May 2016

SWEET TALK

The newsletter of the Greene County Beekeepers Association

BEE Aware--
Odds and Ends:

Bill Starrett

Plenty of comb space in established over wintered hives is an overdue requirement now in mid-May because the primary nectar flow is in progress. It started in mid-April so honey supers should have already been in place to prevent thoughts of swarming in the mind of the bees. If you haven't provided honey supers by now you have probably already experienced a swarm or you will shortly. If not you can check for swarm preparations by tipping the top brood box forward and looking for swarm cells built on the bottom bars of the frames. Don't mistake queen CUPS for queen cells (which are queen cups that are loaded with eggs or larvae). If you have swarm cells then the bees are committed to swarming and nothing short of major surgery can stop it. If the swarm cells are capped then a swarm has already left with the old queen so the capped queen cells should be left intact so you will have a new queen laying in about 3 weeks.

One tactic that may prevent a swarm if swarm cells are started but not capped is to physically move that hive to another location in the apiary and put a weak hive in its place. Or you could put a super of combs with a frame of eggs and open brood and attached bees in that hive's location and hope the bees will develop a queen from the eggs and open brood. The loss of its entire field force MAY cause the hive to dismantle the swarm cells. Of course breaking the hive up into nucs with at least one

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The Place to Bee on

Tuesday, May 17 at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Call to Order
- Welcome and New Member Introduction

Overview
- Reports
- Announcements
- Free Raffle Tickets
- Sign Up Sheets – Honey Harvest
- Show and Tell – Small Hive Beetle
- BEE-Short, Practical Beekeeping

Announcements

June Calendar
Questions/Concerns

Refreshments

Main Speaker: Dawn Combs
Topic: Biodynamic Beekeeping
Raffle and Adjourn

GCBA 2016Board Members:

President:	Dave Allen
Vice-President:	Dave Foubert
Secretary:	
Treasurer:	Tom Davidson
Communications:	Terry Lieberman-Smith
Webmaster:	Dan O'Callaghan
At-Large:	Sam Bernard, Fran Davidson, Jean Doe, Joe Valentour
Past President	Dan O'Callaghan

President's Letter

Wow! The bee yard is really popping now! It was great to see the good turnout at our April meeting. Welcome new members. Our goal is to help everyone bee successful beekeepers.

We have a great lineup for our May. A big thanks to Alex Zomchek for his excellent presentation last month and to Terry Lieberman-Smith for lining up over half of our speakers for GCBA this year. For May's meeting, we have another great program, Dawn Combs will be our speaker. She is terrific and you will not want to miss her presentation on Biodynamic Beekeeping.

Last month we talked about testing individual hives to find out how many mites are in the hive (a mite "load" so to speak). If the load is 2 or 3 mites per 100 bees, you probably are all right for now. Each month the mite load will build until you are able to treat for them. Historically the mite load climbs to an action level about the same time that the honey is removed. This is an excellent time to treat so as to not take a chance of contaminating the honey crop. Typically this also is the same time, the last of June, as the time to re-queen your hives. Whether you choose to treat with a chemical substance, use drone boards, or kill mites by going queen - less for 21 to 30 days, a treatment plan is required. Failure to take some action will result in a weak hive/winter kill. Why is this a difficult time? Because at the end of June our hives are really cooking and nothing seems wrong visually! Remove my queen and grow a new one? Re-queen? Treat? Yes! This month we will discuss small hive beetles and how to manage them.

Well, the farm has been planted and sprayed. The farmers called and we worked out a plan so I could close my hives up the night before. I am happy to report no losses. During last month's meeting we continued a monthly planning concept of being prepared for what is going to happen in the bee yard. This month we will review and dig a little deeper into our expected bee actions for June. Hopefully we will be seeing some honey in June!

I want to thank everyone who generously provided refreshments to our April meeting. Thank you for volunteering. It makes a big difference when everyone helps out.

July 9th Honey Harvest: Our primary event each year is the Honey Harvest activity held at the Narrows Reserve. This is an all day event where we show our community how honey is harvested, demonstrate what it takes to be a beekeeper, and promote beekeeping as a way to naturally improve our food supply and environment. We are asking for volunteers to donate some time on July 9th to help out and showcase your beekeeping talent. Helpers in all areas are needed from set-up to final clean up. See Vice President David Foubert for details.

Green(e) Fest at Glen Helen: Thank you to those who gave the materials, worked the booth and club table during this event. Many meaningful questions were asked and answered. We were able to invite most everyone who stopped by to come to our Honey Harvest at the Narrows on July 9th. I would like to thank Terry for arranging the free table space for the club. A special thanks to Joe Valentour and his wife who stepped in at the last minute to set up and tear down our booth. It was a great time to educate the energetic crowd about beekeeping and saving our pollinators.

What is happening in my bee yard? When I added honey supers, I temporarily took a frame of open brood and placed it above the queen excluder in the honey super. This will "draw" bees thru the queen excluder as they service the open brood; they also establish a pattern of honey super traffic. I will move the brood frames back down in the hive on my 10-day inspections cycle. I inspect my hives on a 10-day cycle under the advice of a long time beekeeper. I think the theory of a 10-day inspection cycle is that this will catch most "bad" things in time. We are also doing swarm prevention techniques. So far I have four nucs started with swarm cells I removed from hives that were getting ready to divide (swarm). These queens, when they emerge, will form a strong hive, as they traditionally are superior in quality. I am trying to keep my large hives from swarming without dividing until after the nectar flow to maximize my honey crop. Then I will divide them for the summer buildup to break the mite loads. This is how I prepare for the winter and gives me a new queen that will explode next spring.

Looking forward to seeing you at our May 17th meeting.

Dave Allen

How to Submit Samples to the Bee Lab in Beltsville, MD

If you think your bees are diseased or have undergone a pesticide kill, you can send samples in for testing:

General Instructions

- Beekeepers, bee businesses, and regulatory officials may submit samples.
- Samples are accepted from U.S. states and territories, and from Canada; samples are NOT accepted from other countries.
- Include a short description of the problem along with your name, address, phone number or e-mail address.
- There is no charge for this service.
- For additional information, contact Bart Smith by phone at (301) 504-8821 or email: bart.smith@ars.usda.gov

How to Send Adult Honey Bees

- Send at least 100 bees and if possible, select bees that are dying or that died recently. Decayed bees are not satisfactory for examination.
- Bees should be placed in and soaked with 70% ethyl, methyl, or isopropyl alcohol as soon as possible after collection and packed in leak-proof containers.
- USPS, UPS, and FedEx do not accept shipments containing alcohol. Just prior to mailing samples, pour off all excess alcohol to meet shipping requirements.
- Do NOT send bees dry (without alcohol).

How to send brood samples

- A comb sample should be at least 2 x 2 inches and contain as much of the dead or discolored brood as possible. **NO HONEY SHOULD BE PRESENT IN THE SAMPLE.**
- The comb can be sent in a paper bag or loosely wrapped in a paper towel, newspaper, etc. and sent in a heavy cardboard box. **AVOID** wrappings such as plastic, aluminum foil, waxed paper, tin, glass, etc. because they promote decomposition and the growth of mold.
- If a comb cannot be sent, the probe used to examine a diseased larva in the cell may contain enough material for tests. The probe can be wrapped in paper and sent to the laboratory in an envelope.

Send samples to:

Bee Disease Diagnosis
Bee Research Laboratory
Bldg. 306 Room 316
Beltsville Agricultural Research Center - East
Beltsville, MD

What's Bloomin'

Pollen Sources Walnut

Nectar: Ground–ivy, Sour Gum Tree, Buckthorns, Viburnums, Locust Trees, Tulip Poplar, Common Privet, Basswood, Linden, Candytuft, Lambs Ear, Vetch, Sedum

Nectar and Pollen: Crabapple, Apple, Serviceberry, Shadbush, Hawthorns, Blackberries, Chives, Cotoneaster, Leopard's Bane, Redbud, Strawberry, White Sweet Clover, Salvias

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Treasurer's Report

Balance 3 April 2016	$4590.74
check 1087 4H + Picnic	118.95
check 1088 Speaker fee	100.00
Deposit Dues	90.00
Balance 3 May 2016	$4461.79

Basic Buzz in the Beeyard

May —"Spring is Busting out All Over"

- Monitor colonies for queen cells.
- Control swarming.
- Add more supers as needed (oversuper).
- Place queen excluder below shallow super on colonies for comb honey.
- Install packages on foundation.
- Split strong colonies.
- Capture swarms.
- Cull and replace defective combs with full sheets of foundation.
- Begin implementing an IPM program for the control of mites.
- Add room for bees, either by honey supers, or deeps - remember the 7/10 rule - when they have filled 7 of the 10 frames, its time to add space!

June

- Continue to check for queen cells.
- Rear queens if you prefer your own stock.
- Check colonies for disease and monitor for mites.
- Remove comb honey supers when properly sealed.
- Provide plenty of super space.
- Control swarming.
- Capture swarms
- Plan for your Fair entries!

Bee Aware *(Continued from page 1)*

swarm cell in each makes increase and prevents the hive from swarming but it also requires having the necessary equipment available.

Here's a tactic that can help capture those swarms located in places that defy shaking them into a box. In my case a swarm landed inside a shed full of clutter and are hanging between two wall studs separated by the width of another stud. I put a frame of brood and bees into a nuc box and placed it among the clutter so the bottom board is in contact with part of the cluster. The brood and bee pheromones in the nuc box caused the swarm bees to immediately begin entering the nuc box. In short time the entire swarm was in the nuc and ready to be relocated to my apiary

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Ortho Brand Announced Plan to Eliminate Neonics from Its Outdoor Products

"MARYSVILLE, OH (April 12, 2016) – Ortho, the nation's leading brand of insect control products for lawn and garden use, said today it would immediately begin to transition away from the use of neonicotinoid-based pesticides for outdoor use and announced a new partnership with the Pollinator Stewardship Council to help educate homeowners on the safe and appropriate use of pesticides.

Earlier this spring, Ortho expanded its selection of non-neonic based garden solutions. Building on this process, the brand will eliminate the use of neonic active ingredients Imidacloprid, Clothianidin and Dinotefuran by 2017.

"This decision comes after careful consideration regarding the range of possible threats to honey bees and other pollinators," said Tim Martin, general manager of the Ortho brand. "While agencies in the United States are still evaluating the overall impact of neonics on pollinator populations, it's time for Ortho to move on. As the category leader, it is our responsibility to provide consumers with effective solutions that they know are safe for their family and the environment when used as directed. We encourage other companies and brands in the consumer pest control category to follow our lead."…

"We applaud the Ortho brand and ScottsMiracle-Gro for the steps that they're taking to protect pollinators," said Michele Colopy, program director of the Pollinator Stewardship Council. "Bees and butterflies are essential to our ecosystem and are increasingly facing a struggle to survive. We know gardeners value the importance of pollinators and we look forward to developing programs that help accomplish our shared goal to protect them. We join Ortho in asking other consumer pest control brands to also transition away from the use of neonics."

In addition to these initiatives, ScottsMiracle-Gro said it would work with the Pollinator Stewardship Council and other partners to encourage government agencies to allow the use of label language that makes the purchase of non-neonic pesticides more apparent for homeowners.

"Ortho is taking this important action on its products, yet, consumers will still not know which products contain neonics and which do not simply by reading the product label. We know straight-forward, easily understood product labels help consumers make the best choices to protect both their plants as well as honey bees and native pollinators," Ms. Colopy continued.

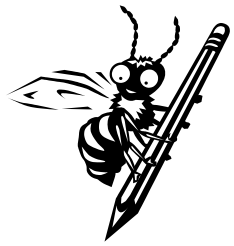
The Fairs...The Fairs….

just a few months away!

Start thinking about your honey for the fair— Greene County, Montgomery County, Clark County, or even the Ohio State Fair. Fair books will soon be available. Take pride in your girls' hard work and show it off at the fair.

The prize money isn't bad either!

Staying Ahead in the Hive



MAY

17 Tues GCBA Meeting– Dawn Combs

JUNE

21 Tues GCBA Meeting— Nina Bagley

Modern Beekeeping Program offers Ethiopian Youth a Sweeter Future

NAIROBI, Kenya (Thomson Reuters Foundation) — Beekeeper Ayenalem Ketema is the proud owner of three hives, which have produced enough honey for the young Ethiopian to build a house equipped with solar panels and buy farm animals.

Ketema, who lives in Jimma in southwestern Ethiopia, left school when she was 17 and has kept bees for four years. "I have benefited a lot from using a modern beehive," said the young farmer, now 22. She belongs to the Boter Boro Co-operative, whose members run 50 beehives between them.

Ketema has used the profit from the 60 kilograms of honey she harvests each season to buy a dairy cow, three sheep and six goats and install a solar system in her home. Now she has bigger ambitions. "I plan to open up a wholesale honey shop where I can sell high-quality honey in large quantities in a bigger market," she said.

Ketema benefited from a project led by the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology, which launched a new program this month to provide work for 12,500 young Ethiopians in beekeeping and silkworm farming.

The Nairobi-based program and the MasterCard Foundation plan to invest $10.35 million in the five-year project, which will support out-of-school and unemployed young people between 18 and 24 with starter equipment and training.

The Young Entrepreneurs in Silk and Honey initiative will involve an additional 25,000 people in the value chain, from harvesting to processing, packaging and marketing of the two sets of products.

Ethiopia is Africa's leading honey and beeswax producer, but honey production is largely traditional and reaches only 10 percent of the country's potential, experts say.

"The project will help to ensure food security, promote more tree planting than tree cutting and encourage agroforestry programs to flourish," said Kelemu.

The amount of annual global food production that depends on pollinators is estimated at $235 to $577 billion, which means bees must be included in plans to feed the world's growing population, she said.

Bees require flowering trees and vegetation from which they can secure high-quality pollen and nectar all year round. As a result, the young Ethiopian beekeepers will have to conserve trees and plant more of them while reducing the use of pesticides that harm bees, Kelemu said.

Alemayehu Konde Koira with the MasterCard Foundation in Toronto said the modern hives that will be used in the Ethiopian project can produce 20 kg of high-quality organic honey a season, compared with traditional beehives that yield six to eight kg of low-quality honey.

The MasterCard Foundation said the project would improve access to regional, national and international markets for young entrepreneurs. They will also be offered financial services so they can expand their businesses.

Centres will be set up to provide training so entrepreneurs can process and market their honey, beeswax, royal jelly and bee venom.