

The Texas Beekeepers Association



# Journal



Jan/Feb 2016

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Issue 16-1





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# President's Report

*from Chris Moore*



## Happy New Year.

That means it's time for us to get to work. The days are getting longer. Weather permitting, bees are starting to find fresh pollen and the queens are starting to lay more eggs. We all need to keep a close eye on how much food our girls have in the pantry this time of year. All those eggs have to be fed and the consumption rate increases.

It can happen to the best of us. Last February, after three weeks cold and rain, I lost several hives to starvation. They were good colonies and just went through the food stores too quickly. I knew I had to feed as soon as the weather broke, but I was too late. It's a horrible feeling when your girls die because you did not feed them enough.

The American Beekeeping Federation conference in Florida was a success and Texas was well represented. John Talbert was even one of four nominated for VP. We also had quite the scare when Tabitha's dad, Gary Mansker, who had to have emergency surgery on his spleen. Thankfully, all went well and a few days later while he rested Wanda was able to sneak back to the conference to see Tabitha crowned the 2016 ABF American Honey Princess.

A quick summary

1. California Almonds have 160000 new acres in Almond production.

2. Now that California has water, some growers now want more bees per acre.

3. 960000 acres will require ~2 million colonies. 2/3rds of all US colonies.

4. Limited Varroa Mite treatments are a still a huge concern

5. Big Bee losses throughout the US, especially the East Coast

Here in Southeast Texas, we have been going through our bees, looking to see how many colonies we have with enough bees to go to California. We do a lot of feeding and put on tons of pollen patty in the fall to try and keep the queen laying so we can have the 8 frames of bees required for Almond pollination.

Weather is always a battle; we have taken advantage of days below 50 and moved some colonies during the day than rather at night. Now we just need a few warmer days to finish checking the rest.

Today's tip: Eat lots of Almonds. They support beekeepers, we should support them.



*Texas Representation at the American Beekeeping Federation Annual Conference*



## Vice President's Report

*from Mark Hedley*



### Always Learning

I have walked down many paths in my lifetime in the “pursuit of happiness.” As I reflect back on the past up to the present day I can honestly say that my experiences in beekeeping have by far brought the most joy and happiness. The education and support structure we create for each other is by far superior to anything I have ever experienced. The common denominator – our glorious honey bee. A selfless creature within itself, she seemingly starts to get into each of our beings and allows us to share and care for others in the same way they do in their colonies.

The educational experiences and mentoring fostered through our local beekeeping associations, Summer Clinic, Annual Convention, American Beekeeping Federation Webinars, ABF Convention, and events such as the Austin Area Beekeepers Association Seminar just held January 16th are all leading examples of the care and support we provide each other to ensure that the honey bee continues to thrive in a managed environment and in nature.

As many of these events that I attend, and as deep as I think my knowledge is, I am always learning. Those little “ah-ha” moments never cease as I focus on, and analyze, the different perspectives and insights shared by other beekeepers. It doesn't even seem to matter the experience levels of these beekeepers either. They all seem to have those little tid-bits of information that can make one think. The time or financial investments in the aforementioned activities indeed have measureable returns.

TBA is hosting our Delegates Meeting on February 20th. Two members of your local association are invited to attend. We need your collective insight and feedback to refine TBA activities and priorities while serving beekeepers within Texas. If you attended, or received feedback from our Delegate Meeting last year, you know that the format and focus of the meeting has changed dramatically over previous years. Please ensure that your local club has representation.

I am pleased to announce that we have an awesome keynote speaker list for our 2016 and 2017 Summer Clinic and Annual Convention to include:

- 2016 Clinic Keynote - Ross Conrad –  
Natural Beekeeping/Apitherapy
- 2016 Convention Keynote– Mike Palmer –  
Sustainable Beekeeping
- 2017 Clinic Keynote – Jesse Brown,  
President NM Beekeepers
- 2017 Convention Keynote – Dr. Marla Spivak –  
University of Minnesota

We will be rounding out the program and speakers for the 2016 clinic within the next two months and look forward to sharing. Once again, the opportunity to be “Always Learning” presents itself. Hope to see you soon.

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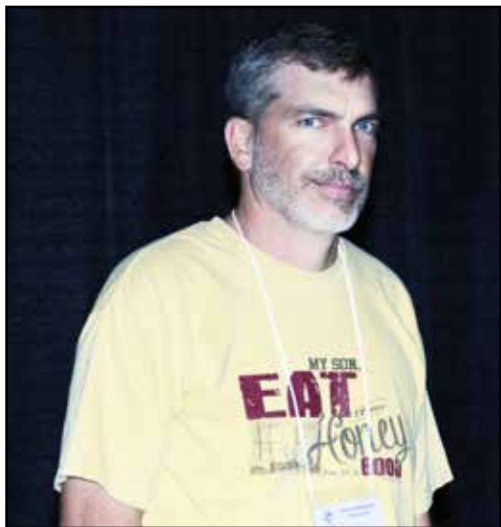
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## Real Texas Honey

*from Chris Moore, President TBA*

**Honey is has always been an honest food.  
Bees make it and Beekeepers harvest it.  
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I am concerned that notion is changing. Honey companies, individuals, and even beekeepers are misrepresenting their honey and not being honest about the source of their honey and/or how it is processed.

The following is an excerpt from *foodsafetynews.com*

### What is Food Fraud?

There is no statutory definition of food fraud, and different countries, researchers and industry groups have defined it in various ways. However, food fraud is most commonly referred to as the intentional defrauding of food and food ingredients for economic gain. Food fraud is estimated to cost the global food industry \$10-\$15 billion a year.

Food fraud can occur in a variety of situations. Food or food ingredients may be substituted for lower-quality, inferior ingredients, or one species for another.

Over the past few years, many consumers have become more conscious about what they consume and are purchasing more local and organic foods. However, even consumers who buy organic foods and foods from local farmers markets are at risk of being defrauded. Numerous "farmers" purchase produce from wholesale suppliers and resell the produce as home-grown and organic. Some produce, marketed as organic or pesticide-free, can be laden with pesticides.

Last year, California passed a new law aimed at combating food fraud after discovering numerous cases of food fraud at farmers markets around the state. Some of the most notable provisions of the new

law include increasing the farmers market vendor's fee, in order to hire more state inspectors to investigate food fraud, and requiring vendors to display the name and location of the farm and the statement, "We grow what we sell." If a vendor violates this statement, they can be fined up to \$2,500 and imprisoned for up to six months. This law is a good example of ways that states and even local farmers markets can get together and create laws or rules to protect one of the few places consumers can get food that comes directly from producers. The closer consumers are to the producers of their food, the harder it is for producers to defraud consumers.

There is still a huge disconnect between food producers and consumers that has enabled rapid occurrences of food fraud. **The best way for consumers to avoid food fraud is to connect to their local producers. Consumers should take the time to get to know local producers and visit the farms where their food is purported to be grown.** Food fraud incidents will continue to occur until consumers start reconnecting to the land and the producers of our nation's food supply.

This is exactly what's happening. How can Beekeepers overcome the effects of Food Fraud ?

A beekeepers primary source of income is honey sales. People/ Companies/Beekeepers that adulterate or substitute honey from another origin (imported) are severely affecting our market.

Texas population is ~27 million. Average honey consumption per person is ~1.3 pounds. So Texans consume ~35 million pounds of honey. Texas Honey production is ~6 million pounds.

We have much higher consumption than production. Simple economics tells us that we have a high demand for honey. When the demand is high, sales are good and you can get a higher return.

Fortunately more and more consumers are aware of what happening in the food market and want to buy direct from the producer to insure they are getting a "Real" product.

Texas beekeepers should be getting a high return on locally produced honey. While we cannot legally advertise health benefits, it's common knowledge that raw local honey is beneficial.



TBA is trying to help through our “Real Texas Honey” program. Our goal is to connect consumers with real local beekeepers. The program lists beekeepers all over Texas so consumers can view an online map and locate a source for local honey. We are currently trying to get Texas beekeepers to sign up. The more participants we have the better the program will work. More info at [RealTexasHoney.com](http://RealTexasHoney.com)

One of the participants in the TBA Honey contest at our annual convention said it best on her label.



*Sharon Stephenson's Award Winning Honey*

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# New to Top Bar? It's Easy!

*from Micheal Mathews, Fayette County Beekeepers*



My wife and I have been keeping top bar hives on eleven acres of Texas cattle country for several years now. During that time we have made some mistakes and enjoyed our share of successes. While are still learning we have come to love the resilience and natural ability of the bees to adapt to everything we have tried. I could say we successful top bar beekeepers in spite of ourselves, but that would not be true. Any success we have is because of the bees.

Top bar hives make an excellent environment for the bees. Top bar beekeepers can purchase their hives or easily build them. In terms of the skills involved, building is not too difficult, being one step above what woodworkers sometimes call "bird box 101." The most basic of hives are built without complex angled cuts and the only power tools needed are a drill and circular saw. A future article will discuss making or buying a top bar hive with easy instructions on how to build a simple hive. Today's discussion will focus on the general features that most top bar hives will have in common and the wide latitude beekeepers have in selecting styles and materials.

## The Hive

Designs of the top bar hive can vary, but over the years a few standard features have become common. To begin with the standard wooden hive is nothing more than a box with a screen bottom covered by a hinged door. The box has evolved over the years to provide a space that is easy for the beekeeper to work while not overly compromising the way which the bees naturally build comb. The slanted sides are said to reduce the bees inclination to attach comb to the sides of the box, although most colonies will make a few attachments anyway. A series of holes in the sides provide a way for the bees to enter and leave the hive. Finally, the bars that give the hive their name sit along the top to serve as anchor points for the comb and as a way for the beekeeper to maintain the colony, and collect honey.



*Top Bar Hive on Stand*

Materials can be as varied as a builder's woodpile with clear dimensional lumber being most common. We have several boxes made of 1x12 clear pine and another made of scrap bead-board left over from a construction project. Other top bar builders I have spoken with have used plywood with success. The only caution a home builder needs to take when selecting materials is to avoid treated lumber, coatings or adhesives that may be toxic to the bees. It is worth keeping in mind that besides the wooden hive box discussed here, beekeepers also make top bar hives from plastic drums cut in half, hollowed logs, fiberglass and some are even made of wicker. For the time being we will stick with basics. Hives are commonly between 44 and 48 inches long and a healthy colony will easily fill out a 44 inch hive in a summer. I suspect that this size is common in part because of the standard size of dimensional lumber, but also because bees like to build up, rather than out, so longer hives do not always translate to more honey production. Building a hive with legs or adding a separate stand is a matter of personal choice. Legs add a level of complexity for the novice builder, but building a suitable stand is a project in itself. Having legs makes the hive harder to move, but more stable once in place. After building a number of hives with legs I have begun to prefer the flexibility offered by a hive with a separate stand.

## The Cover

The Cover can be the most simple part of the hive or the most complex. Some covers are nothing more than a piece of corrugated metal covering the bars with a brick on top to hold it down. Others are complex works of art, complete with shingles that add a decorative look to the hive. Some lift off, others are hinged. Whatever the beekeeper chooses, the bees are unlikely to care as long as it keeps the weather out.

From the bee keeper's perspective a good cover will protect the hive, be easy to remove, easy to replace and durable. We work with two basic covers that were both constructed of 1x4 clear pine and 1/8" plywood. Our first cover design was meant to be as light as possible so we didn't fit ends. While we still have this cover in service, we stopped using the design after warping made it hard to remove and replace. All of our later versions included a full box to prevent warping.

After the first year it was clear that paint, no matter how well applied, would not hold up to the Texas weather. The boxes we had in service were showing signs of water damage and the plywood cover was starting to delaminate at the edges. The solution came in the form of PVC roof panel available from





*Bad Top Cover Design*

the home improvement store. Cut a little large, the panels did a good job of protecting the hive and a dab of calk on the fasteners prevents any water from seeping in. The PVC panels have proven a good addition, both for us and for the bees who like to collect water from the top after a rain.

## The Bars

Most top bar beekeepers have a style of bar that they prefer, but no one style has proven superior in our bee yard. Bees in our hives build on bars with beveled edges or bars with short slats made of wood or plastic form. They have built on smooth spacers



*Three Different Bars*

and on a bars that had only a groove. Most of our bars are of the slat type simply because the style is easy to make with a table saw and a hot glue gun. We also have a number the beveled style made from leftover angled molding. Few components of the top bar hive prove the bees adaptability like the wide variety of bars they will use.

The length of the bars will be dictated by the width of the hive. Width of the bar is another issue that causes a lot of conversation. Brood comb will be narrower than honey comb and a number

of beekeepers will have bars of different width dedicated bars to each purpose. We have chosen to make all of our bars with a standard of 1 3/8 inches and use 1/4 inch spacers to add width where needed. While adding and removing spacers can be a fussy alternative, but the bees have a solution. After a week there will be enough propolis to secure the spacers. A simple pencil mark reminds us which spacers are anchored to each bar. Having a single size of bar also allows us to use recycle a bar anywhere in the hive.

## The Final Pieces

Bees prefer a space that fits their colony and follower blocks provide a way for the beekeeper to limit the space inside the hive. Essentially the follower block is no more than a bar with a piece of wood attached that snugly fits the interior of the hive. The follower block can then be moved forward and backward in the



*Follower Block with Feeder*

hive to add or reduce room as the bees build out comb or as the beekeeper makes splits. We cut a slot in the bottom that fits a Boardman feeder so we can place a feeder on the screen bottom inside the area behind the follower block. This way we can feed new colonies or supplement weaker colonies without disturbing the colony or leaving the feeder outside the hive.

The final piece of the top bar hive is the cork. Yes, simple corks are all that are needed for entrance reducers and even serve as queen excluders. Special disks can also be purchased from suppliers that can serve as entrance reducers and queen excluders. We added a few last year and like the way they work, but this coming spring will be the first real test.

## What Works For You

It's a common mantra among beekeepers "to find what works for you." Nowhere is this more true than in top bar. When we first started we fretted far too much about the details, only to learn that the bees will make a home for the colony if given a chance. In the end what makes a top bar hive is the beekeeper willing to work with the bees.

## How Queen Bees Control the Princesses.

**Queen Bees and Ants Emit a Chemical That Actually Alters the DNA of Their Daughters and Keeps Them Sterile and Industrious Workers**

*from Catch The Buzz - 01/30/2016*



Queen bees and ants emit a chemical that alters the DNA of their daughters and keeps them as sterile and industrious workers, scientists have found.

"When deprived of the pheromone that queens emit, worker bees and ants become more self-centred and lazy, and they begin to lay eggs," said lead researcher Dr Luke Holman from The Australian National University (ANU).

"Amazingly, it looks like the queen pheromone works by chemically altering workers' genes," said Dr Holman, a biologist in the ANU Research School of Biology.

Queen bees and ants can have hundreds of thousands of offspring and live for many years, while workers are short-lived and mostly sterile, even though they have the same DNA as the queen.

Recent research suggests that a chemical modification to a baby bee or ant's DNA, called DNA methylation, helps determine whether the baby develops into a queen or a worker.

Dr Holman collaborated with biologists from the University of Helsinki to investigate whether the queen's pheromone altered DNA methylation in workers.

The team found evidence that indeed, workers exposed to pheromones tag their DNA with methylation differently, which might suppress queenly characteristics in the workers.

Surprisingly, the queen pheromone of honeybees seemed to lower methylation, while the queen pheromone of ants seemed to increase it, suggesting things work differently in bees and ants.

"Bees and ants evolved their two-tier societies independently. It would be confusing but cool if they had evolved different means to the same end," Dr Holman said.

Dr Holman said he was looking forward to studying Australian bees next, which evolved sociality independently from the European species in this study.

"It brings us one step closer to understanding how these animals evolved their amazing cooperative behaviour, which in many ways is a step beyond human evolution," he said.

The research is published in *Biology Letters*.

## Wild bee populations dwindle in main U.S. crop regions: study

*from Will Dunham, Reuters*

Wild bees, crucial pollinators for many crops, are on the decline in some of the main agricultural regions of the United States, according to scientists who produced the first national map of bee populations and identified numerous trouble spots.

The researchers on Monday cited 139 counties as especially worrisome, with wild bee numbers decreasing while farmland for crops dependent on such pollinators is increasing.

The counties included agricultural regions of California such as the Central Valley, the Pacific Northwest, the upper Midwest and Great Plains, west Texas and the southern Mississippi River valley.

The counties grew crops such as almonds, pumpkins, squashes, blueberries, watermelons, peaches and apples that are highly dependent on pollinators, or had large amounts of less-pollinator-dependent crops including soybeans, canola and cotton.

Taylor Ricketts, director of the University of Vermont's Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, said the 139 counties represent 39 percent of the pollinator-dependent crop area of the United States and most likely will face inadequate pollination in the future.

"Wild bee declines may increase costs for farmers and, over time, could even destabilize crop production," Ricketts said.

Some crops such as corn and wheat do not need pollinators.

The study estimated that wild bee numbers diminished in 23 percent of the continental United States between 2008 and 2013 in a trend driven by conversion of their natural habitat into farmland including corn for biofuel production.

Pesticides and diseases were cited as other factors behind the declines among the roughly 4,000 U.S. species of wild bees.

"Wild bees help pollinate many of our most nutritious crops, support natural ecosystems and contribute over \$3 billion to the U.S. economy each year," Ricketts said.

Their decline may prompt greater dependence on commercial honeybee colonies for pollinating crops, but honeybee numbers also are falling, added Gund Institute researcher Insu Koh, the lead author of the study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

"Our results highlight the need for strategies to maintain pollinator populations in farmland, and the importance of conservation programs that provide flowering habitat that can support wild bees and other pollinators," said Michigan State University entomologist Rufus Isaacs, who heads the U.S. Department of Agriculture-funded Integrated Crop Pollination Project.

The study followed a 2014 memorandum by President Barack Obama creating a task force to study pollinator losses. The task force in May called for preserving wide swathes of pollinator habitats.





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## 2015 Texas Honey Queen is 2016 American Honey Princess

*from Anna Kettlewell, American Honey Queen Chair*

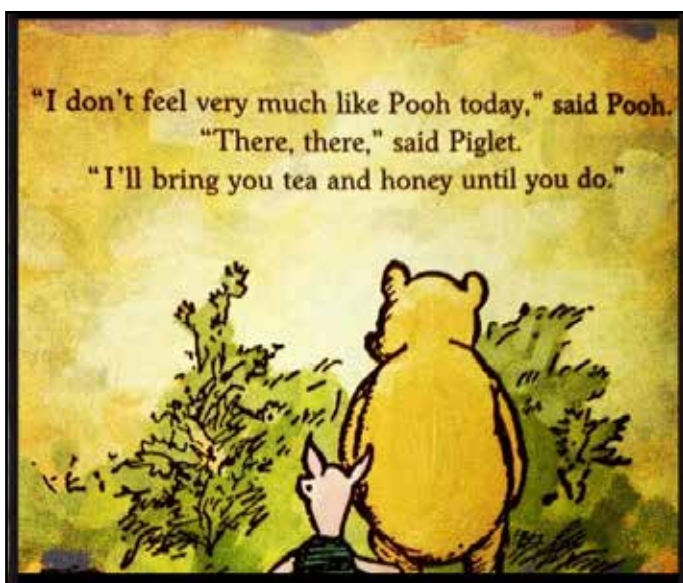


The American Beekeeping Federation is proud to announce that Tabitha Mansker was selected as the 2016 American Honey Princess at the North American Beekeeping Conference in Jacksonville, FL, in January.

Tabitha is the 20-year-old daughter of Gary and Wanda Mansker of Nevada, TX, and granddaughter of Bobby Lou Mansker of Lubbock, TX. She lives with her family on a small farm and enjoys caring for their many animals. Tabitha was deeply involved in 4-H for more than eight years and enjoys all aspects of agriculture. Currently, she is pursuing studies in business and marketing and has hopes of becoming a teacher. Tabitha stays busy helping to manage her family's 16 hives of bees and extracting honey for many commercial beekeeping operations.

Prior to being selected as the American Honey Princess, Tabitha served as the 2015 Texas Honey Queen. In this role, she promoted the honey industry at fairs, festivals, and farmers' markets, via media interviews, and in schools.

Tabitha will spend the next year promoting the beekeeping industry throughout the United States in a wide variety of venues. To schedule an appearance with American Honey Princess Tabitha Mansker, please contact American Honey Queen Program Chairperson Anna Kettlewell at 414.545.5514.



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## East Texas Beekeepers Launch Ambassador Program

*from Lani Lanchester, ETBA*

American Honey Princess, Hayden Wolf presented Jacob Cole, East Texas Beekeepers Association's first Ambassador a stainless steel hive tool engraved "2016 ETBA AMBASSADOR."

For years club members have been inquiring about our remarkable Queen Program and what amazing work these young women do promoting our beekeeping industry, but what comparable program do we have for our young men? My response has repeatedly been, "We are working on that." The problem is how to do it. The male gender just does not command respect in tiaras and sashes. This December I knew we got it right as the envious chorus of Beekeeper's "oohs" over the engraved stainless steel hive tool proclaimed that the ETBA Ambassador Program had found just the right start.

The ETBA Ambassador Program, like the Queen Program, is a professional position similar to an internship where a young man applies, interviews, and one is selected by our Royal Court Committee to represent our club for the upcoming year. The Ambassador speaks at schools, garden clubs, civic groups, fairs, and festivals educating the public about honeybees and the beekeeping industry. He also assists at our local club monthly meetings. Through the efforts of the Honey Queen Brittany Miller and now the Ambassador Jacob Cole, our club has a prominent influence on our community reaching thousands of people with their work.

This new outreach program has its roots ultimately in ETBA's Youth Scholarship Program. ETBA offers a chance for 12-17 year olds a chance to become a beekeeper supported by the club. Part of the scholarship is a class with Dick Counts. For 15 years, Dick has been inspiring young people to love honey bees through his beekeeping class, his own enthusiasm for the honeybee, and his enthusiasm for young people. These enthusiastic youth then help out at booths at the East Texas State Fair, Tyler's Mini Makers Fair, even at school presentations around the area. One of our club youth, 12 year old Micah Sparks, took this enthusiasm for honey bees all the way to Florida in a national speech competition with his extemporaneous speech on honey bees just this last summer.

ETBA is not the first Beekeeping Club to have an Ambassador. Rachael Seida, TBA Queen Chair, wrote the TBA Queen's Manual last spring. At the very end of the manual under "miscellaneous" she wrote two paragraphs about an "Ambassador Position." Rachael then showed me her American Honey Queen

Scrapbook from 2008. Somewhere in the middle she showed me a picture of the Beekeeping Ambassador from Wisconsin! With Rachael's encouragement, vision of the ETBA board, ETBA families and the remarkable youth, the ETBA Ambassador Program is born.

So let me introduce the first beekeeping Ambassador in the state of Texas! 2016 ETBA Ambassador Jacob Cole began beekeeping in 2013 through the East Texas Beekeepers



*Jacob Cole, ETBA Ambassador*

Association Youth Scholarship Program. He has spoken at various Henderson County Master Gardener events as well as local schools. He loves to pass along his knowledge of beekeeping and inspire others to get involved too! In 2015, Cole earned his Master Beekeeper (Apprentice) certification, and he looks forward to advancing to the next level in 2016. Jacob and his family live in Malakoff; he is a freshman in high





*Jacob speaking at Athens Elementary School  
about Honey Bees*



*The Cole Family Apiary at  
Milk & Honey Meadows*

school who hopes to be a Texas Game Warden. In addition to beekeeping Jacob loves to hunt, read, and is very involved in his local 4H Club. Volunteering at the local food pantry, and teaching children in the garden at South Athens Elementary are two ways Jacob is giving back in the local community. When he is not speaking about the honey bee, Jacob is sharing his experience at Texas Brigade camps and promoting Wildlife Conservation.

For more information about starting your own Ambassador or Queen Program at your local club, contact Rachael Seida, TBA Queen Program Chair. She can be reached at [texashoneyqueenchair@gmail.com](mailto:texashoneyqueenchair@gmail.com) or (214) 578-3477.

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- \* **Texas Beekeepers Association**
- \* **North Dakota Beekeepers Association**

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# The EPA Finally Admitted That the World's Most Popular Pesticide Kills Bees 20 Years Too Late

*from Tom Philpott, Mother Jones*

Bees are dying in record numbers—and now the government admits that an extremely common pesticide is at least partially to blame.

For more than a decade, the Environmental Protection Agency has been under pressure from environmentalists and beekeepers to reconsider its approval of a class of insecticides called neonicotinoids, based on a mounting body of research suggesting they harm bees and other pollinators at tiny doses. In a report released Wednesday, the EPA basically conceded the case. The report card was so dire that the EPA "could potentially take action" to "restrict or limit the use" of the chemical by the end of this year.

Marketed by European chemical giants Syngenta and Bayer, neonics are the most widely used insecticides both in the United States and globally. In 2009, the agency commenced a long, slow process of reassessing them—not as a class, but rather one by one (there are five altogether). Meanwhile, tens of millions of acres of farmland are treated with neonics each year, and the health of US honeybee hives continues to be dismal.

The EPA's long-awaited assessment focused on how one of the most prominent neonics—Bayer's imidacloprid—affects bees. The report card was so dire that the EPA "could potentially take action" to "restrict or limit the use" of the chemical by the end of this year, an agency spokesperson wrote in an emailed statement.

Reviewing dozens of studies from independent and industry-funded researchers, the EPA's risk-assessment team established that when bees encounter imidacloprid at levels above 25 parts

per billion—a common level for neonics in farm fields—they suffer harm. "These effects include decreases in pollinators as well as less honey produced," the EPA's press release states.

The crops most likely to expose honeybees to harmful levels of imidacloprid are cotton and citrus, while "corn and leafy vegetables either do not produce nectar or have residues below the EPA identified level." Note in the below USGS chart that a substantial amount of imidacloprid goes into the US cotton crop.

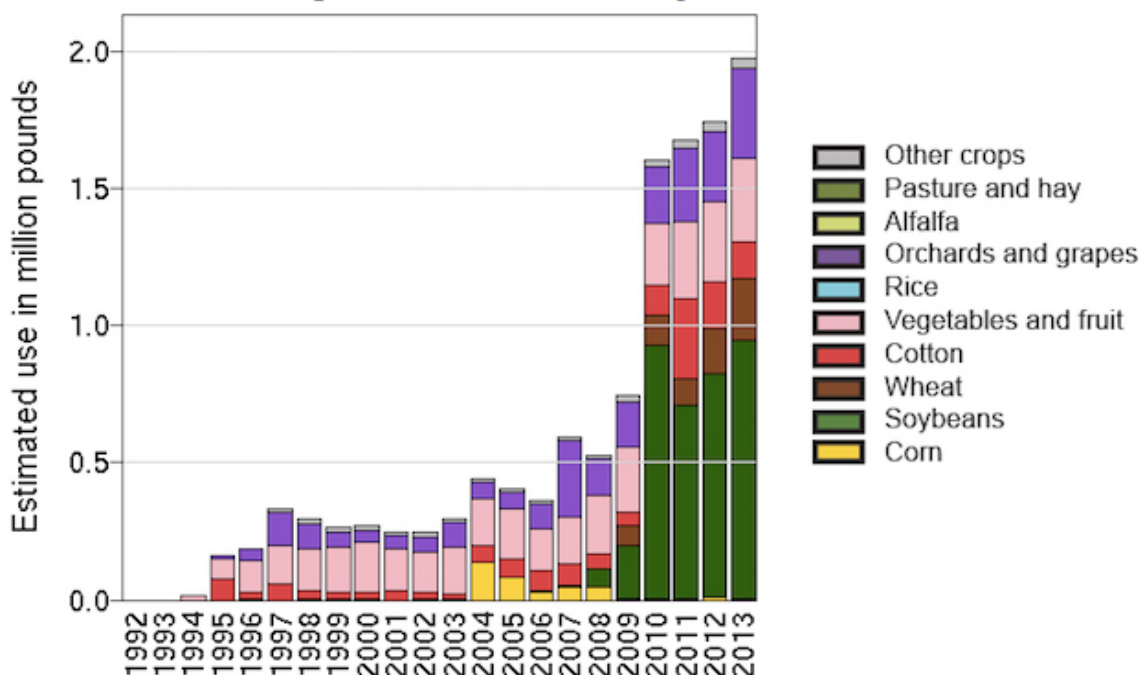
Meanwhile, the fact that the EPA says imidacloprid-treated corn likely doesn't harm bees sounds comforting, but as the same USGS chart shows, corn gets little or no imidacloprid. (It gets huge amounts of another neonic, clothianidin, whose EPA risk assessment hasn't been released yet.)

Soybeans could expose bees to dangerous levels of imidacloprid, but data on how much of the pesticide shows up in soybeans' pollen and nectar are "unavailable."

The biggest imidacloprid-treated crop of all is soybeans, and soy remains an information black hole. The EPA assessment notes that soybeans are "attractive to bees via pollen and nectar," meaning they could expose bees to dangerous levels of imidacloprid, but data on how much of the pesticide shows up in soybeans' pollen and nectar are "unavailable," both from Bayer and from independent researchers. Oops. Mind you, imidacloprid has been registered for use by the EPA since the 1990s.

The agency still has to consider public comments on the bee assessment it just released, and it also has to complete a risk assessment of imidacloprid's effect on other species. In addition to their impact on bees, neonic pesticides may also harm birds, butterflies, and water-borne invertebrates, recent studies suggest. Then there are the assessments of the other four neonic products that need to be done. Meanwhile, a coalition of beekeepers and environmental groups filed a lawsuit in federal court Wednesday pointing out that the agency has never properly assessed neonics in their most widely used form: as seed coatings, which are then taken up by crops.

## Use by Year and Crop



# Bees, Bee Education and Bee Association Business

*The Continuing Journey of Two Third-Year Beekeepers  
from Roger and Sue Farr, Caddo Trace Beekeepers Association*



January is usually a slow time for beekeepers; however, our apiary in northeast Texas is humming! Let us share with you what has occupied us in early 2016.

## Our Bees

We bedded down the girls in December and have occasionally checked on them as we walk our property. It has usually been cold enough that we only see a few flying on warmer days. However, on one unusually warm January day, we distinctly heard the loud buzzing of bees. Our hives are about 100 m (330 ft) from our house, so we reasoned that the bees must have found a blooming plant nearby. As we walked closer to the hives, the sound level intensified until it was obvious that the sound was coming from the hives themselves! Hundreds of bees were in the air around the entrances to all three hives. They simply seemed to be enjoying the day, doing cleansing and orientation flights, and taking out the trash. One undertaker bee actually flew into us as she carried her dead sister out to the burying grounds in our orchard. They were also gathering water from our gray-water bird bath. Judging from that simple “inspection,” all seems to be well. We’ll look for a warm day in late January or early February to assess their stores of pollen and honey, and we will take necessary action.



*Our Bees Enjoying a Drink on a Warm Winter Day*

## Bee Education

We believe that one of the functions and highlights of any local bee association is the training of beginning beekeepers, or as we affectionately call them, “NewBees.” Our association, Caddo Trace Beekeepers Association (CTBA), uses two different types of NewBee classes to meet local demand and needs.

First, we run an eight session course, which meets on Saturday mornings for two hours every other week, from January to April. This type of course appeals to those who have little or no knowledge of beekeeping and who desire a hands-on approach. We run this course only once a year. Five of the sessions are in the classroom utilizing local instructors from CTBA. The other three sessions are with a NewBee and his or her assigned mentor. The first session is at the mentor’s apiary, and the last two are at the NewBee’s property. Mentors assist the NewBees with the installation of their bees and their first inspection.

Second, we run a one-day nine-hour intensive course where we cover all the material in one session. It is a bit like taking a drink from a fire hose, but it works well for those who have some beekeeping knowledge and want a refresher. We do some hands-on work in a hive at the training site, but we do not assign mentors. We run the one-day course in February, April, and late in the year as requested.

We limit each class to 15 students so that there is adequate time

for questions. We have chosen to pay our instructors and mentors a nominal stipend to cover their costs and to encourage a high standard of preparation in their presentations. We use Kim Flottom’s *The Backyard Beekeeper*, third edition, as our text book, and our instructors teach from the textbook before they share their own experiences with the students in their handouts. Our desire is to teach beekeeping from a “what does the research say” bias with local adaptation to northeast Texas conditions. This drives us to continually learn from the published bee literature. Instructors and mentors agree to a “code of conduct” in their teaching and interactions with their NewBees, and they must be members in good standing of CTBA.

Most of our students ultimately become members of our



*Sue Farr, in 2015, Conducting a Portion of our Newly Developed, One Day Intensive NewBee Course*



association, so teaching the classes raises the standard of beekeeping in the local area and increases our membership as well. CTBA started with six of us sitting in a room in early 2014, and we have now over 100 members!

## Bee Association Business

Local beekeeping associations are the lifeblood of the hobby beekeeper, and we believe that it is essential to have an active one where all are welcome to come and learn. However, this does not come without some organizational challenges. We'll share five of those below.

**Accountability** - CTBA has experienced explosive growth which brings great joys and the need for adaptation. In the beginning our treasurer handled a cash envelope with a few tens of dollars in dues income and payments to out-of-town speakers. Now, the treasurer deals with thousands of dollars, an Excel spreadsheet, and proper invoices and receipts. Our Articles of Association call for a yearly audit, by at least two of our members, of our finances each January and a report to our members in February. This audit will surely point to the need for procedural changes so that the association keeps everything in good order. Like our bees we each yield a little personal space for the good of the group.

**Communication** - Decision-making was simpler when there were only a handful of us. We picked up the phone, asked a question, and received an answer. Now, we seek the collective wisdom of a committed group of our officers. Our Articles of Association calls for a minimum of two officers' meetings each calendar year. We've decided to increase that to four per year, and we have scheduled specific topics to be addressed at each officers' meeting to ensure adequate discussion time and planning time. Like our bees, we have learned the value of information transfer.



*Jesse Wright, our Vice President, and one of our founders, conducting a NewBee Q&A session before a regular monthly meeting.*

**Discipline** - Unfortunately, CTBA had to deal with an allegation of harassment in 2015. We needed to deal with this issue not only for the health of our association, but because harassment is a punishable offense if a charge is filed with the local district attorney and is prosecuted. On the association side, we reviewed the allegation with the member asserting the offense and gave instructions in our association's resolution process. The member ultimately decided to not pursue the case either with CTBA or

the district attorney. As a preventative measure we conducted a harassment training session, lasting 15 minutes, at our next regular meeting. We've also made it a part of our annual program schedule and will make harassment awareness an overt part of our membership application process. We desire our association meetings and activities to be a safe place where, like our bees, all can come, learn, and grow without unwanted attention.

**New Input** - We officially founded our association in late 2014, so we decided that our initially elected officers would serve until April, 2016. Our officer election cycle runs from April to March, allowing time for new members from our classes to join our association and gain involvement and commitment. Our current officer corps has been great, but it is probably time for new folks to step up and take on responsibility in our association. Our Articles of Association limit the service time for officers to three years. We'd like to have orderly transitions for some of our officers in 2016 so that CTBA continues to be a smooth-running club that meets the needs of its members. Like our bees, we welcome the new members to take active roles in their association to complete the needed tasks.

**Information Sharing** - TBA plans to create a "resource handbook of sorts" in 2016 to assist newly-forming associations. CTBA and other smoothly-running associations have found most of the pitfalls and have developed workable answers on how to organize and run a bee association. Your local association probably also has some answers to thorny issues. We encourage you to contribute your knowledge and documents to TBA to assist current and future organizations in the administrative aspects of running a bee association. In that way we all can spend more time on what we love, beekeeping and learning about bees, and less time on administration! Like our bees, we all benefit when we share information.

---

The new wooden ware is here waiting to be assembled. We're looking forward to warmer days in February, March, and April to allow us to raise queens, expand our apiary, and supply bees to several NewBees in our classes. We're very conscious of the weather, and we're hoping that we do not have a repeat of last year's late March ice storm and freeze. In the cool meantime, we're learning, teaching, clarifying, simplifying, communicating, mentoring, and writing. As always, we enjoy hearing from you about your beekeeping exploits.

Roger and Sue Farr; [rdfarr@gmail.com](mailto:rdfarr@gmail.com); [sue.farr1@gmail.com](mailto:sue.farr1@gmail.com)





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## The Brantley Column

*from S. S. Brantley  
East Texas Beekeepers Association*

February is the “get busy” month for beekeepers. We had enough nice days in December and January to examine our hives and make sure honey, pollen and bee bread stores were adequate. Bee Bread is a cell of pollen with honey on top of the pollen. As the weather continues to warm and the days get longer, the queen will increase her laying and expand the brood nest. Large amounts of honey, pollen and bee bread will be used to produce the young spring bees.

February can be a tricky month because we can have some of our coldest weather and some nice, warm days. If you want to inspect the hive, catch one of the nicer days. Do not open the hive on cold, wet or windy days because of the danger of chilling the brood nest. If it is at least 60 degrees, dry and no wind, you can open the hive and do inspections. However, work quickly and do not keep the hive open for long periods. If you remove a frame and see the queen or brood, return it to the hive quickly.

If you are concerned about the stores in a hive, do not hesitate to feed. Hives need access to both carbohydrates (honey or sugar syrup) and pollen (natural pollen or pollen substitutes like patties or powders). Carbohydrates allow the bees to generate the heat needed to survive cold and pollen is needed for the new brood. If you robbed honey from a hive this summer, be sure to watch the available honey stores and feed syrup if needed. As long as we have cold nights, make sure there are at least a few frames of honey or syrup in the hive. A hive can go through a lot of honey or syrup in a prolonged cold spell.

If you are concerned about pollen stores, you can feed with a pollen substitute. I would not suggest laying a full patty in the hive. Cut off a third or fourth of the patty and place it on the top bars or on the inner cover. Your goal is to add only the amount of patty that the bees can eat in about a week. Different hives will consume patties at different rates so there is no absolute formula.

You will develop a feel by observing each hive. We do not want to leave a large piece of patty in the hive for a long period because the hive beetles like to lay eggs under the patty. Even though beetles are less active in cold weather, they still remain in the hive. Just one final comment about pollen patties. Experienced beekeepers give advice like “add a piece of pollen patty” and assume that a novice beekeeper will know how to do that. If you have never used pollen patties, they are a gooey substance sandwiched between two pieces of paper. The typical size is about

4 inches wide and 6 to 8 inches long and 3/8 inch thick. Just use a knife to cut off a piece the size you want and lay it on the top bars or on the inner cover -- with the paper still adhered to the gooey insides. The bees eat the pollen substitute and remove the paper from hive. If they leave it there, you can remove the paper next time you are in the hive. It never occurred to me that someone would try to peel the paper off until a first-time patty user commented about how hard it was trying to pull the paper off that sticky stuff!

When doing inspections, you may see drone cells hanging off the bottoms of frames. When you remove a frame or separate two brood boxes, you will usually break open these large drone cells. This is normal and nothing to be concerned about. Drones are only about 10-15% of the hive population. Unless something is terribly wrong, the hive will produce plenty of drones. You need not worry about breaking open those cells.

If you do break open some drone cells, look for varroa mites on the larvae and pupae. Varroa prefer to lay eggs on drone larva because they have a longer period of pupation. The longer time in the cell gives the varroa a better chance at reproducing before the



*Varroa Mites  
on  
Drone Larvae*

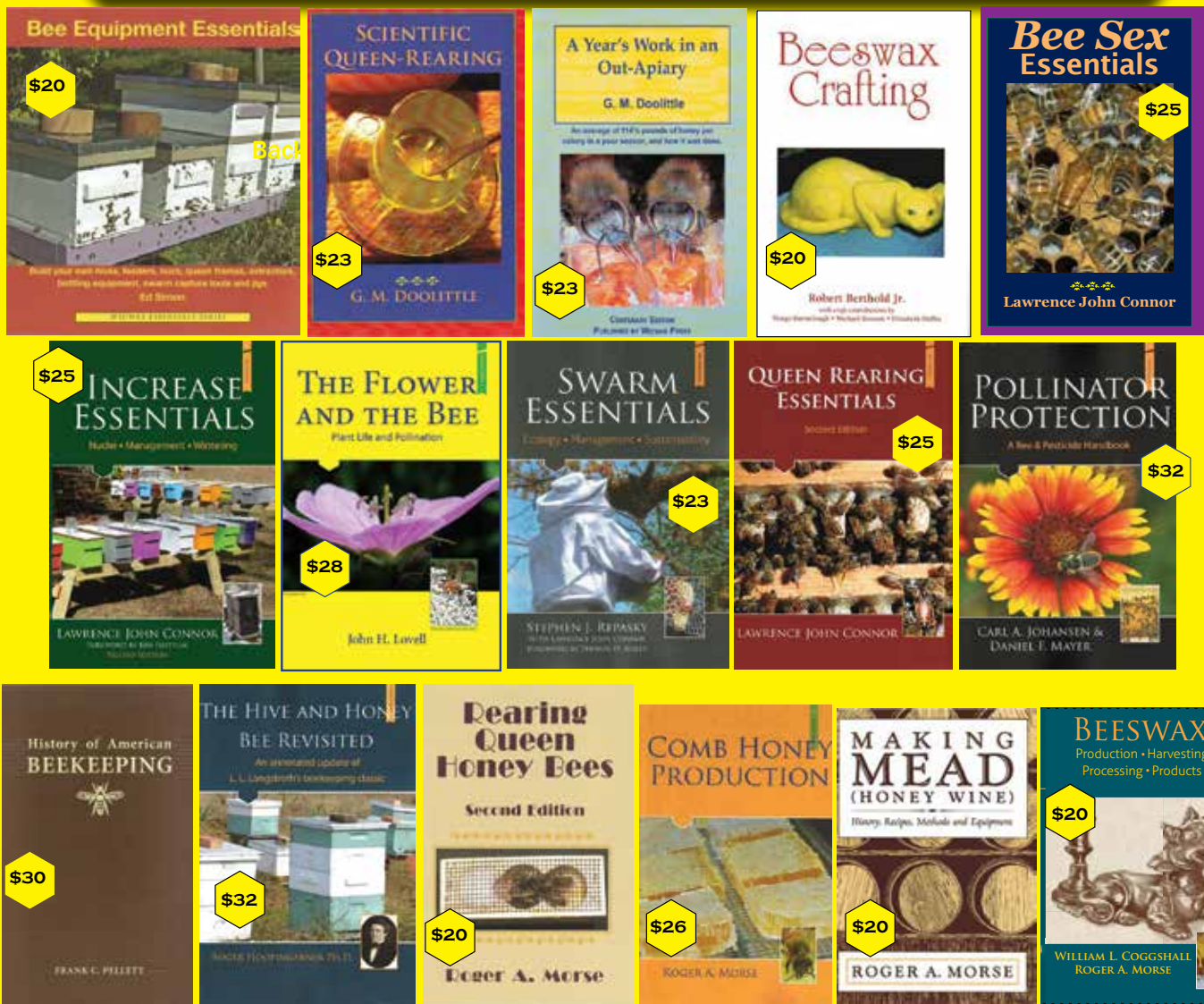
drone hatches. The varroa often are readily visible on the white drone larva. One part of Integrated Pest Management for control of varroa includes placing a frame of drone-sized foundation in the hive, then removing and freezing it after the drone brood are capped, hopefully reducing the number of mites that will hatch inside the hive.





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# The Social Organization of Honey Bees

from Ashley N. Mortensen  
Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory  
University of Florida



## What is Sociality?

Insects exhibit several levels of social organization. Many species live in groups for some portion of their lives, but not all of these groups are truly social. For instance, chimney bees, *Anthophora abrupta*, do live in groups for periods of time, but they are nevertheless solitary bees. Female chimney bees build nests in large aggregations, giving the impression that they are social, but in fact each female builds and provisions her own nest. In contrast, some insects, ants for instance, live in complex societies called colonies and depend on continual social interactions to survive. Members of these social species cannot survive as individuals; they must live as a part of a colony.

Three characteristics define the levels of sociality observed in insects. These characteristics are: 1) **reproductive division of labor**: most individuals are non-reproductive and specialize in colony growth, maintenance, and defense while only a few reproduce; 2) **cooperative brood care**: individuals within the colony care for offspring that are not their own; and

3) **overlapping generations**: offspring contribute to colony labor while their parent(s) (at least their mothers) are still alive and inside the colony. Species that express all three of the above characteristics are highly social or eusocial. The most common eusocial insects are bees, wasps, ants, and termites (Table 1).

Honey bees (Hymenoptera: Apidae: *Apis*) meet all three of the criteria described above and are therefore eusocial:

- **Reproductive division of labor**- Each honey bee colony consists of a queen (reproductive female), workers (non-reproductive females), and drones (males). Each caste has a clearly defined role that is not performed by any other caste.
- **Cooperative brood care**- Workers care for the queen's offspring. In most cases the queen's offspring are sisters to the workers who are rearing them.
- **Overlapping generations**- Honey bee queens can live several years and coexist in the colony with their offspring (workers and drones).

**Table 1**

Insect Order	Common Name	Number of Eusocial Species
Blattodea	Termites and cockroaches	~2750 species (all termites are eusocial)
Hemiptera	True bugs	~50 eusocial species
Thysanoptera	Thrips	6 known eusocial species
Coleoptera	Beetles	1 eusocial species (ambrosia beetle)
Hymenoptera	Ants	~14000 eusocial species (all ant species are eusocial)
	Wasps	~900 eusocial species
	Bees	300–400 eusocial species (there are ~20,000 species of bees)



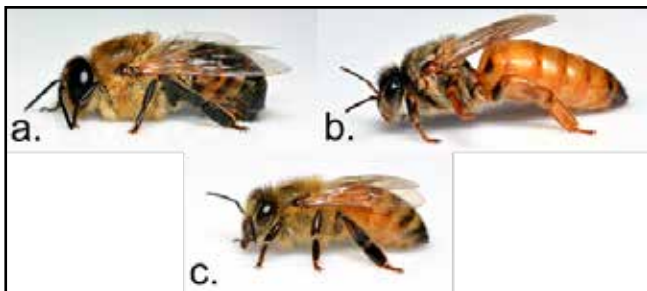
## Social Structure: Honey Bee Castes

There are three castes of honey bees: drones, queens, and workers (Fig. 1).

**Drones**- Drones are male honey bees. The drone's head and thorax are larger than those of the females. Drones' large eyes touch on the top center of their head, which makes them appear more "fly-like." Their abdomens are thick and blunt at the end rather than pointy like the abdomens of the females. Drones are responsible for passing the colony's genes on to the next generation by mating with queens from other colonies.

**Queens**- Honey bee queens are the reproductive females of the species. The queen's head and thorax are similar in size to those of the worker. However, the queen has a longer and plumper abdomen than does the worker. Throughout most of the colony life cycle, the queen is the only reproductive female in the colony and is responsible for producing all of the offspring within the colony.

**Workers**- Worker honey bees usually are non-reproductive females. They are the smallest in physical size of the three castes, and their bodies are specialized for pollen and nectar collection. Workers perform all brood care, hive maintenance, and hive defense tasks in their colony. Rather than specializing in one job only, each worker progresses through colony tasks in predictable order based on age. This progression is called temporal (or age) polyethism.



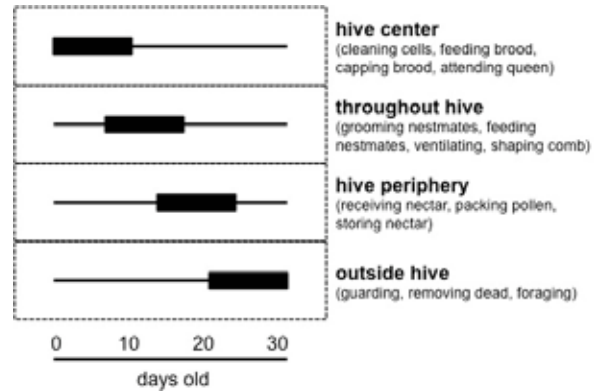
**Figure 1.** Honey bee castes: a. drone (male), b. queen (reproductive female), and c. worker (non-reproductive female). Mike Bentley, University of Florida

## Temporal Polyethism

Temporal polyethism is the age-related division of labor that occurs within honey bee colonies. At different ages, worker bees are better suited to perform different tasks. Each worker performs colony tasks in a somewhat predictable progression throughout her lifetime rather than specializing in a single task.

In general, young workers perform jobs in the central area of the hive where the brood (immature honey bees) is. Young workers' jobs include cleaning brood cells, feeding and tending the brood, and tending to the queen. As they age, the workers take on duties in the outer regions of the hive. These jobs include building comb, receiving nectar and pollen, storing nectar and pollen, processing honey and ventilating the hive. The oldest bees perform tasks outside of the hive, such as guarding the hive, removing dead bees from the hive, and foraging.

This progression of jobs by age is believed to be regulated by juvenile hormone (JH). The levels of JH vary within a worker throughout her life. The changes in JH levels cause glands to



**Figure 2.** Simplified representation of the order in which honey bee workers perform tasks in a hive. Figure by Ashley Mortensen, University of Florida, data generalized from Seeley (1985).

activate/deactivate, which in turn changes workers' physiologies to fit their present jobs. For example, young bees tending brood have highly developed hypopharyngeal glands that enable them to produce the larval diet. On the other hand, older bees that are building comb have reduced hypopharyngeal glands, but highly developed wax glands for producing wax.

There is a fair amount of flexibility in the system, and not every bee will progress through the tasks in the most common order. For example, if many foragers are killed by pesticide exposure, younger bees will advance to foraging tasks more quickly than they would ordinarily in order to compensate for the loss. Conversely, if something like a brood disease dramatically reduces the number of young bees emerging, some older bees will revert to the "younger bee tasks" to ensure that all jobs are being completed.

## Superorganisms

Eusocial organisms, honey bees included, can be considered superorganisms (the colony itself functions like a single organism). When considering a honey bee colony as a superorganism, each bee within the colony can be likened to a cell within an animal. Bees within a colony work together to perform colony level tasks, just as the cells in a human body work together to build and maintain a functional person. A few basic examples of this are thermoregulation (temperature regulation of the hive), respiration (air exchange into and out of the hive), and reproduction (creation of a new honey bee colony).

**Thermoregulation**- Bees maintain the brood area of the hive at approximately 93°F (34°C). When the ambient temperature rises above 93°F (34°C), worker bees cool the interior of the hive by fanning air over droplets of water. Conversely, when the temperature drops below 93°F (34°C), worker bees cluster around the brood nest and vibrate their wing muscles to generate heat. Individual bees are cold-blooded, but considered as a single

*continued on page 26*

organism, they are “warm-blooded.” The colony superorganism behaves like a warm-blooded animal in that it maintains a constant temperature despite fluctuations in the ambient temperature outside the hive.

**Respiration**- Bees prefer to nest in enclosed cavities (such as those in trees). There is very little passive air exchange in and out of such enclosed cavities. Therefore, workers actively fan air into and out of the colony in distinct inhalations and exhalations through the colony entrance. In fact, the volume of air that a honey bee colony “breathes” in one minute is the same as that of a domestic cat.

**Reproduction**- Superorganism reproduction is not a single queen laying thousands of eggs. A honey bee colony reproduces when it creates a new honey bee colony. This process is called swarming. Swarming is initiated when daughter queens are produced. The resident queen and up to two thirds of the workers leave the hive to find a new nesting cavity. This process produces a daughter colony (the bees that remain at the original nest site) and a parent colony (the bees that left to find a new nest site).

## Acknowledgements

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## It is time to send a message.

### Help start a movement!

from ABF

Dr. Jonathan Lundgren is a good friend of the beekeeping industry and is in the process of establishing a new sustainable farming/research venture called Blue Dasher Farms. He plans to conduct honey bee research as part of this endeavor, but the entire concept of this project is all about sustainability and using methods that are certainly more “bee friendly” than much of conventional farming today. Check out the message below and please consider a donation to Blue Dasher Farms in order to help Dr. Lundgren help us all, as well as our bees! The following message is from Dr. Lundgren:

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

It is time to send a message.

[www.indiegogo.com/projects/blue-dasher-farm](http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/blue-dasher-farm)

If you are tired of scientists, farmers, and beekeepers being bullied by politics and large industries. If you want answers to your questions about how we can use agriculture to solve problems. If you value citizens and scientists that stand up for what is right rather than taking the easy road. Then please consider supporting the Blue Dasher Farm initiative.

To help support a transformational change in agriculture using ecological principles, my family and laboratory crew have created the Blue Dasher Farm initiative. Our vision is that the South Dakota location will be the first in a national network of Centers for Excellence in regenerative agriculture. Here, we combine cutting edge science with education and demonstration. And we are well vested in making this a reality. We will be moving to the new facility in the next few weeks, have begun ordering supplies, and have secured operational funds for an ambitious suite of projects pertaining to honey bee health, rangeland ecology, and plant diversity in cropping systems.

But we need your help! And the hour is late. Many of you have donated already (\$50,000! We cannot thank you enough). But we need to raise more than \$25,000 in the next 3 weeks. You don't have to donate a lot (and the amount can be anonymous)... we can use the number of supporters as leverage for other funders to show that people believe in what we are trying to do. But you have to get your name on the site. Send it to your networks: facebook, twitter, e-mail, websites, newsletters, etc. And please lead by example! Why would anyone else participate if your name isn't on the board?

If we crush our funding goal, it sends a strong message to the decision makers and media that the status quo is no longer good enough, and that the consumers, farmers, and beekeepers have found a better way. We are planting a flag in the ground to rally this regenerative agriculture movement around. Don't do it for us; do it for your children and grandchildren.

Please, take action.

Dr. Jonathan Lundgren and Jenna Lundgren: jon.lundgren@bluedasher.farm



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# Mississippi State University Examined Pesticide Effect on Honey Bee Health

*from Bonnie Coblenz, MSU Extension Service*

Because bees are important to the success of crops, honey bee health is important to Mississippi State University.

Jeff Gore, Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station researcher at the Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville, participated in a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture-Agricultural Research Service study of pesticide toxicity to honey bees. The study was conducted in Stoneville at the USDA-ARS Jamie Whitten Delta States Research Center. It was part of ongoing efforts to protect the population of pollinators.

What looks like weeds to a farmer or landowner is forage for pollinators such as honeybees. Angus Catchot and other researchers at Mississippi State University are part of efforts to find management plans that balance competing needs.



*Photo by MSU Extension Service/Kevin Hudson*

Mississippi State University participated in a recent U.S. Department of Agriculture study that looked at several herbicides' toxicity to honey bees.

Researchers tested 42 commonly used pesticides in a realistic field setting to determine their toxicity levels for honey bees. The pesticide study examined 40 insecticides, one herbicide and one fungicide.

USDA senior investigator YuCheng Zhu and colleagues found that 26 pesticides killed nearly all bees that came into direct contact with them. However, seven pesticides -- including glyphosate, which is used in Roundup and other weed control products -- killed practically no bees.

"There are many chemicals that have been used in agriculture that were once thought safe for bees," said Jeff Harris, MSU

Extension Service bee specialist and Experiment Station researcher. "This study was important to determine what impact these pesticides have on honeybee health."

Harris said the study was also important in the way it tested toxicity.

"Many times chemicals are tested for acute dermal toxicity, when different doses are touched to the body of the bee. Others look at acute oral toxicity, when the chemical is put in the bees' food," he said. "The big question is what happens in the environment, and this study tried to address that question."

John Adamczyk, research leader with the USDA-ARS lab in Poplarville, said the study looked at acute toxicity, or whether these pesticides killed bees when they were exposed to realistic doses of the chemicals in an agricultural setting.

"This study gives us a baseline," Adamczyk said. "We were looking at the acute kill, and we were able to put these chemicals in a sort of order based on toxicity."

Adamczyk said the study produced no surprises. The chemicals tested were found to have toxicity similar to what the manufacturers and the Environmental Protection Agency stated.

"This information will help beekeepers and growers understand that there are certain pesticides that are clearly very toxic to bees, and it will help them manage that risk," he said. "Chemicals are often used in combination with other chemicals, and with this data, we can quickly look at what effect these combined chemicals will have on pollinators."

The study applied chemicals as spray to mimic application methods used by farmers. They tested those commonly used in agricultural settings and simulated a situation where an adult bee in a cotton field is accidentally sprayed.

Researchers found that many but not all of the neonicotinoids, organophosphates and pyrethroids tested killed nearly all of the bees these chemicals touched. However, a few pesticides, including glyphosate and acetamiprid, killed practically no bees in the test.

A few chemicals were found to be more toxic than originally assumed when used at field application concentrations. One pesticide that was considered a high risk for bees was found to be only an intermediate risk when used at the labeled rate.

Adamczyk said this study that created baseline data was just the tip of the iceberg, and much more work needs to be done.

"The impact will come in understanding the toxicity of certain combinations and understanding the residual effect chemicals have on bees," he said. "If farmers can understand that they need to be extra careful with a particular mixture, they may try something different that is less toxic to bees but still effective for their purposes or be mindful about when and how they spray."

---

*The tools that a society uses to create and maintain itself are as central to human life as a hive is to bee life. Though the hive is not part of any individual bee, it is part of the colony, both shaped by and shaping the lives of its inhabitants.*  
Clay Shirky

# “Crazy” Ants: A New Menace but an Old Problem

*from Robin Young, Metro Beekeepers Association*



If you live in Texas you have probably seen the “Crazy” Ant. They are very tinny and move around really fast in crazy directions. They showed up in Houston in 2002 according to Texas A&M, but this year they made it to my house north of Fort Worth.

Like most beekeeper’s, I tried the old tried and true method of putting Amdro under a rock next to the ant trail going up into the hive with no success. I then reached out to my friend beekeepers and the experiments commenced.



- 1) Vinegar in a spray bottle: I found this very satisfying in dousing the ants with the vinegar and it did wash away their trails to the sweet honey, but the effect was only temporary.
- 2) Place roofing paper or shingles under the legs of the hive: I did have some success during the summer with this method. The shingles hold heat and the Texas sun kept them too hot for the ants to walk on. When fall came and the temperature dropped, I found the ants actually moving their entire mound under the shingles to use the warmth in cold weather giving them direct access to the hive.
- 3) Motor Oil on the bottom of the stand: I had several bee keepers recommend Motor Oil on the hive base. I did not try this method because at the last two Texas State Beekeeping conventions the chefs in the honey tasting contest mentioned that they tasted motor oil in one of the honeys. It only makes sense that honey bees that crawl back up into the hive would bring the motor oil on their legs and get it into the honey.
- 4) Diatomaceous Earth: I sprinkled it around the base of the hive after a fresh rain. It has had the best results. The ants are gone by the next day. When you use it be sure to wear thick chemical grade gloves and a face mask so you do not breathe any in. Always read the labels with anything you use.

- 5) Cinder Block Hive Stand: A few years back, I had a tree fall on one of my hives. The wooden legs gave way, but the hive stayed intact. I rushed to my garden and grabbed some cinder blocks to get the hive off the cold ground. To this day I have never had problems with ants on this hive. The sun seems to make the blocks to warm for ants to climb on. Cinder Blocks cost around \$2 each.



I hope this helps with your ant problem this spring.

In this issue of the Journal we are discussing Ants. I wanted to give you the “Antiseptic Balm” recipe that I use and sell at the market. My 2 year old son got into fire ants and was covered in bites. I gave him an alcohol bath, turned on his favorite cartoon, and spent the next hour spreading the antiseptic balm all over him. The next morning he only had 4 bites. It was amazing. I have also used this balm on diaper rash. What you do is clean the area, spread the ointment on the red skin, and then cover it with a little cornstarch. The rash will be gone by the next day.

## Antiseptic Balm

- 2 ounces Beeswax
- 3 ounces Sweet Almond Oil
- 1 ounce Jojoba Oil
- 20 drops Wheatgerm Oil
- 20 drops Myrrh Essential Oil
- 20 drops Tea Tree Essential Oil

(Makes enough to fill 4 each 1 ounce salve jars or 1 ounce metal tins) I pour it into lip balm tubs and sell it for \$3 each.





A rule of thumb is 2 parts oil to one part beeswax. Simply heat the Sweet Almond and Jojoba oil in a saucepan and add Beeswax. If you want a thin consistency (such as a cream or Vaseline) add only a little bit of Beeswax. Want it thick like wax? Just add more Beeswax.

Allow the base to cool down to see what the consistency is like. If it's too thick, add more Sweet Almond oil and reheat, too thin?, add more Beeswax.

As the base is cooling add the essential oils to enhance the healing effect of the balm. I purchase mine from: [bulkapothecary.com](http://bulkapothecary.com) there are several suppliers online to choose from.

After you have added the essential oil and the lip balm is still warm enough to pour, carefully pour it into Salve Jars or metal Tins.



Tell next time Bee Friends,

Robin L-S Young



## Curried Honey-Glazed Chicken Wings

*Recipe courtesy of Marie Simmons, cookbook author.*



- 1 cup - honey
- 1/2 cup - crushed tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons - curry powder
- 1/2 teaspoon - ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon - ground cayenne, to taste for preferred heat level
- 1 tablespoon - apple cider vinegar
- 2-1/2 pounds - chicken wings

Combine honey, tomatoes, curry, cumin and cayenne in the food processor and puree until smooth. Transfer to a saucepan and bring to a boil. Boil, gently, over medium low heat, stirring occasionally, 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool to room temperature. Stir in the vinegar.

Meanwhile cut the chicken wings in thirds, cutting at the joints. Discard the wing tips. When the glaze has cooled combine the cut up wings and the glaze in a large heavy duty self-closing bag. Refrigerate, turning the bag once or twice, several hours or overnight.

When ready to cook the wings preheat oven to 375°F. Line a large rimmed sheet pan with heavy duty foil and spray the foil with non-stick spray. Lift the wings from the marinade and arrange on the prepared baking pan. Transfer the remaining marinade to a saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and boil gently 10 to 15 minutes.

Bake the wings, turning twice and brushing with the boiled marinade, every 15 minutes. After 35 to 45 minutes the wings should be nicely browned and glazed. Serve either hot or at room temperature.

**TIP:** Try using a buckwheat, alfalfa or wildflower honey varietal in your marinade for an extra flavor boost.

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# Chief of Apiary Inspection - Texas Apiary Inspection Service

*from Mark Dykes*



## Greetings from the Texas Apiary Inspection Service (TAIS)

I hope everyone had a great winter season and are looking forward to what spring has in store for us. If last year is any indication, we may be in for a wild ride! For myself and the staff here at TAIS the winter provided us little in the way of rest. We were invited to speak at several conference including the American Beekeeping Federation (ABF) conference in Jacksonville. I am happy to report the talks went well and we had some great feedback from the attendees. Speaking of the ABF conference the TAIS staff would like to congratulate Tabitha Mansker, our 2016 American Honey Princess! Tabitha is taking the torch from the 2015 Princess, Hayden Wolf, who did an awesome job this last year representing the beekeeping industry! I know Texas is proud of all the great work they both do.

We have a rather major change happening here at TAIS I would like to make everyone aware of. Our long time office administrator Linda Sebesta will be retiring at the end of February. Linda has been the backbone of the service for many years handling the processing of all the permits we receive as well as holding down the office when we are in the field. We are sad to see Linda go and wish her a very happy retirement, Lord knows she has earned it! Our hope is to have a smooth transition between Linda and the next office administrator and we ask for your patients during the transition. We will do our best to make sure there is little to no disruptions of beekeeper services during this time.

With spring fast approaching I would encourage all beekeepers big and small to start to think about pest and disease monitoring. Specifically monitoring for varroa mites. At the ABF meeting this year there was a lot of emphasis on monitoring and

controlling varroa mites. Dr. Dennis VanEngelsdorp introduced us to the varroa bomb concept at the meeting. The concept is basically colonies that had very high mite levels appear to be influencing those who have low mite levels by acting as a reservoir for mites. The implications for this are pretty serious. In order to combat this effect, it is important to monitor for varroa mites and treat as needed. I understand there are many different philosophies on treatment types but all treatments should be done in conjunction with a sound monitoring plan. I would encourage you to look at the Tools for Varroa Management published by the Honey Bee Health Coalition (<http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/Varroa/>) This guide is free to download and contains very good, current information about all types of legal varroa treatments from organic to synthetic chemicals including a guide on how to monitor. If you have any questions about monitoring for varroa mites please let us know and we will do our best to help.

For those of you interested in the Texas Master Beekeeper Program we will have the next testing on April 15th in Brenham, TX. The testing will be the day before the Central Texas Bee School. For information and registration information please see the Master Beekeeper website (<http://masterbeekeeper.tamu.edu/>) We are very excited to enter into our second year of the program!

That's all for now. Myself and the staff here at TAIS hope everyone has a productive spring with full supers and healthy bees. As always if you have any questions or a good bee joke please do not hesitate to contact us at [TAIS@tamu.edu](mailto:TAIS@tamu.edu) or 979-845-9713 and keep on keeping those wonderful bees!

---

*Nobody around here had ever seen a lady beekeeper till her. She liked to tell everybody that women made the best beekeepers, 'cause they have a special ability built into them to love creatures that sting. It comes from years of loving children and husbands...*

*I hadn't been out to the hives before, so to start off she gave me a lesson in what she called 'bee yard etiquette'. She reminded me that the world was really one bee yard, and the same rules work fine in both places. Don't be afraid, as no life-loving bee wants to sting you. Still, don't be an idiot; wear long sleeves and pants. Don't swat. Don't even think about swatting. If you feel angry, whistle. Anger agitates while whistling melts a bee's temper. Act like you know what you're doing, even if you don't. Above all, send the bees love. Every little thing wants to be loved....*

Sue Monk Kidd, *The Secret Life of Bees*

# 5th Annual Austin Beekeeping Seminar

*from Lance Wilson, TBA Director*



Thanks to you, the 5th Annual Austin Beekeeping Seminar was a huge success! We had 450 attendees, 16 presenters and about 25 additional volunteers for an approximate total of about 491 at the event. I was asked to write a little bit about our experience for the Journal and thought this might inspire others to attend next year. At the very least this will allow me the opportunity to give credit to TBA and the people working behind the scenes that really made this event successful.

Our Austin seminar is organized each year by Karl Arcuri, Lily Rosenman and myself. But the people that are responsible for its success were the hardworking Honey Queens, Austin club volunteers, TBA and their Directors, club presidents, presenters and volunteers. Our poised Honey Queens ran many of the rooms this year, announcing presenters, handling speaker transition issues and making sure the rooms ran on time. The club presidents from around the state helped promote the seminar to their membership. The Austin club volunteers ran the registration desk, directed people to the proper rooms and managed the vendors. I would also like to thank Terry Spencer for building and donating

The mission of the Austin Beekeeping Seminar is to provide evidenced-based instruction in the promotion of successful bee husbandry. Towards that end they try to create a presentation schedule that captures many of the more challenging issues facing beekeepers today. An example of that was the recent labeling of



*Mark Hedley, TBA Vice-President*



*Hive donated by Terry Spencer*

a charming Langstroth hive that is raffled away each year to a lucky attendee.

Fortunately, this year we were able to find a much larger, well equipped venue, namely the J.J. Pickle Commons Learning Center, a part of the UT campus. This center provides classroom and auditorium style seating rooms along with ample parking and large common areas.

oxalic acid as a miticide in the state of Texas. We were fortunate enough to have lined up Mark Hedley from Spiral Horn Apiaries as a presenter on another topic and he graciously consented to add a presentation on labeled Oxalic use at the last moment.

The Austin Area Beekeepers Association is a non-profit organization and is run exclusively by volunteers, as is the seminar it sponsors. The club, while having expenses, does not charge its members an annual fee and so revenue from the seminar sustains the club. They make it a goal of the seminar, however, to dedicate over half of seminar revenues to bee research or related non-profit pursuits benefiting sustainable beekeeping. This year, like last, they were able to make a sizeable donation to our local hardworking academician friends at our Texas A&M bee lab. They also made contributions to the Texas Queen Fund and The Texas Master Beekeeping Program.

Last year we held this seminar at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. That event generated a lot of feedback in regards to specifically having a "Beginner Beekeeping Track" for people that have not started beekeeping or have less than a year of experience. So this year we created a beginner track which was kept in the same room on each time slot and the curriculum was outlined in advance for each presenter's class. This helped to





*Karl Arcuri, Ginny Stubblefield, Sandra Garcia, Williamson County Honey Princess, Elise Gardner*

make sure all the essentials were covered and reduced redundant content. This also provided a logical flow of information starting with honey bee biology and behavior. The classes moved through equipment decisions, apiary selection and colony manipulation, feeding, bee purchases, package installation and ended with a live honey extraction by Cameron Crane. We were surprised to discover that 290 of our 450 attendees made this beginner track selection, necessitating placing this series in an auditorium holding up to 330 people.

I encourage anyone planning their own seminar to never leave out top bar hive management from their presentation menu. Top bar hive equipment requires strategies and manipulations that are unique to this craft. You may not fill up an auditorium with a top bar presentation but you fill a large classroom with the most passionate devotees. This year, top bar aficionado Dean Cook presented this subject in a part 1 and part 2 spread over two class periods.

The vendors' booths always seem to be a favorite of seminar attendees. It provides an opportunity for beekeepers to actually pick up equipment and ask questions. Unfortunately the J.J. Pickle venue does not allow for equipment sales to occur on premises.

However, vendors graciously agreed to present their wares which allows them to brand their company and direct people to where purchases can be made. This year vendors were represented by RWeaver Apiaries, Busy Bee Beekeeping Supplies, Bee Friendly Austin and BeeWeaver Apiaries. (vendor pics here)

Something we tried, which received across the board kudos, was the club-centered approach we took this year. We waived club presidents' entrance fees and designated a club table for each in the open commons area of the venue. This allowed club leaders, club members and new beekeepers in their area to meet and mingle. Our hope was that new friends could be made and perhaps help promote club membership. Everyone seemed to really enjoy that opportunity to meet new beekeepers in their backyard.

Texas is very fortunate to have abundant educational opportunities and support available to the beekeeping community. We have Dr. Rangel and her lab at our disposal providing cutting edge research and educational support. We have a top notch Texas Apiary Inspection Service led by Mark Dykes. He recently implemented the Texas Master Beekeeping Program and he and his department present the latest beekeeping information to clubs around the state. Lastly, we have a series of beekeeping seminars to help beekeepers of all experience levels. The next seminar on your agenda should be the Central Texas Beekeepers School on April 16th in Brenham, Texas. It is well-run, large and is a Texas favorite. On May 7th Dr. Rangel will be providing a day of



*The TAIS Team, Mark Dykes and Mary Reed*



*Laura Weaver from BeeWeaver Apiaries*

instruction with Dr. Sue Colby on queen rearing at the bee lab. In addition, the Texas Beekeepers Association will be offering a daylong summer clinic on June 18th in Conroe, Texas. It was huge last year and will have a large presentation selection for beekeepers of all ages.

We all know beekeeping is a challenging endeavor. I hope everyone takes advantage of these unique educational opportunities to build our knowledge and skill level in managing these fascinating creatures.

We hope you see you again next year!





## Texas Honey Queen Chair Rachael Seida

### Reaching your Local Community! Part 2: Civic Groups

Hello everyone! Winter has hit the Dallas area and my bees are clustering up for warmth, which I find to be good idea too! But it is not slowing our Honey Queen and Princess down one bit! Both have been out on the road for various events and both are excited to keep busy this year!

We would love to come to an event in your area this year. Not sure what to invite us out for? For the next several articles I am going to do a series on reaching your local community and setting up events. This month, we will discuss Civic Groups.

These are prevalent in your community! I promise! You probably have dozens of these meeting within a few minutes of where you live. And like schools, civic groups are just looking for the chance to invite in a beekeeper.

Finding civic groups can be a little more difficult (than schools), but usually can be found by a quick internet search. Or again you can send a press release to your local paper to let everyone know that the Honey Queen/Princess is coming (more on press releases in a later article).

#### Tips:

- When looking for civic groups, Do an internet search for groups in your area. For example: "Tyler Texas Lions Club"

- Examples of local civic groups
  - o Gardening Clubs
  - o Lions Clubs
  - o Girl/Boy Scouts
  - o Literature /Reading/Writing Groups
  - o Cooking Clubs
  - o History Groups
  - o Agriculture Groups (Like FFA or 4H)
  - o Crafting Groups
- Don't forget that your friends and acquaintances have probably already mentioned a group or two that they attend
- The standard presentation is about 20 minutes with question and answer time afterwards, but this is flexible and can be adjusted to meet the group's needs.
- If you can, bring an observation hive. This really makes the experience memorable for everyone.

That's all for this time! As always, if you would like to schedule the Texas Honey Queen or Princess, email me at [texashoneyqueenchair@gmail.com](mailto:texashoneyqueenchair@gmail.com).



*2016 Texas Honey Queen, Hope Pettibon and  
2016 Texas Honey Princess, Willow Lanchester at  
Clint Walker's Honey Farm in Rogers, TX*





## 2016 Texas Honey Queen Hope Pettibon

### Wonderful Beeswax

I can remember the very first time that our family harvested our honey at Mr. Talbert's home. I had to be careful with the hot knife as I cut off the white beeswax capping from each frame. The honey dripped golden out of each cell, and the smell of melting wax was delicious. We made sure to save all of the cappings to take home and melt into a beautiful bar of pure beeswax. There are so many ways that we can use beeswax.

Did you know that beeswax used to be confused with pollen? Some people thought they were one in the same. But pollen as we know comes from flowers and wax comes from bees. Honeybees have eight wax glands on their abdomen. When they eat honey, that allows them to be able to draw the wax from their wax glands, which comes out in flakes, and the honey bee then puts it in her mouth and chews it to mix with bee saliva as well as other enzymes to make it more pliable and easier to work with. Honeybees use wax to make hexagon cells used to store eggs, honey, pollen, and nectar.

Wax can be used not only in the hive but also for many different products sold in the world. Some of the products include candles, pharmaceuticals, food, cosmetics and cheese coating to preserve the cheese as it ages. It's also used as an ingredient in making shoe polish, furniture polish, modeling waxes and a lot more.

Encaustic painting is another way we can use beeswax. Sometimes it is called hot wax painting. We can mix colored

pigments or oil paint with heated wax and then brush the melted wax onto a surface where it will harden and last for many years. We have actually found encaustic panel paintings that have survived from the Roman-Egyptians in the 1st century BC.

There are many different types of wax in the world. Some of these include beeswax, soy wax, paraffin wax, palm wax, etc.

Many people love beeswax over other types of wax. Why do people use beeswax instead of other types of wax? Beeswax holds non-allergenic substances that helps protect the skin from airborne allergies. When lit, beeswax candles create negative ions that clean the air of dust, dander, pollen, and other allergies that are airborne. Beeswax is a good treatment for allergies like hay fever and asthma. It is also a good cure for relieving the symptoms of sleeplessness and depression.

Also, Beeswax is one of the best waxes to use because it is the easiest wax to work with and holds its form. Because it's a harder wax to melt, it then makes it easier to ship to other places during the summer time. Beeswax is also the best wax to use when making candles because it does not drip or leave soot. Other waxes either don't hold their shape or melt too fast.

I look forward to harvesting our honey each year and collect the white cappings. Not to mention taking a taste of the sweet honey as it pours out of the extractor into a bucket. My next article will be about this golden yummy liquid.

See you at the next gathering!

---

*Queen Hope with Princess Willow tasting varieties of Honey At Walker Honey Farm, helped by Alyssa, Clint Walker's Shop Manager*



## 2016 Texas Honey Princess Willow Lanchester

This year I would like to share about something that I touched on in my first article. That is the numerous beekeeping organizations around the world that are combatting poverty and other challenges of our society through beekeeping. Through the work of these organizations, their goals of relieving poverty are being realized in many areas. Not only do they reach their intended goals, but many beneficial side effects result from their work. There is one specific organization that I would like to go a little more in depth on. That foundation is Bees Abroad. More specifically, I would like to share some of their stories.

In 2012 Bees Abroad began a project in Hoima, Uganda. As in every project done by Bees Abroad they send in experts to study the environment and practices of successful local beekeepers to construct their training plan. The experts also examine what resources are available to their beekeepers. Once they have done this they begin to provide beekeeping training to the local beekeepers and those who are just starting out in beekeeping. As a part of their training they teach their students how to build and make the hives, equipment, and bee suits out of the resources that are readily available to them. This project in Hoima, Uganda was specifically targeted to help empower impoverished women, so they might support themselves and their families. Through Bees Abroad people are aided to become self-sustaining and are taught not only about beekeeping, but also about money management and how to market their products. The women supported by Bees Abroad in Hoima, Uganda are selling honey and other hive products to the local stores and are able to support themselves and their families. Now that this project has been successful and the knowledge passed on, it marks the end of Bees Abroad's participation in the project. These beekeepers have been trained and are ready to train others.

Among the world's least developed countries is Malawi, a largely agricultural country attempting to overcome poverty, poor education, and gender discrimination. Despite these difficult circumstances Bees Abroad has made great success in the area. Beekeeping is a perfect match, for there were already many excellent beekeepers in the region and it also helps to improve the environment. Beekeeping also gives women a means of obtaining

a significant income.

Not only has the beekeeping training provided by Bees Abroad helped boost the economy for beekeepers and farmers, but it has also helped to preserve the environment. Beekeepers planted many trees to provide a nectar source for their bees. This provided security against erosion of their delicate soil. As of 2011 there were over 90 beekeeping groups in Malawi that are becoming self-sustaining.

Recently Bees Abroad partnered with Ashanti Development, a charity that helps to improve the lives of people in the Ashanti region of Ghana, to help relieve poverty. They focused on teaching new beekeeping techniques and how to turn beekeeping into a business. To reach more people they would often select two people per village to train so they could take their knowledge back to their own communities. In this particular project they focused on training beekeepers on how to train others, and were astounded at their enthusiasm to do so. It is crucial that people who are familiar with the region and the local bees are the mentors for future generations. For example keeping African bees is very different from keeping European honey bees, because they do not tolerate being handled and manipulated very well. You can't simply catch a swarm of African bees and put them in a hive and expect them to stay. Instead African swarms must be baited if there are to stay. Another difference is that African bees will abscond if they are handled too frequently. Those who keep African bees will very seldom examine their bees other than to extract honey. It is things like these that are vital that beekeepers of these regions are taught. It is with much hard work and the enthusiasm of local beekeepers that make this project possible.

Whether it is tailored training courses, teaching beekeeping skills, helping the environment, improving crops, or training the mentors of tomorrow, Bees Abroad is changing the lives of thousands of people. Bees Abroad has projects in 13 counties and that list is growing.



---

*I am fascinated by the interactions between bees.  
I am fascinated by the interactions between beekeepers.  
-Marla Spivak*





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# Listing of Local Beekeepers' Associations in Texas with TBA Delegate and Regular Meeting Information Shown for Each

Please forward any changes and/or additions to  
John J. Talbert, Executive Secretary, [john@sabinecreekhoney.com](mailto:john@sabinecreekhoney.com)

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## Alamo Area Beekeepers Association

Rick Fink - (210) 872-4569  
[president@alamobees.org](mailto:president@alamobees.org)  
[www.alamobees.org](http://www.alamobees.org)  
**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday on odd # months; at  
Helotes Ind. Baptist Church  
15335 Bandera Rd., Helotes @ 7 pm

## Austin Area Beekeepers Association

Lance Wilson - (512) 619-3700  
[lw@ausapts.com](mailto:lw@ausapts.com)  
8701 North Mopac Expressway #150, Austin TX 78759  
[www.meetup.com/Austin-Urban-Beekeeping/](http://www.meetup.com/Austin-Urban-Beekeeping/)  
**Meeting:** 3rd Monday of each month  
Old Quarry Library, 7051 Village Center Dr., Austin TX 78731 @ 7pm

## Brazoria County Beekeepers Association

Kenneth Nugent - (979) 922-9725  
418 CR 243, Angleton, TX 77515  
[knugent@gmail.com](mailto:knugent@gmail.com)  
[bcba@brazoria-county-beekeepers-association.com](http://bcba@brazoria-county-beekeepers-association.com)  
[www.brazoria-county-beekeepers-association.com](http://www.brazoria-county-beekeepers-association.com)  
**Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month at 6:45pm;  
Brazoria County Extension Office  
21017 County Road 171, Angleton TX 77515

## Brazos Valley Beekeepers Association

Chris Barnes - (979) 220-0004  
[info@bvbeeks.org](mailto:info@bvbeeks.org)  
5105 Wallis Rd., Bryan, TX 77808  
**Meetings:** 3rd. Tuesday of each month at 7pm

## Caddo Trace Beekeepers Association

Roger Farr - (979) 436-5310  
6073 Farm Road 2348, Mount Pleasant, TX 75455  
[rdfarr@gmail.com](mailto:rdfarr@gmail.com)  
**Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm  
Titus County Agrilife Extension Bldg, 1708 Industrial Rd.,  
Mount Pleasant, TX 75455

## Central Texas Beekeepers Association

Michael Kelling - (979) 277-0411  
[CentralTexasBeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:CentralTexasBeekeepers@gmail.com)  
[www.centraltexasbeekeepers.org](http://www.centraltexasbeekeepers.org)  
1997 Tonckawa Hills Ln - Brenham, TX 77833  
**Meetings:** Monthly on the 4th Thursday  
(except November and December) at the  
Washington County Fairgrounds  
Brenham @ 7 pm

## Coastal Bend Beekeepers Association

Pete Hartje - (361) 229-0512  
[phartje@juno.com](mailto:phartje@juno.com)  
1330 Whispering Sands, Port Aransas, TX 78373  
**Meetings:** First Thursday of each month at 6:30pm;  
City of Corpus Garden Senior Center  
5325 Greely Dr., Corpus Christi, TX 78412

## Collin County Hobby Beekeepers Assn.

John J. Talbert - (214) 532-9241  
[john@sabinecreekhoney.com](mailto:john@sabinecreekhoney.com)  
P O Box 6 - Josephine, TX 75164  
[www.ccbba.org](http://www.ccbba.org)  
**Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month;  
Collin College Conference Center, (Central Park Campus)  
2200 West University Drive, McKinney, TX 75071 @ 6:30 pm

## Concho Valley Beekeepers Association

Mel Williams - (325) 668-5080  
[honeybeemanwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:honeybeemanwilliams@gmail.com)  
**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of each month Jan-Nov  
Texas A&M Research and Extension Center  
7887 US Hwy 87 N, San Angelo @ 7:30 pm

## Deep East Texas Beekeepers Association

Ellen Reeder - (337) 499-6826  
[ellenswartz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ellenswartz@sbcglobal.net)  
1299 Farm Road 3017, San Augustine, TX 75972  
**Meetings:** 1st Tuesday of each month  
San Augustine Chamber of Commerce Building  
San Augustine, TX 75972

## Denton County Beekeepers Association

Christina Beck - (940) 765-6845  
[christinadbeck@gmail.com](mailto:christinadbeck@gmail.com)  
2217 Denison, Denton, TX 76201  
**Meetings:** 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm  
2216 Bolivar St., Denton, TX 76201

## Dino-Beekeepers Association

Chip Hough (817) 559-0564  
[dino-beeclub@hotmail.com](mailto:dino-beeclub@hotmail.com)  
[www.dinobee.com](http://www.dinobee.com)  
**Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday of month  
Glen Rose Citizens Center  
209 SW Barnard St, Glen Rose, TX 76043

## East Texas Beekeepers Association

Richard Counts - (903) 566-6789  
[dickcounts@bigplanet.com](mailto:dickcounts@bigplanet.com)  
16239 Audrey Lane - Arp, TX 75750  
[www.etba.info](http://www.etba.info)  
**Meetings:** 1st Thursday of each month;  
Whitehouse United Methodist Church,  
405 West Main (Hwy 346), Whitehouse @ 6:45 pm

## Erath County Beekeepers Association

James K Gray - (254) 485-3238  
[grayjamesk@jkggray.com](mailto:grayjamesk@jkggray.com)  
675 Turkey Ridge Road, Stephenville, TX 76401  
**Meetings:**

## Fayette County Beekeepers Association

Ron Chess - (979) 525-9254  
[ragsdale@industryinet.com](mailto:ragsdale@industryinet.com)  
**Meetings:** First Saturday of the month, Feb, April,  
June, August, October and December at 5:00pm  
Fayette County Agriculture Building  
240 Svoboda Lane, La Grange, TX 78945

## Fort Bend Beekeepers Association

1402 Band Road, Rosenberg, TX 77471  
(281) 633-7029 (during office hours)  
Jeff McMullan - Secretary - Treasurer  
(281) 980-2363 (home): (281) 615-5346 (cell)  
[jeffmcmullan@comcast.net](mailto:jeffmcmullan@comcast.net)  
**Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday of each month (except  
December) in the Fort Bend County  
Bud O'Shieles Community Center  
1330 Band Road, Rosenberg, TX 77471



# Local Beekeepers' Associations in Texas

## Fredericksburg Beekeepers Association

Joe Bader - (830) 537-4040

[joebees@gmail.com](mailto:joebees@gmail.com)

724 Cypress Bend Dr., Boerne, TX 78006

**Meetings:** Third Thursday of even number months (excl. Dec)

Gillespie County AgriLife Extension Office

95 Frederick Rd., Fredericksburg, TX 78624 @ 6:30 pm

## Harris County Beekeepers Association

Gary Parks (713) 906-1805

[gparks@geparkslaw.com](mailto:gparks@geparkslaw.com)

[www.harriscountybeekeepers.org](http://www.harriscountybeekeepers.org)

**Meetings:** 4th Tuesday of each month

Golden Acres Center - 5001 Oak Avenue

Pasadena @ 7 pm

## Heart of Texas Beekeepers Association

Gary Bowles - (254) 214-4514

[gbowles@peoplepc.com](mailto:gbowles@peoplepc.com)

**Meetings:** 4th Tuesday of each month

(except December) at Vegas Buffet,

505 N. Valley Mills Dr., Waco, TX 76710

Dinner at 6 pm, Meeting at 7 pm

## Hill County Beekeepers Association

Art Wharton (254) 221-5325

[ohyougotit@aim.com](mailto:ohyougotit@aim.com)

**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of the month

at Hill County Court House Annex

126 S. Covington Street, Hillsboro, TX 76645

Social at 6pm, Meeting at 7pm

## Houston Beekeepers Association

Rita Willhite - (832) 654-7317

[rr.willhite@yahoo.com](mailto:rr.willhite@yahoo.com)

7806 Braeburn Valley Dr. - Houston, TX 77074

[www.houstonbeekeepers.org](http://www.houstonbeekeepers.org)

**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of each month; Bayland

Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St.

Houston @ 7:30 pm

## Lamar County Beekeepers Association

Scott Brinker - (501) 307-5111

[lamarcoba@gmail.com](mailto:lamarcoba@gmail.com)

**Meetings:** 1st Thursday of the month: Lamar County Fairgrounds

570 E Center Street, Paris, TX 75460 @ 6pm

(First Mtg April 7th 2016)

## Liberty County Beekeepers Association

Cameron Crane - (409) 658-3800

[info@libertycountybeekeepers.org](mailto:info@libertycountybeekeepers.org)

2300 Belevvedere Dr., Baytown, TX 77520

[www.libertycountybeekeepers.org](http://www.libertycountybeekeepers.org)

**Meetings:** 1st Tuesday of each month at 7pm

Business meeting at 6:30pm

Liberty Agrilife Extension Office

501 Palmer Avenue, Liberty TX

## Marshall Beekeeping Association

Beth Derr - (936) 591-2399

[marshallbeekeeping@gmail.com](mailto:marshallbeekeeping@gmail.com)

210 Meadowlark Dr. Jefferson, TX 75657

**Meetings:** 2nd Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm

Cumberland Presbyterian Church

501 Indian Springs Drive

Marshall, TX 75670

## Metro Beekeepers Association

Roger Evarrt, President

[evarttrog@yahoo.com](mailto:evarttrog@yahoo.com)

[www.metrobeekeepers.net](http://www.metrobeekeepers.net)

344 NW King St., Burleson, TX 76028

**Meetings:** 2nd Monday of each month; Southside Preservation Hall,

1519 Lipscomb St., Fort Worth TX

## Montgomery County Beekeepers Assn.

Doug Stanley

[mocobees@gmail.com](mailto:mocobees@gmail.com)

[www.mocobees.com](http://www.mocobees.com)

**Meetings:** 3rd Monday of each month at

Montgomery County Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road,

Conroe TX @ 7 pm (NewBee at 6:30pm)

## Northeast Texas Beekeepers Association

Jim Burt - (469) 371-4542

[burt.b@sbcglobal.net](mailto:burt.b@sbcglobal.net)

[netbacantontexas@outlook.com](mailto:netbacantontexas@outlook.com)

14158 Rainbow Dr., Forney, TX 75126

**Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday of each month; @ 6:30 pm

The Farm Bureau Building,

281 Hwy 243, Canton, TX 75103

## Pineywoods Beekeepers Association

Terry McFall - (409) 384-3626

[tdmcfall@botmail.com](mailto:tdmcfall@botmail.com)

1700 FM 252, Jasper, TX 75951

**Meetings:** 2nd Thursday of each month

Chamber of Commerce Building,

1615 S Chestnut, Lufkin @ 7:00 pm

## Red River Valley Beekeepers Assn.

Kerry Roach (940) 249-0947

[kerrysbees43@gmail.com](mailto:kerrysbees43@gmail.com)

PO Box 8445, Wichita Falls, TX 76301

**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of each month

(except December) Bolin Science Hall, Room 209

Midwestern St. University

Wichita Falls @ 7 pm

## Travis County Beekeepers Assn.

Tanya Phillips - (512) 560-3732

[info@traviscountybeekeepers.org](mailto:info@traviscountybeekeepers.org)

9874 Wier Loop Circle, Austin, TX 78736

[www.traviscountybeekeepers.org](http://www.traviscountybeekeepers.org)

**Meetings:** First Monday of the month at 7pm

Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX 78704

## Trinity Valley Beekeepers Association

Bob Richie - (214) 793-1516

[rgrichie@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rgrichie@sbcglobal.net)

8266 Barbaree Blvd., Dallas, TX 75228

[www.tvbees.org](http://www.tvbees.org)

**Meetings:** 2nd Tuesday of each month

(except August), Continuing Education Center,

C.C.Young Facility, 4847 West Lawther Dr.,

Dallas, TX 75214 @ 7 - 9 pm

## Walker County Area Beekeepers Assn.

Mark Short - (281) 387-8124

[mshort5150@yahoo.com](mailto:mshort5150@yahoo.com)

PO Box 9535, Huntsville, TX 77340

**Meetings:** Last Thursday of each month

at Walker County Extension Office, 102 Tam Rd.

Huntsville, TX 77320 @ 7 pm

## Williamson County Area Beekeepers Assn.

Jimmie Oakley - (512) 388-3630

[jimmie.oakley@gmail.com](mailto:jimmie.oakley@gmail.com) - [www.wcaba.org](http://www.wcaba.org)

425 Sapphire Lane, Jarrell, TX 76537

**Meetings:** 4th Thursday of each month

(except December) 1st United Methodist Church -

McKinney Ministry Center, 410 E University Ave.

Georgetown, TX 78626 @ 7 pm

## Directors -at-Large and Local Associations Served:

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<b>Area 1</b>	<b>Tammy Barr</b> <i>tammybarrbrands@hotmail.com</i> 182 Cardinal Lane Fredericksburg, TX 78624 (325) 642-2012	Alamo Area Beekeepers Association Concho Valley Beekeepers Association Erath County Beekeepers Association Dino-Beekeepers Association Fredericksburg Beekeepers Association Metro Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 2</b>	<b>Lisa Dittfurth</b> <i>dittfurths@gmail.com</i> 12992 CR 577 Anna, TX 75409 (972) 542-4419	Caddo Trace Beekeepers Association Collin County Beekeepers Association Denton County Beekeepers Association North East Texas Beekeepers Association Red River Beekeepers Association Trinity Valley Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 3</b>	<b>Lance Wilson</b> <i>lance@apartmentexperts.com</i> 17021 Conway Springs Court Austin, TX 78717 (512) 619-3700	Austin Area Beekeepers Association Fayette County Beekeepers Association Heart of Texas Beekeepers Association Travis County Beekeepers Association Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 4</b>	<b>Leesa Hyder</b> <i>lhyder@swbell.net</i> 82 Sandpebble Dr. The Woodlands, TX 77381 (281) 460-0344	Brazos County Beekeepers Association Central Texas Beekeepers Association Hill County Beekeepers Association Montgomery County Beekeepers Association Walker County Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 5</b>	<b>Harrison Rogers</b> <i>h-rogers@comcast.net</i> 5402 Greenhill Road Brookside Village, TX 77581 (281) 468-0019	Brazoria County Beekeepers Association Coastal Bend Beekeepers Association Fort Bend Beekeepers Association Harris County Beekeepers Association Houston Beekeepers Association
<b>Area 6</b>	<b>Cameron Crane</b> <i>cameron@cameroncrane.com</i> 2300 Belvedere Dr. Baytown, TX 77520 (409) 658-3800	East Texas Beekeepers Association Deep East Texas Beekeepers Association Liberty County Beekeepers Association Marshall Beekeepers Association Piney Woods Beekeepers Association Lamar County Beekeepers Association



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