacted me saying their bees were cranky and they needed to feed a bit to bridge the gap of no nectar being available.

HAS (Heartland Apiculture Society) is going to be close in our area, Wooster, Ohio- at the OARDC on August 23 and 24. Please check the newsletter for more information... I hope to see you there.

The annual picnic is August 19th at Buckeye Woods Park – the club will be providing burgers, brauts, and cold drinks. Please bring a side dish to share with the members.

I will be looking for volunteers to assist with a cut out that morning at a park, so please contact me for further information. We will start at 9am and finish well before our picnic time. We should have some interesting stories to share.

Please stay healthy, hug your family, and enjoy your bees!

Ten Minutes with the Bees – The bee yard in July

By Paul Kosmos

What are the Bees doing in August?

Most hives in August are in the early stages of winter prep. The bees are in the nectar dearth and often they are bearding and sitting around with not enough to do.

As a result, hives can get hot in August. Some beekeepers place insulation boards (the same ones we use in winter over the inner cover) on top of their hives and/or on the side that gets the afternoon and evening sun. I put them on in July when the temps were pushing 90.

If you inspect your hives in August, you will probably find a fair amount of capped brood, but much fewer eggs and larva. Don't panic, that is normal as the bees get ready for winter.

Some beekeepers requeen their hives in late July or early August. That is definitely a personal decision. I have never replaced healthy queens to follow this practice and have lost very few hives over winter.



Robbing all over a hive

Most beekeepers remove their excess honey in July and early August. Check the hives for stores before you take it all in case they are light on honey stores in the deeps.

There are a number of other things to watch for come August and September.



Robbing screen (pictured on the right)

Robbing. With food scarce it is common for strong hives to rob weaker hives and steal their honey. You can tell robbing if you see unusually heavy activity at a hive. Or an unusual number of bees at the entrance early in the morning, and or checking the other parts of the hive (top cover, joints, etc.) Use of a robbing screen can solve this in a day or two.

Some Beeks lose hives due to attacks by yellow jackets. There are easy traps to make that are effective.

So, keep your eyes open and pay attention to your hives now. It's actually the start of next season for your bees.

And keep your nose up sniffing for the smell of Goldenrod Honey (hard to miss, as it smells bad)! Some years we really need it!

Extracting Honey

By Clint Allen

Extracting honey from a Langstroth hive can be one of the most satisfying aspects of beekeeping. The Langstroth design, with its removable frames, allows beekeepers to harvest honey more easily while minimizing disruption to the bees. There are several methods for extracting honey, ranging from traditional manual approaches to more modern mechanical processes. Choosing the right method depends on your resources, experience level, and beekeeping goals. In addition to discussing these methods, we will also explore how to determine when your honey is ready for harvest.

Knowing When to Harvest Honey

Before you begin extracting honey, you need to be certain that the frames are ready for harvesting. Timing is crucial to ensure the honey is properly cured and won't ferment after collection. A beekeeper should examine the frames to see if the honey is capped. Bees cap their honey with a thin layer of wax when it has reached the right moisture content, typically below 18%. This capping indicates that the honey is fully cured and safe to extract.

If a significant portion of the honey in a frame is still uncapped, you may want to wait before harvesting it. However, some beekeepers use a shake test to check uncapped honey. In this test, you hold the frame horizontally and give it a quick shake. If the uncapped honey stays in the cells, it is likely ready to be harvested; if it drips out, it still contains too much moisture and should be left in the hive a little longer.

Crush and Strain Method

The crush and strain method is one of the most basic ways to extract honey and has been used by beekeepers for centuries. This approach is particularly suitable for small-scale beekeepers who do not need to harvest large amounts of honey at once.

Once you've confirmed that the frames are filled with capped honey, you can begin by removing the honey-filled frames from the hive. The next step is to cut the honeycomb from the frames. Using a sharp knife or a similar tool, you can carefully slice the honeycomb off and place it into a large container. Afterward, the honeycomb is crushed manually, often with a potato masher, until the comb is broken up and the honey is released. The crushed honeycomb is then strained through a fine mesh or cheesecloth, allowing the honey to filter through into a clean container below. The entire process can be time-consuming, but it allows you to collect both honey and beeswax. One downside is that the honeycomb is destroyed in the process, requiring the bees to build new comb for the next honey flow.

Honey Extractor Method

The honey extractor method is more advanced and efficient, especially for beekeepers who need to extract larger quantities of honey or prefer to preserve the comb for reuse. A honey extractor uses centrifugal force to remove honey from the comb without damaging it.

To begin, you first uncap the honeycomb by removing the thin wax layer covering the cells. This can be done with an uncapping knife, which is often heated, or with an uncapping fork, which allows you to scrape off the cappings. After uncapping, the frames are placed inside a honey extractor, which can be either manually operated or powered by electricity. The extractor spins the frames at high speed, forcing the honey out of the comb and onto the walls of the extractor, where it drips down and is collected at the bottom. Once the honey is collected, it is filtered to remove any stray wax particles or impurities. This method is highly efficient and allows the beekeeper to reuse the honeycomb in the hive, saving the bees time and energy.

Cut Comb Method

For beekeepers who prefer to sell or consume honey in its most natural form, the cut comb method may be ideal.

Rather than extracting the honey in liquid form, this method involves harvesting and selling the honeycomb itself.

Once the frames are filled with capped honey, the beekeeper removes the frames from the hive. Using a sharp knife, the honeycomb is cut directly from the frame and then packaged or sold as-is. Cut comb honey is often seen as a premium product and is prized by consumers for its purity and natural presentation. Beekeepers who use this method don't need expensive extraction equipment, but it requires careful attention to frame management throughout the season to ensure high-quality comb production.

Heated Knife and Gravity Method

Some beekeepers opt for a more patient approach, using a heated knife and gravity to extract honey. After removing frames from the hive and ensuring the honey is capped, the beekeeper uses a heated knife or uncapping fork to remove the wax capping from the honeycomb. Instead of placing the frames in an extractor, the beekeeper sets the frames in a warm room or over a container with a sieve. Gravity slowly draws the honey out of the comb and into the container. While this method is slower than using a mechanical extractor, it preserves the comb for reuse and requires less expensive equipment. However, careful heat management is essential to avoid damaging the honey.

Final thoughts

Extracting honey from a Langstroth hive offers beekeepers multiple methods to suit their needs, each with its advantages and challenges. For those just starting or working on a smaller scale, the crush and strain or cut comb methods offer simplicity and low-cost options. Beekeepers with larger operations or those looking for efficiency might turn to the honey extractor. Meanwhile, the heated knife and gravity method provides a slower but effective alternative. Regardless of the method, timing the harvest carefully by ensuring the honey is

properly capped and cured is key to producing high-quality honey that is safe for consumption.

Fair Booth Cleanup

The club would like to thank all of those who came out to help clean up the fair booth in July. The many hands made short work of a big job. In the end, the booth looked great!



About Feeding

By Neal Klabunde

We're getting into the time of year when a lot of new beekeepers get confused about the ratios of sugar to water when they are mixing the various formulas, (1:1, 2:1, etc.)

It's easy when you understand a few things. Water weighs 8.3 lbs. per gallon and sugar from the grocery store comes mainly in 4 lb. bags. So, two bags of sugar to a gallon of water will give you a 1:1 syrup and 4 bags to a gallon will give you 2:1.

Two gallons of water and 4 bags of sugar will fit in a five-gallon bucket and yield around 4 gallons +/- of 1:1 syrup.

Member Spotlight

Ellie Jisa

1. Where do you live: Strongsville
2. What got you interested in beekeeping? My neighbor kept bees and I became curious and interested in the plight of the bees.
3. How long have you been keeping bees? 10 Years
4. How many, and what kind of hives do you have? 3 hives, Italian, Carniolan.
5. Are you looking to add to your apiary? no, I can't handle anymore.
6. Do you share your beekeeping hobby with anybody else? Yes, Sheila Maurer and I work together.
7. What is your most memorable beekeeping moment? Watching my first swarm.
8. What is the best and worst part of beekeeping? The best part is watching the working life of bees, and the worst part is getting stung.
9. What is your favorite food to add honey to? Using it in my ham glaze and in tea.
10. Do you have any tips for beginner beekeepers? I suggest any beginner taking Medina's beginner classes and continue learning by attending meeting to continue learning.
11. Other than beekeeping, do you have any other hobbies? quilting and raising chickens.
12. What do/did you do for a living? I was a Home Economics teacher and worked in a floral shop.

Club Bee Yard Update

August 10

Hive 1 - Did not see queen. Did see small number of young larvae and some capped brood. Mite count - 2 mites per small sample (less than ½ cup of bees). Added Formic Pro. Pull approximately 8/24.

Hive 1a, 8 frame - Saw queen, eggs and brood in all stages. Super is full of mostly capped honey. Brood box has a good amount of honey/nectar and pollen on outer frames. No evidence of Deformed Wing Virus. Did see several bees holding wings in K formation, and several shiny (hairless bees) with shortened abdomens. Mite count - 15 mites per ½ cup of bees. Added Formic Pro. Pull approximately 8/24.

Hive 2 - Did not see queen, did see small amount of eggs and brood in all stages. Brood box has some stored honey and pollen. Both supers filled with mostly capped honey. Pulled previous Formic Pro treatment. Mite count - 5 mites per 1/2cup of bees.

Hive 2a - requeening. Did not disturb. Check after 8/25 for laying queen.

Nuc 2b - Saw queen, eggs, and brood in all stages. Gave another deep of 5 undrawn frames. Filled top feeder.

Hive 3 - Did not see queen. No evidence of a queen. No eggs, larvae or capped brood. Lots of bees. Supers filled with capped honey. Back filling brood box with nectar. Hive fairly calm. Mite count - 1 mite per ½ cup of bees.

Hive 3a - Very defensive. Did not see queen. No evidence of a queen. No eggs, larvae or capped brood. Lots of very spicy bees. Supers filled with capped honey. Mite count - 9 mite per ½ cup of bees.

August 5

Returned the observation hive bees to the yard. Small hive had an abundance of dead bees again and lots of larvae and pupae on the bottom.

Hive 1a - removed 2 undrawn frames and returned the queen and frames to the hive. Smashed the started queen cells I saw. Appeared to accept the queen. Still several undrawn or incompletely drawn frames in the second deep.

Nuc 2b - placed the frames in a nuc in the center of the yard. Added a hive top feeder with syrup. Will need to draw out frames and increase numbers to survive winter.

MCBA Meeting Minutes

By Sharon Carpenter

MCBA monthly meeting was held at the Medina Fair Grounds and was called to order at 6:24 p.m.

The club met at the fairgrounds to clean up our booth for the fair. There was a great turnout, and the booth was cleaned very quickly with a job well done.

Following the clean-up, we had a quick meeting, and the following was discussed:

1. The minutes from the June meeting were posted in the July newsletter for all members to read. They were voted on for approval – motion carried.
2. Medina County Fair: The fair will be from July 29th – August 4th. A sign-up sheet for working at the fair booth this year was brought by Tim Moore, Chairperson.
3. Set-up for the fair will take place on Saturday, July 28 from 2:00 – 4:00.
4. Club bee yard: Volunteers are still needed to help demonstrate hive inspections. A sign-up sheet has been posted on “Signupgenius”. Everyone is welcome to observe the inspections. It was noted that the honey extraction demo went well, and 50# of honey was extracted. Some of the honey was donated to the park district for their festival. Also highlighted was the fact the

bees for the observation hives at the library and the two at the fair were taken from the club bee yard.

5. Bee Festival: Takes place at the Medina Library on July 20 from 10:00 – 3:00; volunteers will be needed, Kim Barkfelt, Chairperson, is in charge and will have a “Signupgenius” posted.

6. Club picnic: Will take place at 5:00 p.m. on August 19th, at Buckeye Woods Park. Ellie Jisa and Shelia Maurer are the organizers of the event.

7. Ag Day is on September 27th from 8a.m. to 3 p.m. Presentations will be geared to older students and aimed at teaching about careers in beekeeping.

New Business:

A separated meeting was held for those who are planning on selling honey products at the fair. Instructions were given and questions were answered.

The meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

From Around the Web

Baking with Honey: Sweet, Sticky, and Tricky

<https://www.honeybeesuite.com/baking-with-honey-sweet-sticky-and-tricky/>

2025 Youth Scholarship - Application

The 2025 Youth Scholarship Application goes live on Sunday, August 3, at 12:00 p.m. (noon). We will have 5 scholarships to award to 4-H and FFA students 12-18 years of age by January 1, 2025.

<https://ohiostatebeekeepers.org/youth-scholarship-program/>

The application deadline is Saturday, October 5. Winners will be announced on Saturday, November 2.

Heartland Apicultural Society

HAS 2024 Conference has been cancelled due to low registration. The team over at HAS “would have loved to hold the conference for the dedicated beekeepers and vendors who registered, it would not be responsible to put on anything less than a high-quality conference that truly benefits attendees, speakers, and vendors.”

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 Honeybees' incredible sense of smell can be trained to detect explosives, much like sniffer dogs. Researchers have conditioned bees to associate the scent of explosives with food, causing them to extend their proboscis when they detect the odor of TNT, which could potentially be used in bomb detection.