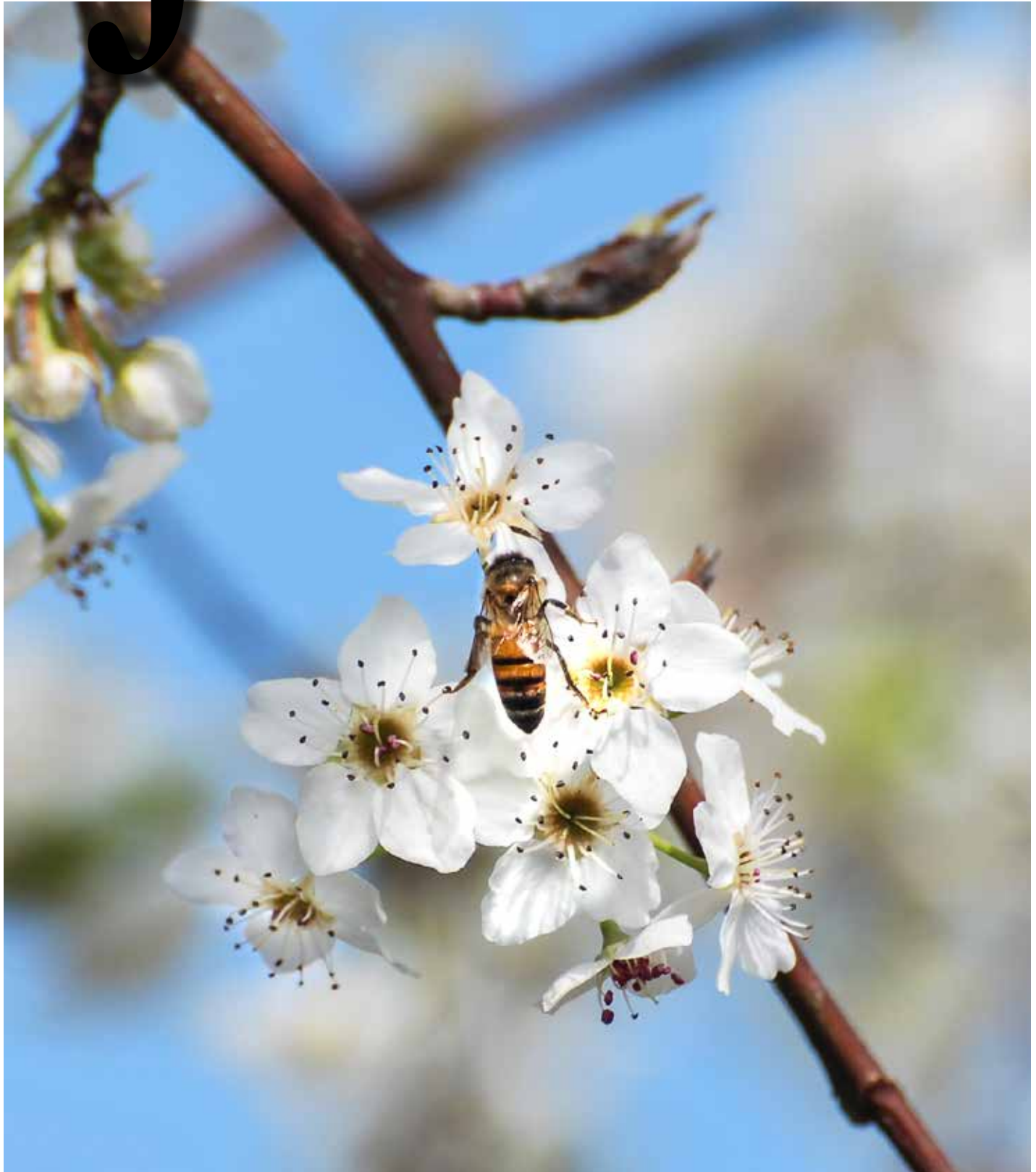


The

Texas Beekeepers Association



# Journal



Mar/Apr 2016

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Issue 16-2



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## President's Report

*from Chris Moore*



I am always glad to start seeing new leaves this time of year, especially on the Pecan trees. But mid-Spring means work, work, work. Warm weather in California during the Almond bloom helped the bees pollinate quickly. Our hives returned from the 3900 mile trip. Now we are busy splitting our bees for the next two weeks. We re-queen all our colonies every year. Keeping young queens helps prevent swarming and typically gives us a healthy more productive colony.

TBA had a great meeting at the Texas A&M Bee Lab on Feb 20th. We invited representatives from each of the 35 Local Texas Bee clubs to update them on what TBA is currently working on and to ask for input on any local issues or suggestions on what we can do to help all Texas beekeepers. One of the topics we discussed:

### **Can I make money keeping honey bees ?**

Beekeeping is expensive. If you have 1 hive or 1000 hives, consider beekeeping a business. You have your initial investment, then after much work you should see a return on investment - income.

It takes proper management and timely maintenance to maintain healthy hives. If you take the time and effort to

maintain healthy hives, that gives you the best opportunity to produce your return on investment, Real Texas Honey.

### **Why Real Texas Honey and not just Honey ?**

Lets look at Economics. Texas has ~28m people and the average honey consumption per person is 1.4 lbs. That's a total of ~39m lbs. Of that, roughly 40% is sold retail and the rest is ingredient or foodservice use. So Texas buys ~15m lbs. of honey per year yet we only produce ~8 million lbs. Simple Economics - if you have a high demand for a product you receive a higher return.

That's where things get frustrating. Many Texas consumers think they are buying Texas produced honey. They go to the market or the grocery store and there are Texas businesses selling "Texas" or "Local" honey but often it is not, and no one knows where it's coming from ? Did you know ~70% of the honey sold in the US is imported ?

How do we let consumers know where to get "Real Texas Honey" and promote "Real Texas Beekeepers" ? TBA created *RealTexasHoney.com*. Beekeepers can register to be listed on the locator map so consumers in their area can contact them directly. If you sell honey from 1 hive or 1000, sign up now.

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*Cover Photo by Isabella Crawford, East Texas Beekeepers Association*

## Vice President's Report *from Mark Hedley*



### March Madness

Back in my college days, at this time of year I would scramble to assess players, coaches, and stats while filling out brackets to select teams that would go all the way to the NCAA Championship. Fast-forward about 30 years and March Madness has a whole new definition...

I recently started thinking recently that there really is something to this whole groundhog thing. We have experienced more 75 to 80 degree days at the end of February into March than memory serves. Henbit, Wild Plum, Agarita, Redbud and Cleveland Pear trees are all blooming like mad! Even today I saw Iris and dandelion in full splendor. It is sheer madness for all this to happen in my part of Central Texas through the first week of March. It is supposed to be 86 degrees here next week. Insane.

We are now scrambling to get supers out of storage and aired out as the hives have been building rapidly and the girls are hauling in pollen by the pant-load. We are all praying that the rain keeps coming and the temps remain above 75. We also hope for an occasional break to get into bee yards. Glad I changed to off-road-traction tires on the bee truck this year.

The spirits and mood of people in the county is now high. Grain crops discussed during the "coffee clutch" back in January held little hope, and now those same ranchers can't seem to get enough cattle to graze it down. After a dismal honey crop in 2015, our hopes for a great 2016 were high, yet the rain hadn't come yet as Uncle El Nino just didn't come to visit, or stay for supper. Better late than never.

I have determined that this thing we call beekeeping is pure madness, especially in the month of March and April as it seems to be when our brackets are determined – too much rain and we lose; not enough rain and we lose; the right amount of rain at the right times, with the right temperatures and we go all the way to the championships. Top seed is always Mother Nature, and we know she is fickle. God willing, the point spread is in our favor

this year and we will make the championships. I love this game!

It's a great time to check your equipment inventory. Bees generally won't wait for you to build extra frames and boxes, let alone paint them. It's always good to have some on the shelf. If you haven't thought about splitting hives before, it may be a good time to get serious about that process. Ask a local club member for help if it is your first time. Better to split than lose your bees in a swarm. If you re-queened in the fall, the likelihood of a swarm may decrease a bit as long as you keep the "box" resources coming. Split too hard and your bees may not build up fast enough to haul in the nectar from a strong flow. Have any sugar on the shelf for making syrup to help those nucs / packages build up? Yep, it's March Madness time and how you play this month may take you to the Championships and win this year too!



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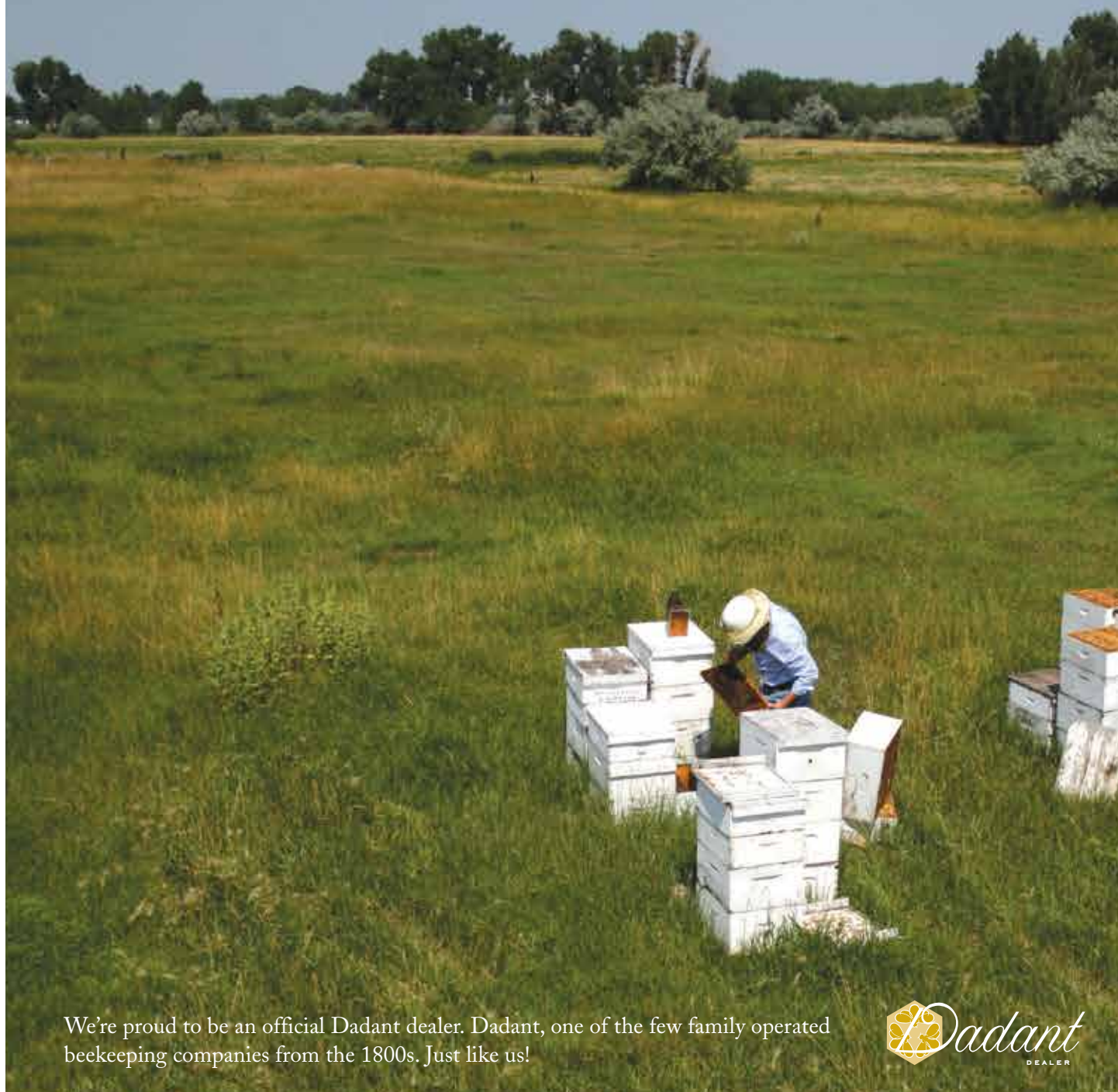


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# Summer Clinic 2016

**Saturday June 18th**

**Lone Star Convention & Expo Center**

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**Featuring Guest Speaker:**

**Ross Conrad**

**Author of: Natural Beekeeping:  
Organic Approaches to Modern  
Apiculture**

**Classes Available for ALL Levels of Beekeeping**

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Top Bar Hives  
Making a business out of a hobby!  
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Drones  
Marketing your Honey  
And more...*

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Honey Extraction***



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the Newest Innovative  
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**Register at *texasbeekeepers.org*  
\$50 per person, \$90 per couple, \$25 for age 15 and under  
(Includes Lunch)**

Please register by June 12th

## Summer Clinic Registration Form

Use this form or register online at [www.texasbeekeepers.org](http://www.texasbeekeepers.org)



### Summer Clinic Registration June 18th., 2016

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate # of attendees

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50- Individual (\$65 after 6/5, before 6/16)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$90- 2 Adults same household (\$120 after 6/5, before 6/16)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 - Child 16 and under

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Paid

Check made payable to: TBA

Mail to:

Shirley Doggett

400 County Road 440

Thrall, Texas 76578

Early Registration ends June 5, 2016

At the Door Registration (Day of Event) \$65, Individual - \$120, 2 Adults same household

**Calendar of Events  
Keep these dates free**

**Summer Clinic  
Montgomery County Fairgrounds  
June 18th., 2016**

**Annual Convention  
Belton Expo Center  
November 3rd - 5th, 2016**

### **Summer Clinic 2016** **Register Early Please**

Early Registration ends June 5th 2016

\$50 per person, \$90 per couple

Registration 6/6 through 6/16  
\$65 per person, \$120 per couple

Registration at event  
\$70 per person, \$130 per couple

Children under 16  
\$25



# Summer Clinic

## June 18th., 2016 - Lone Star Convention & Expo Center

**Keynote Speaker - Ross Conrad**  
**Soil Carbon Restoration**  
Open to all levels of Beekeeper

### NEW BEEKEEPERS

(0-1 YEARS EXPERIENCE)

Honey Bee Biology and Behavior  
How to Get Started - Equipment Essentials  
Buying Bees, Installation and Apiary Setup  
Annual Management

### INTERMEDIATE

(2 OR MORE YEARS EXPERIENCE)

Honey Bee Biology and Behavior  
Nutrition Management  
General Management  
Varroa Monitoring  
Effective Varroa Management Through IPM  
Pesticide Management  
Products of the Hive  
The Making of Mead

### ALL BEEKEEPERS

Natural Beekeeping  
Honey Bee Plants of Texas  
Apitherapy  
Beescapes  
Top Bar Hives  
Growing Pains- Hobby to Sideline  
Building a Sideline Honey House  
Texas Master Beekeeping Program  
Honey Extraction

### BEGINNER

(1 OR MORE YEARS EXPERIENCE)

Feeding Basics  
Splits for Beginners  
Pest Management  
Swarm Capture

### ADVANCED

(3 OR MORE YEARS EXPERIENCE)

Sales (Bottling) and Marketing  
Intro to Queen Rearing  
Splitting Hives  
Latest in Lab Research  
Supersedure  
Drone Biology  
Oxalic Acid  
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A Panel of Experts available to answer questions on all Honey Bee matters

### KIDS LEARNING ABOUT BEES

Honey Bee Biology and Behavior  
How to Get Started  
Annual Management

# Bees, Bee Education and Bee Association Business

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



Activity has certainly picked up at our apiary in northeast Texas, as we're sure it has in your locale. So, let's jump right in with our most recent activities and learning experiences.

Queenless!

On a warm early-February day we checked our bees and found all three hives happy, well populated, and with plenty of groceries in the form of pollen and capped honey. All appeared to be in good order.

In mid-February we checked them again. The warm temperatures made us afraid they might start brood rearing too soon with too few bees and colder temperatures surely on the horizon. We found one queen with two frames of brood and no brood at all in the other two hives. We thought she was just an eager beaver in starting so soon.

In late-February we checked them again since it looked like winter was ending and spring was in the air with numerous plants beginning to flower. This time we had a nasty surprise. The two hives with no brood still did not have any brood and both were queenless and one had been reduced to laying workers!

It was still too early in the season to start raising queens since there were no drones with which to mate. What to do? We put into practice what we had learned from our mentors and read in the bee books. First, we took some young brood from our brood rearing hive and give it to the queenless non-laying worker hive so that they could start to rear an emergency queen. This was not an ideal solution but, we thought it might prevent the workers from beginning to lay in this hive.



*A frame full of drone cells from a laying worker colony  
is a sad sight to see.*



*A Spring chore - mulching the orchard and the area  
around our apiary to keep down the weeds and  
provide level footing for the beekeepers.*

Next, we had a mess to clean up, the mess from the laying-worker hive. We took the entire hive about 500 feet from our apiary and separated the frames and removed all the bees. Frame by frame we shook all the bees onto the grass; this would leave all the young workers behind who had never been outside the hive, unable to go back to our apiary. We placed the frames with resources of pollen and honey into an empty super, making sure to cover it each time to prevent potentially laying workers from getting back on the frames. Those frames with drone brood we put into a plastic, bee-tight, storage box to take to the freezer for a few days. Since we are an all medium frame operation, moving resources and brood between boxes is easy for us. We then transported the two supers with resources back to the apiary where the foragers who had flown back, were waiting on us. Lastly, we gave them two frames of brood to begin rearing an emergency queen and to keep the workers from again laying unfertilized eggs.



*The forager bees made it back to the apiary before we did!*



## Queen Rearing

OK, now that we had solved the immediate problem, we took deep breaths and realize that indeed Spring was coming and that we had better get our queen rearing operation into gear.

Last year we used the Nicot system to raise queens for our splits and for sales. The system worked well, but we split our bees too hard and had limited success in making increase. Being one year smarter we are ready to try again. The Nicot system is a small box fitted with 110 removable cell cups. We found the queen, enclosed her, and left her for 24 hours to lay eggs, all of the same approximate age. On day two we released the queen and the nurse bees began to tend the eggs and ultimately the developing larvae. On day four, we harvested the emerged and developing larvae in their removable cell cups and placed them onto empty frames fitted with ten cell cup holders each. We placed these frames into queenless cell builder hives that are rich with resources. Nurse bees to the developing larvae continue to feed royal jelly and draw out the cells to the familiar peanut shape of a queen. On day 14 we will remove the ripe queen cells from the cell builder hives and place into their final homes, our new splits, or allow them to emerge into a roller cage which will protect them from death by the first emerging queen. As we write this in mid-March, we've had to dodge a few rain drops to do the required manipulations for our queen rearing. We've also been more selective on the queen cups we harvest from the Nicot box in hopes of having greater success in raising queens. We are eagerly awaiting day 14 when we should have ripe queen cells!



*Even Texas bees love to feast on pollen from our almond orchard!*

## Mentoring

Our local bee association, Caddo Trace, provides a mentor for every student that takes our Introductory Beekeeping class. The mentor conducts, at a minimum, three lessons with each mentee. The first is a visit to the mentor's apiary to see how they do things and to allow the mentees their first hands on experience with live bees. The second lesson is at the mentee's apiary just before their bees arrive, to make sure location, equipment, and supplies are all set for a successful launch into beekeeping. The mentee may buy bees from the mentor, and if so the bees are delivered on this second lesson. Lastly, about a week later, the mentor assists the mentee with their first hive inspection. Some of our mentors continue the relationship by making monthly visits to check on

the mentee for the entire first year.

We have two mentees this year and had them out to visit our apiary in mid-March. The day was beautifully sunny with little wind, so it was a perfect opportunity to practice with happy, live bees for the first time. After the inspection and further training, we enjoyed lunch together, and talked about next steps with our mentees.



*Remember your first hive inspection? Here, we're walking two NewBees through theirs in our apiary.*

## Plans

Our desire for 2016 is to increase our apiary to six hives. We have seen too many times the value of having enough resources in the form of live bees, queens, and honey- and pollen-filled frames to know how important a larger apiary would be. However, beekeeping is a hobby for us, and we have no ambitions of becoming a side-liner with more than 25 hives. For us, that sounds too much like work and would negate the reasons we got into beekeeping in the first place. We enjoy seeing the bees in our garden and orchard, we enjoy the pollination benefits of increased crop production, we enjoy having useful products from the hive to sell or give away, and we enjoy meeting the nice people we call fellow beekeepers!

We are also increasing our learning so we become better beekeepers. Roger is brushing up his bee biology in preparation for taking the Advanced level test for the Texas Master Beekeeper Program in April. We both are enjoying reading Kim Flottum's Better Beekeeping to challenge our thinking and practice of keeping bees.

---

So, what are your plans and what are the steps you are taking to get you there? We'll be at the TBA summer clinic in June and hope to see you there!

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)

# Undiscovered Beeswax Awesomeness!

*from Robin Young, Metro Beekeepers Association*



Proverbs 16:24 “Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bone.”

This verse means many things, but what I have come to understand is that every item from the beehive has a healing use. Let me share with you just one of those uses.

I was at the Denton community market with my husband selling our honey and bee products when an older gentleman, around 65, stopped by. He removed his hat, took a sample of our Beeswax Hand Cream, smeared it on his head and then walked on. I thought this was odd. Next week he came by with his wife. His eyes started to well up with tears as he told me about his skin cancer and that when the doctor cut off bits from his head it would never heal. The blood that flows to your skull is at such a high pressure that at random times blood would start dripping down his face. He was so happy to find something that helped him heal. Nurses and others that wash their hands often use it, and men like that it does not have a “girly” scent.

When people try the hand cream, here is what I tell them: “A little goes a long way. I use it on my hands elbows, heels of my feet, basically any dry bits. Try it and in the middle of the week you will notice your hands feel awesome. Then come back next week and get a jar. We sell 2oz. for \$5.”

I would like to thank Myra Smith and Linda Pelham for sharing this recipe. I decided when I started my honey business, “Soul Honey”, that its mission was to share God’s healing and all benefits beekeeping has to offer. Till next time, enjoy the recipe Bee Friends.

Heat water in a separate pan to 160F (I heat the water in a pan on the range burner with another thermometer in it). Measure borax into a 2 or 4 cup Pyrex measuring cup. Pour the 160F water into the borax cup and whisk to dissolve borax.

## BEESWAX HAND CREAM

6 oz. Mineral oil

8 oz. Distilled Water

2 oz. Clean Beeswax

2 Teaspoons Borax

Long Candy Thermometer

Scale to Weigh the Beeswax

Place decanter on a hot plate on a low/medium setting SLOWLY heat the oil and beeswax to 160F. Place the thermometer into the decanter. Heat slowly. This may take 20-30 minutes.

When the beeswax and oil have reached 160F, remove decanter from the heat and pour water and borax mixture into the oil and beeswax mixture. Stirring continuously with the whisk for a full 5 minutes or until the mixture reaches 140F. The last 30 seconds stir slowly to eliminate bubbles. Pour into containers and allow to cool before placing top on the container. This will eliminate moisture buildup.

I use small popsicle sticks about 2’-3’ long or the longer ones also work for samples at the market.







We clean the beeswax by melting in water and straining through a clean white tea towel. Pour the beeswax into rubber oven ready cupcake molds for easy measuring.



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# Texas Beekeeper Association's Club "Buzz"

*from Chari Elam, Communications Coordinator*

As of March 11th, 2016, the Texas Beekeepers Association is proudly buzzing with 35 Texas bee clubs! As TBA grows and improves the benefits of membership, we are seeing more and more clubs form and join our great association.

## **Bell/Coryell Beekeepers Association**

One of the newest member clubs comes out of Killeen, Texas. The Bell/Coryell Beekeepers Association was started in April of 2015 by Side-Liner beekeeper, Jack Isbell. At the first meeting Jack was elected President and Dennis Herbert, Vice President. At that time, Dennis also served as Vice President of the Heart of Texas Beekeepers Association. The two clubs met on different nights, so this wasn't an issue for him and his wife Annette. Dennis is a Wildlife Biologist and Natural Resource Manager, and owner of Conservation 1 Wildlife and Land Management Services.

October (2015) brought sad news of the passing of Jack Isbell. "I didn't know Jack prior to the organizational meeting of the B\_C club. Jack was a very intelligent man and always faithful to God and the church. Over the few months I knew Jack he taught me much about bees and my relationship with God," said Dennis. As protocol dictated, Dennis became President, and soon made the decision to step down as VP of Heart of Texas.

## **Getting stung by the Beekeeping bug**

As Chief of Natural Resources - Fish and Wildlife at Ft. Hood for 33 years, Dennis had an Entomologist working for him. When he learned about her receiving swarm calls, it started him thinking about the Honey Bee and the need for beekeeper intervention. "It seemed that the need was for more beekeepers with a few hives each and spread them out, something more like it used to be when we still had small farms and bees on each farm," said Dennis. "I wasn't sure how to accomplish this at the time. It took a year or two of thinking about how to get us (Texas) back to the 1940's, so to speak."

In 2006, after having retired in 2005 from Fort Hood, Dennis decided it was time to become a Beekeeper! He also purchased a small retail store in Troy, Texas, selling Texas gifts and furniture. This gave him, as he said, "Plenty of time to consider the possibilities of changing the face of Texas and beekeeping back to something similar to the 1940's and 50's."

## **Author of the "original legislation" on Agricultural Exemption for an Apiary**

In just a few short years, Dennis would have the chance to turn "possibilities" into "reality" in a very positive way for Texas beekeepers. In 2010, a gentleman walked into his store looking for Texas décor for his wife's new office in Austin. This man's wife just so happened to be the "Chief of Staff" for a newly elected Texas Representative. "People these days don't like to hear about God and his intervention in people's lives," said Dennis. "But, God brought the right person to our store..."

What happened next definitely proves that to be so...

In conversation with the gentleman, Dennis learned that Representative George Lavender was looking for a "simple" bill, that "might be easy to pass" in the hope of getting him some recognition in Austin. So, Dennis took the opportunity to tell this gentleman what he had been hoping to do for bees and beekeepers. After a series of conversations with the Representative's office, Dennis presented his draft of the "original legislation" allowing land used for beekeeping to qualify for an agricultural exemption for property taxes, to Representative Lavender's Chief of Staff. "She worked it through her boss and the necessary channels that the bill needed to proceed through," Dennis said.

The bill was introduced in the 2011 legislative session, and Dennis testified before the committee in the spring of 2011! The following is an exact quote from his testimony that day...

"You own 200 acres of cotton and have your Ag tax valuation; I live across the fence from you, own 15 acres and raise bees but I don't get an Ag valuation because I own bees rather than cows! Yet, my bees fly across the fence and pollinate your cotton making your crop. How is that right?" Apparently the entire committee agreed! The bill passed across the board!

## **Benefit to Small Scale Beekeepers**

Texas law, effective January 1, 2012, made it possible for beekeeping to qualify for an Agricultural exemption on property taxes. (TAIS website quote)

Chapter 23, Subchapter D, Sec. 23.51 (1) and (2) in the Tax Code states among other things the definition of "qualified open-space land" as well as specifically stating the following (in the very last sentence):

...The term also includes the use of land to raise or keep bees for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value, provided that the land used is not less than 5 or more than 20 acres. (Contact your local appraisal district for details on qualifications in your area.)

In speaking with Dennis, it was very obvious that he recognizes and appreciates the "blessing bestowed on him" of the right person, at the right time, walking into his little store in Troy, Texas that day. (George Lavender was only a two term Representative, with little else to his acclaim. This writer's research could find no recognition of this bill even being tied to Representative Lavender.) It is truly inspiring to speak with such a faith filled individual as Dennis, who took advantage of the opportunity given to him by the grace of God, to "change the face of Texas and beekeeping" and to have a positive impact on ALL small scale beekeepers through this legislation. You may dispute the acreage allowance or the hive allotments for the acreage, but the fact that WE as beekeepers, have an exemption at all, can very definitely be traced back to one individual, Dennis Herbert, who saw a door opened and walked through it for OUR benefit.

Hometown bee clubs are what make the TBA. Without these great individuals giving of their time to promote and educate their communities, the plight of the Honey Bee may never have had a chance. As far as Dennis Herbert, his impact on the "Small" beekeeper will forever be felt for generations to come.



# Sales Tax Exemption for Beekeepers

*from Joe Bader, Fredericksburg Beekeepers Association*

Texas law and the Texas State Comptroller offer beekeepers who are, “engaged in the production of agricultural or timber products for sale in the regular course of business an Ag/Timber Number. This number can be used to claim an exemption from Texas sales tax on the purchase of qualifying items.”

I am not an attorney or an accountant, so I can’t argue the fine points. I am a sideline beekeeper and have a long background as a sole proprietor. The law does not mention beekeeping specifically, but the state comptroller’s website specifically says that “persons engaged in aquaculture and apiculture” are eligible for an ag/timber sales tax number. Some of the thoughts expressed in this article are implications of the law. If you have specific questions, call the Texas comptroller’s office at 1-800-252-5555.

There are two important words in the law. The first is “exclusively”. If you use something exclusively for beekeeping and can’t reasonably use it for other things, it is in the exempt category. The other important word is “business”. This implies a profit motive. If you are keeping bees as a hobby, the exemption does not apply. If, on the other hand, you are selling honey or other beekeeping products with a motivation to make a profit, the sales tax exemption might apply.

If you sell honey and attempt to make a profit from your beekeeping, you are entitled to use a sales tax exemption for qualifying items. What are qualifying items? “Items used exclusively to produce timber products for sale or items used exclusively on a farm or ranch in the production of agricultural products for sale in the regular course of business.” That would include things like hive boxes, lumber and frames, hive tools, pollen substitute, and the law says this includes “machinery and equipment exclusively used in, and pollution control equipment required as a result of, the processing, packing, or marketing of agricultural products by an original producer at a location operated by the original producer for processing, packing, or marketing the producer’s own products if:

- (A) 50 percent or more of the products processed, packed, or marketed at or from the location are produced by the original producer and not purchased or acquired from others; and
- (B) the producer does not process, pack, or market for consideration any agricultural products that belong to other persons in an amount greater than five percent of the total agricultural products processed, packed, or marketed by the producer “. My interpretation is, for the small scale beekeeper who is only bottling for himself, this would include extractors, bottles, labels and marketing material.

Unlike retail sales tax, for the ag number there are no quarterly

or annual reports to file with the state comptroller. All reporting is done by the vendors such as beekeeping suppliers and lumber yards. Like any other tax deduction, it is your responsibility to keep good records to be able to prove the item you purchased was used exclusively for your beekeeping production business.

The law does not discuss the size of an agricultural business, so there is no minimum number of hives. There is no requirement for profit, but the comptroller’s website uses the term “products for sale in the regular course of business” This implies that you are operating a business rather than keeping bees as a hobby. The law simply says you must be “in the production of agricultural products for sale.”

You don’t want to get crosswise with the state comptroller. They can fine you for misuse of the exemption. The fines can be ugly. The sales tax exemption would almost certainly not include things like a logo shirt for your beekeeping business or planting fruit trees for your bees. The use has to be exclusively for agricultural production. If you get an exemption, use it, but don’t abuse it.

One interesting item that is currently in question is protective gear. Suits, gloves and veils are mentioned in an old letter ruling as being taxable. I am currently working with the Comptroller’s office to get protective wear considered for exemption.

Until 2012, all you had to do was fill out a form with a vendor to receive the sales tax exemption. There were abuses to the system and vendors were left holding the bag. Today the comptroller issues an ID card which makes it easy to buy materials at retail stores. I registered with Home Depot and Tractor Supply. It takes only a couple of minutes to set up with a supplier once you have the ID card.

Certainly, if you are a commercial beekeeper or a sideline you qualify for this sales tax exemption. You are clearly in business. Nothing in this state law requires you to file with the IRS as a business. If you are working toward an ag special valuation on your property tax and attempting to make a profit, the ag sales tax number might be something for you to consider. My wife and I have 12 hives and have three of the 5 years history toward the ag exempt property tax requirement. We applied for and received an ag sales tax number. We use it cautiously, but we always use it on items directly for our beekeeping and honey production.

The application process is straight forward and easy. Go to [http://comptroller.texas.gov/taxinfo/agriculture/get\\_ready\\_texas.html](http://comptroller.texas.gov/taxinfo/agriculture/get_ready_texas.html) and choose the Register Now button to register on line, or they also offer a paper application if you would rather apply by fax or mail.

If you are a sideline, it is not easy to make a lot of profit from beekeeping. One of my rules of business is to keep taxes as low as possible. Even though the sales tax exemption only saves 6 to 8 percent on purchases, those savings add to your bottom line.



## THE ART OF QUEEN REARING

**Saturday, 7 May 2016**

Janice and John G. Thomas Honey Bee Facility, College Station, TX

**Head Instructor: Sue Cobey**

**Co-Instructors: Dr. Juliana Rangel, Megan Mahoney, Liz Walsh, Adrian Fisher, Pierre Lau**

**Invited Guest (not yet confirmed): ET Ash**

### REGISTRATION FORM

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Did you attend the 2015 queen rearing workshop?** Yes ☐ No ☐

**Previous queen rearing experience:** None ☐ Some ☐

**Do you currently rear queens or plan to rear queens in 2016?** Yes ☐ No ☐

**Lunch preference:** Meat ☐ Vegetarian ☐

#### **Instructions for registration:**

1. Send email of intent as soon as possible to Liz Walsh at: **walshe@tamu.edu**
2. Once you receive a confirmation e-mail, send this registration form and payment to secure spot
3. Send payment and this registration form to secure your spot by 22 April 2016
4. Only the first 50 paid registrants will be able to participate in this year's workshop
5. Late registration, or registration by those that were not confirmed via email might not be able to attend and their checks will be returned. We can only accept the first 50 people that pay.
6. Those that have either taken this course before or do not plan on rearing queens do not qualify.

**Payment:** ☐ **Enclosed is a check for \$125**

**Please Note: Payment includes lunch, binder with notes, and queen rearing goodies!!**

**Make payment payable to:** Department of Entomology, Texas AgriLife Research

**Please send payment, along with this registration form BY Friday, 22 APRIL 2016 to:**

Ms. Sherry Boyd  
Memo: Dr. Rangel's queen rearing workshop  
Department of Entomology, Texas A&M University  
412 Heep, 2475 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843

# THE ART OF QUEEN REARING

## Workshop Agenda

Saturday, 7 May 2016

Janice and John G. Thomas Honey Bee Facility, College Station, TX

**Head Instructor: Sue Cobey**

**Co-Instructors: Dr. Juliana Rangel, Megan Mahoney, Liz Walsh, Adrian Fisher, Pierre Lau**

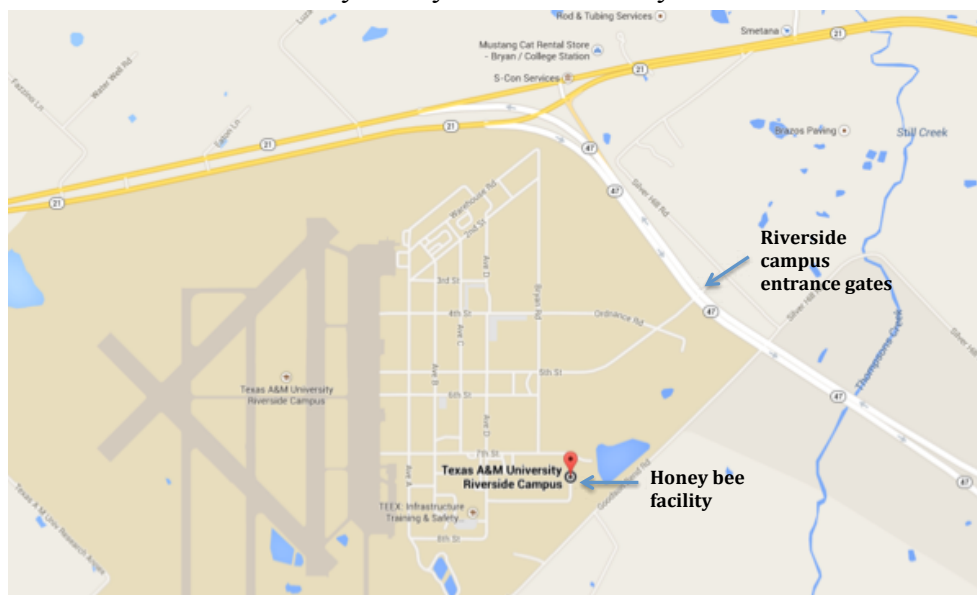
**Invited Guest (not yet confirmed): ET Ash**

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 9:00a - 9:30a   | Coffee and Introductions   |
| 9:30a - 11:00a  | Lecture - Principals of Queen & Drone Rearing                                    |
| 11:00a – 12:00p | Field - Setting Up Cell Builders, Queen-Less & Queen-Right                       |
| 12:00p – 1:00p  | Field - Banking, Incubating Queen Cells  |
| 1:00p – 2:00p   | Lunch  |
| 2:00p – 4:00p   | Lab: Grafting Queen Cells, Instrumental Insemination<br>Demonstration & Practice |
- Concurrent Sessions**
- **Sessions 1:** Establishing Nucleus Colonies, Celling Nuc
  - **Session 2:** Handling, Candling & Cutting Queen Cells
  - **Session 3:** Finding, Marking & Clipping Queens
  - **Session 4:** Evaluating Drone Maturity & Queen Mating Status
- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 4:00p – 5:00p | Classroom Discussion - Exploring CB Systems, Situations & Troubleshooting<br>Wrap Up & Question & Answers |
|---------------|---|

Directions to the **Janice and John G. Thomas Honey Bee Facility:**

**Address:** 3100 State Highway 47  
Bryan, TX 77807

Once you enter the gates of the campus, make a left on Bryan Rd., then a left on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and follow the road all the way until you find the honey bee lab.







## The Brantley Column

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

Look out! Keep your veil on tight. The new Bee Year is exploding out of the drab into the glorious colors of Spring. Almost overnight, the Bradford Pear went from barely blooming to almost white. Barring a late freeze, the world of the honey bee will be ready for the collection of nectar — perhaps a bit early this year.

One question often asked is, “When do I add supers?” In East Texas, old beekeepers will tell you to add supers when you see the native Wild Plum bloom. Wild Plum trees are the earliest blooming of native nectar-producing trees. They are intensely fragrant and a strong source of nectar. You see them as a small tree covered in white blossoms when you drive along country roads.



Before you add supers, double check for medication that you used in the hive during the fall and winter. Some medications must be removed before adding supers. Other types can be left in the hive. If you are not sure, check the manufacturer’s recommendations and take the appropriate action before adding the super.

With this early blooming, we will soon see swarming activity. If you are interested in capturing swarms, consider keeping a few essential items in your vehicle so you can be ready on a moment’s notice. You would need your veil, suit or jacket, gloves, a small brush, and a small pruning shear. You also need a transport container to hold the bees until you can get them to a hive. The simplest container could be a sturdy cardboard box with screened vent holes. The vent holes could be covered with screen wire or

1/8-inch hardware cloth. Tape all of the box’s seams to keep the bees inside. Carry a roll of duct tape to seal the lid — you do not want bees escaping in your vehicle. I have a wooden box made by a friend to specifications I developed from years of observing swarm behavior. It is light in weight, ventilated and “bee-proof” so I can carry it inside my truck cab with no leakage of bees. However you choose to transport the swarm, it is best to carry it in the air-conditioned vehicle to prevent overheating in the trunk or truck bed.

As March brings some warmer days, you should feel comfortable doing more thorough hive inspections. If you have not already done so, now is an excellent time to clean your bottom boards of cappings and hive trash that collected during the winter. Bottom boards covered with crud are excellent places for hive beetles to lay eggs. The least disruptive way to clean bottom boards is to start with a spare, clean bottom board. Lay the clean bottom board beside the hive. Separate the hive from its bottom board and place the hive on the clean bottom board. Clean the bottom board you just removed and repeat the process with the next hive. If the wire of your screened bottom board is covered with wax and propolis that is difficult to remove with your hive tool, melt the wax with the flame of a small propane torch and strike the bottom board against a solid object while the wax is hot. Most of it will fall off. Be careful not to apply too much heat and damage the bottom board or start a fire in your apiary.

Don’t neglect propolis build-up on the frame’s ears. Some bees tend to create a lot of propolis and can glue the frames very tightly to the box. Keeping the frame ears and frame rest clean makes it easier to remove the frame next time. Keeping the build-up to a minimum allows you to push the frames together and gain a little space between the outside frames and the wall, preventing the bees from gluing the outside frame to the wall. Gently pry the frame loose from the box. Using your hive tool, scrape propolis from the frame ears and from the frame rest of the box. It is a good idea to do this every time you have to remove a frame.

This is also a good time to check your frames. Scrape excess propolis and burr comb from the top and bottom bars. Catch the scrapings in a container and dispose of them outside your apiary. Do not throw them on the ground near the hives as they attract ants and hive beetles. Frames with poorly drawn or damaged comb can be moved to the outside positions. Severely damaged comb can be replaced with frames of empty drawn comb.

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# Do You Smell Bananas?

*by Elise Gardner, Williamson County Honey Princess*

Recently I had an altercation with my bees, leading to an allergic reaction. Did I know I was allergic to bees? No. Had I ever been stung before? Yes! Many times in fact, seeing as I have been keeping bees for 3 years.

The hive I was working with when this happened was one I had been having minor issues with, starting when it was given to me, a couple of weeks ago, by a neighbor who had left it alone in his backyard for 4 years. Who can pass up FREE BEES, right! All I had to do was move them across the street.

Well, we soon came to realize (after my allergic reaction) that these “rescue” bees were Africanized. On March 11, I didn’t make it to my scheduled appearance at Spicewood Elementary for a day of teaching kids about bees during their STEAM day. Instead, I visited the emergency room!

I had wanted to take an observation hive to the school, so I decided to pull frames from my new hive because it was the most prolific and there was honey in it. As I was standing there, being stung numerous times, ready to cry in defeat, I began smelling bananas.

BANANAS??? I knew immediately that it was pheromones from the bees, but I had never known that you could smell them so strongly! I decided to do a little research. I discovered that there are a number of kinds of honey bee pheromones that perform different functions and have different scents that sometimes even humans can smell. The banana scent means “sting”; a lemongrass odor mimicks the “come home” signal scout bees emit when they find a new home.

Some different types of bee pheromones are:

- **Alarm pheromones** - 1st stage is released by the mandibular gland; 2nd stage comes from the sting gland when a bee stings something - they attract other bees to the location (these smell like bananas).
- **Brood recognition pheromones** - emitted by larvae and inhibit the production of eggs as well as allow nurse bees to distinguish between worker larvae and drone larvae.
- **Drone pheromones** - produced by drones to attract other drones to congregation sites where they can mate with virgin queens.
- **Egg marking pheromone** - emitted by the Dufour’s gland - these pheromones allow worker bees to distinguish between eggs that are laid by a queen and eggs that are laid by a worker.
- **Attractant pheromone** - emitted by the Nasanov gland of the worker bee and used for orientation, navigation and recruitment.
- **Footprint pheromone** - this pheromone is left by the bees when they walk and is helpful in enhancing Nasonov pheromones when searching for flowers.
- **Other pheromones** - like rectal gland pheromones, tarsal pheromone, wax gland and comb pheromones.

All these pheromones are very important and useful to the bees, and I know first hand, the banana scented attack pheromone certainly does function as it’s supposed to! So the next time you’re working your bees if you smell bananas...WATCH OUT! and make sure you’ve got your smoker handy (it helps mask the smell of the pheromones).

At the end of the day this turned out to be a good experience for me. I learned a lot about bees that I had not known before and I have more interesting information to share while teaching others about bees. I figure I’m much more qualified to teach about bee stings and especially allergic reactions, now that I’ve actually had one myself!





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# Scenes from the Delegates Meeting at the A&M Honey Lab

*Photos by Jimmie Oakley, Williamson County Area Beekeepers*



*TBA Delegates at the Texas A&M Bee Lab*

On February 20th, some 80+ delegates met at the Dr. John and Janice Thomas Bee Lab on the Texas A&M Riverside Campus to discuss the plans for Texas Beekeepers Association activities during 2016. They represented many of the 35 Associations now affiliated with TBA. There was opportunity for all of TBA's Directors to inform them about their individual programs for the coming year as well as time for the Associations to communicate to TBA Leadership issues that were important to them and their organizations.



*Harrison Rogers Speaks about the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo*



*Leesa Hyder with her Report on Legislative Issues, Ag Exemptions and Honey Labeling*



*Juliana Rangel and her students with Updates on Research and the Queen Rearing Workshop*

Chris Moore opened the meeting with a welcome and an outline of the day's activities.

Cameron Crane then spoke about the "How to Start a New Club" packet that he and others were producing, followed by Vice President Mark Hedley with updates on the website and early news of plans for the 2016 and 2017 Conventions.

Lance Wilson gave updates on the Texas Master Beekeeper program as well as progress on a speaker list that clubs might use.



*The Meeting Split into Groups with Individual Directors for Discussion. Lisa Dittfurth leads this*



*Queen's and Ambassador Handing out Door Prizes*



*Lance Wilson Talks about the Speaker List, the Upcoming Summer Clinic and the Texas Master Beekeeper program*

Lisa Dittfurth outlined plans for the June Summer Clinic in Conroe - to be held indoors this year in the Convention Center which adjoins last year's outdoor location. She continued with a discussion on the venue for the 2017 Convention and expansion of the TBA scholarship program.

Dr. Juliana Rangel, together with her post graduate students updated the meeting on research programs at the Honey Bee Lab and announce a repeat of the highly successful Sue Cobey Queen Rearing workshop to be held for it's second year on May 7th.

After lunch, during which folks new to the lab were able to take a tour of the facilities, Chris Doggett spoke about the

formation of the 501(c)3 organization to operate under the umbrella of TBA and named the Texas Honey Bee Education Association. Leesa Hyder continued with further information on Ag Exemptions and Honey Labeling requirements.

Chris Moore talked about our Real Texas Honey marketing plan, a Specialty Crop Grant application and potential updates to bee laws.

After a break for clubs to gather with their TBA Directors to discuss their individual Association's needs the afternoon continued with Harrison Rogers on the Houston Livestock show, John Talbert on proposed changes to by-laws and the Texas State Fair, Rachael Seida with the introduction of our Queens and Princesses and after some open discussion, Chris Moore closed thje meeting after a very successful and informative day.



*Chris Moore, President, Speaks About the Real Texas Honey Marketing Plan and Future Updates to Bee Laws*





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# Build or Buy - Anyone Can Build a Nice Looking Top Bar Hive

*from Micheal Mathews, Fayette County Beekeepers*



Despite never having met the man, I know my father-in-law's work. It can be found all around the small town where we keep our bees. It's there in the Lutheran Church and the out of place modern house with the oddly curved walls a block off the square. He was a carpenter, something my wife from time to time gently reminds me that I am not. This was in the back of my mind when I found a complete top bar hive kit in a catalog for \$175 and decided to try and make one for the same price.

After building five top bar hives I knew the process and owned the tools. For the most part, top bar hives are simple to make. Amateur woodworkers who are already halfway to building their own home version of the New Yankee Workshop will not need much more than plans to get started, but for those who are beginning carpenters it is easy to make a few mistakes and ruin some expensive wood. So I decided to see if I could make a nice looking top bar hive with only a few common tools.

There are some very effective and simple designs top bar hives but I wanted this hive to be similar to the hive kit. A top bar hive is easy to build and the key to simplifying the project would be to minimize precise measurements and expensive tools. To give credit where credit is due, my first hives were built on a plan described in the Barefoot Beekeeper, by Philip Chandler. This hive follows in that style although I have tried to make it a little easier to build. Listed below are the materials and tools needed to make one hive.

## Materials

- 3ea 1 x 4 x 96 clear pine @ \$5.48
- 12ea 1 x 2 x 96 clear pine @ \$3.68
- 2ea 1 x 12 x 96 clear pine @ \$12.98
- 1ea 1 x 6 x 96 clear pine @ 7.54
- 15 ¼ x 36 square dowels @ \$0.98
- 1 2.17 x 8' PVC roofing panel @ \$20.31
- 1 Titebond glue @ \$3.98
- 1 box 1 ¼" screws @ \$5.98
- 6ea 1" #8 tapered corks @ \$0.68 2-pack

A note on lumber. Lumber is rarely perfect and no two boards are the same. Take a few minutes at the home center or lumber yard to make sure that the lumber is straight and on the wider boards, not curved or cupped too much, especially the 1x12s. Generally the ends will be square, but on the wider boards this is worth checking before buying.

## Minimum Tools

- Circular or reciprocating saw
- Electric drill
- Square
- Measuring Tape
- 4 hand clamps
- Pliers for pulling the price tags from the lumber
- Sanding block and sandpaper
- 7/8th paddle bit
- 1/8th drill bit
- Screw driver bit for drill
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Work table

## Nice to Have

- Small hand saw
- Corner clamp
- T-Bevel
- Hammer

## Tricks of the Trade

I am not very accurate when it comes to measuring angles and making cuts. In fact the "measure twice, cut once" mantra is lost on me since I can somehow manage to get a different result every time I measure and cut. Fortunately there are only two really critical cuts on this project. Also, there is a simple trick to get the angles perfect and easily identify where to drill the pilot holes for the screws. That trick is a jig.

The jig is a simple affair made of a piece of 1X4 about 22 inches long, 2 each 3 ½" long 1x2s and a 1X6 exactly 10 ¾" long. The length of the 1X6 is important since it dictates the angles of the side, so take care to get the length correct and the cut square. Begin building the jig by marking the center of the 1x4 and then mark two lines 8 inches out on either side of the center. Center your 1x6 against the 1x4 so the bottom of the 1x6 rests on the



work table beside the 1X4, not on top of it, and secure it with screws or glue. To complete the jig, screw a 1x2 along the lines scribed 8 inches from the center.

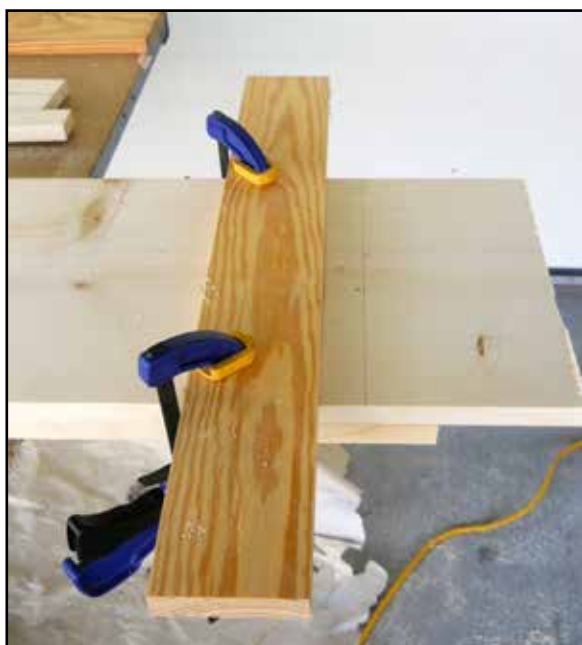


*Jig with Bars*

## Cutting the Component Parts

The exact length of most components, like the sides and the top, are not important as long as they are close and exactly the same length if they are paired with another board. By cutting boards together it is easy to achieve the identical lengths needed to get a tight joint and a square box.

Begin by cutting the 1x4s. Stack two boards and cut them to 48 inches to make the sides of the top. Next cut 5 more pieces to a length of 23 inches to make the ends and the top pieces. Set these aside. These dimensions should make a top that is larger than the box. Bigger is better because a snug fit will make the top hard to replace after checking the hive.



*Cutting the Sides*

Next cut the sides and ends of the hive. The sides of the hive are the only cuts that need to be exactly square, so take a few extra moments to make sure they are correct. Begin by taking a 1x12 and making a cut 46 inches from one end. In the next step lay the longer of the two boards on top of the shorter and make sure the factory cut ends of the boards are even. Then clamp the boards to the work surface. Measure out 44 inches from the end and mark your spot. Inside this mark, make another mark to adjust for the width of the guide on the saw. Use one of the 23" 1x4 board as a guide by placing it over the second mark, align it with a square and clamp it.

Cut 2 1x12s to 22" lengths for the ends. Then cut what remains of the 1x6 to 45 1/2" for the bottom.

The hive will need at least 30 bars and each bar is made up of a bar top of 17 3/4" length of 1x2, a bar bottom of 13 3/4" length of 1x2 and a guide of 12" length of 1/4" square dowel. Begin by clamping 6 of the 1x2s together, measure and mark a line at 17 3/4" and then cut. Repeat until there are 30 bar tops. Cutting the bar bottoms is done in the same way. For the 13 3/4" cuts, 5 1x2s will be enough to make 30 bar bottoms. Finally bundle 12 of the 1/4 x 1/4 square dowels together and cut them to 12" lengths. These are easier to cut with a handsaw, but the cut can be done with a power saw.



*Cutting the Bars*

## Assembling the Hive

Place one of the 22" 1x12 end boards against the jig, center it and clamp it. For convenience I mark a centerline on the top of each end board and on the center of the upright in the jig. Next lay each side in the jig and place a 1x4 under the far end to make them level. The tops of the sides should be flush with the end boards. Chances are that the 1x12 will have some curve to it despite any and all efforts to find the perfect board at the lumber yard. This is no problem, just face the cup toward the center so that it bows out rather than in. With the sides fitted snugly against the end board, draw a line on the inside and outside of the end board to mark where they fit. Remove the end board and using the 1/8th drill bit make three pilot holes for the screws on each side about 3 inches apart. As long as the holes are close to center between the lines it should work. Center the end board against the assembly jig, snug up the sides, double check that the lines are aligned correctly with the sides and drill the pilot holes

*continued from page 27*

through into the ends of the sides. The only step that is left is to glue and screw the end to the sides. Repeat on the other end.



*Lines on End Board*



*Hive in Jig*

Making the top is a simple matter of building a box from the 1x4s cut earlier. The finished size of the box should be 48" long and 24 1/2" wide. Take the 48" outside rails cut earlier and place one of the 23" end pieces inside the outside rail. Glue and screw it in place. While it is not necessary, a \$10 corner clamp from the lumber yard or home store will make this work much easier. Two ends and two sides will make up the box and the remaining three boards will make the top. Put one at each end and one in the center as shown in the photo. All that is left is to paint and add the PVC top.



*Hive Top*

Building the bars is easy, but a little more time consuming. Glue a 13 3/4" bar bottom in the center of a 17 3/4" bar top and then glue a 12" dowel in the center the bar bottom for a guide. Repeat. Make up all 30 and stack them while the glue cures. In the attached photo I used some scrap lumber to distribute the weight evenly on the bars and later placed a cinderblock on top to secure them in place while the glue set.

Making the follow block is simple. Take the T-Bevel measure the angle of the sides by aligning the handle against the end of the box and the blade against the sides. If a t-bevel is not handy, the same task can be done by aligning a piece of paper against the bottom of the end and folding it into the corner. Transfer the angle to some of the leftover 1x12 with a pencil and straight edge. Along the bottom, mark a spot 5 1/4" from the line, flip your t-bevel and transfer the angle to the other side. This should make a close fitting follow block.



*Follow Block*

Only a few steps remain. Take some scrap wood and drill entry holes with the 7/8" paddle bit. Clamp the scrap behind the holes to prevent tear out when the bit breaks through. I generally put 3 holes in each side on opposite ends of the hive. These are spaced 2" from the bottom and 3" apart. Top Bar beekeepers have

a number of opinions on the perfect hole placement but my bees don't seem to care. Once the holes are drilled, add the 1x6 bottom board. There should be three dowels left over, so glue them inside the space where the bottom board meets the angled sides. This space is perfect hiding spot for hive beetles if it is not filled. Once the hive is painted the PVC top can be secured with 2 screws at each end. Finally, a pass with the sanding block will even some corners and clean up any possible splinters.



*Entrance Holes*



*Finished Hive*

## Final Thoughts

The materials for the hive described above totaled \$141.11 and I built it in a little over 4 hours. A little shopping could improve on the price and practice could improve on the time. The hive in the catalog came with 1x4 legs which I didn't include because I feel they are too light for the task and many top bar bee keepers

use boxes or cinder blocks for hive stands anyway. Still, legs like those listed could be added for about \$11.00 in additional lumber. Also I did not include the cost to paint either box.

There are by far more simple styles of top bar hives and a really thrifty builder could make one for well under \$100. If I didn't have the time or the tools listed above and wanted to get into top bar, I would not hesitate to buy the kit. But for those of us who like working with our hands, even if we are not carpenters, a good looking top bar hive is easy to make.

If you need more detailed plans, please  
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# Clemson Research on Watermelons and Wildflowers

*From Catch the Buzz -March 17th, 2016*

Besides adding beauty to a field of watermelons, colorful patches of wildflowers might also provide benefits that would improve the quality and increase the yield of one of South Carolina's most important vegetable crops.

Ongoing studies based at Clemson University's Coastal Research and Education Center are investigating how a more diverse agroecosystem — swarming with native bees, wasps and other beneficial insects — might complement honeybees and enhance watermelon production.

"We've been surveying wildflowers for about three years and have a pretty good handle on most of the major native pollinators: bumblebees, carpenter bees, leaf-cutter bees, ground-nesting bees; there are a lot of different bees," said Merle Shepard, professor emeritus of entomology at Coastal REC and also chair of the agricultural committee for the Agricultural Society of South Carolina. "Habitat destruction, pesticides and diseases are contributing to a rapid decline in our bee populations, so we need to better understand the systems that help pollinators thrive. Because if we don't the situation will continue to worsen."

According to Shepard, native bees pollinate about 75 percent of all plants in the United States and are responsible for billions of dollars in agricultural production. Without proper pollination, plants often produce small or misshapen fruits, as well as poor yields.

"When our forefathers were cultivating crops there was no need for additional pollinating species because native bees were present in sufficient numbers to carry out the task," Shepard said. "The farms were relatively small, with lots of undisturbed habitat and a wide diversity of flowering plants and nesting sites. Unfortunately, there has been a serious decline in both cultivated honeybees and native bee populations. Today, the farm landscape is very different with large expanses of crop monocultures."

To make matters worse, Shepard said, most growers now "clean" the borders of their fields to slow the encroachment of weeds. But this causes a serious loss of plant biodiversity that once supported native pollinators. Urban sprawl is another major culprit, destroying plants and nesting sites.

"Agriculture's gotten bigger and bigger and we have these huge farms," Shepard said. "I understand the economics of all this. But without biodiversity, a single disease or certain kind of insect can wipe out an entire crop. There's a fundamental ecological principle that says 'diversity leads to stability.' And so, when you have one crop planted in a huge area, you're setting yourself up for trouble."

Thanks to funding from the Agricultural Society of South Carolina and the National Watermelon Promotion Board, Shepard has helped sponsor a Clemson graduate student to spend the next several years researching how to enhance watermelon agroecosystems to attract native pollinators.

"The objective of our study is to find a simple, cost-effective way for watermelon farmers to attract native pollinators to their fields. Then we will test whether attracting these native pollinators leads to watermelon yields comparable to fields where honeybees are the major visitor," said Mimi Jenkins, whose experiments will be conducted at Coastal REC and also at about a dozen other fields in various areas of the state.

"We will explore the hypothesis that the diversity and abundance of native pollinators is greater in a watermelon field that includes wildflowers than one that does not thanks to additional food resources and nesting areas. We will also be looking to see if native bee populations can provide pollination services for farmers that are comparable to what honeybee colonies provide, potentially eliminating or reducing the need for domesticated honeybees on watermelon farms. Previous research in other parts of the country shows that this is likely if the right conditions are established."

Jenkins, who will begin most of her days on the job before the sun rises, will use a combination of nets and traps to capture native bees and insects and take them back to Shepard's lab for identification. She will also be measuring how much pollen certain varieties of native bees are able to deposit in a single visit to determine which species are more efficient at pollinating watermelons.

"I'll be observing and recording the frequency of insect visits and I'll be netting insects and collecting them in vials," Jenkins said. "I'll sneak up on a bee as it's foraging on flowers and put the net over the top of it. Bees always fly upward, so if I hold the back of the net up straight, the bee will fly up into it and then I can close the bottom of the net off. I will also use 'bee bowls' — colorful bowls containing soapy water — to collect insects. Then I'll bring the insects back to the lab where they can be identified using a microscope."

Brian Ward, a research specialist at Coastal REC, will soon be planting three varieties of watermelons — Quetzali Seeded, Crimson Sweet Seeded and Melody Seedless — that will be grafted onto Carnivore, Super Shintosa and Bull Dog root stocks. The one-acre test site at the REC will also contain more than a dozen varieties of wildflowers, including zinnias, asters, cosmos, bachelor's buttons and black-eyed Susans. The wildflowers, which typically bloom throughout the spring and summer, will be planted first, followed a month or so later by the watermelons. In South Carolina, watermelons are typically planted in April and May and harvested by mid-July.

"I'll be the boots on the ground," said Ward, who oversees 15 acres of organic research as part of the 325 acres at Coastal REC that contain a variety of vegetables and grains, most of which have centuries-old landrace, heirloom or heritage ties. "The habitat we'll create by planting wildflowers will also harbor other insects like large wasps that will be predators against caterpillars and microscopic wasps that feed on aphids and other tiny pests."

Ward hopes the outcome of this research will eventually benefit large commercial growers.

"The ideal situation for most watermelon growers will be to plant about six rows of watermelon and then have a blank row, and then six more rows and then a blank row," Ward said. "The blank row is there for the harvesting machine and spray tractor to drive down. But it would also be where they would plant their wildflowers. So if you looked at an aerial view of their field, there would be seas of green interlaced with stripes of brilliant color."

Most watermelon farmers ensure pollination by maintaining beehives on their properties, which can be expensive and



labor-intensive. Though honeybees remain one of the world's most important pollinators, they tend to stay in their hives when it's cold or rainy, while many native bees will continue to work, regardless of the weather.

Since the mid-20th century, multiple problems have caused the honeybee population to dwindle, highlighted by a drastic decline around 2006. Relying on only a handful of managed species to provide the pollination services required for a third of the world's food supply can be risky and unsustainable.

"I think this is a great project that we're pleased to help support," said Mark Arney, executive director of the National Watermelon Promotion Board. "With the collaboration of Clemson University's Coastal Research and Education Center and the U.S. Vegetable Laboratory, as well as the excellent work being done at the Edisto Research and Education Center and other facilities around the state, it's not an exaggeration to say that South Carolina has become an epicenter of watermelon research."

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## Reduce Bee Poisoning from Pesticides

*from Oregon State University*

### Description

Search the active ingredients of commonly used pesticides and their effect on bees in California, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. Search by product name or chemical name. Icons and color-coded text help you quickly determine whether a pesticide is toxic or highly toxic to bees, or whether no precautionary statement is on the pesticide label.

### Full Companion Publication:

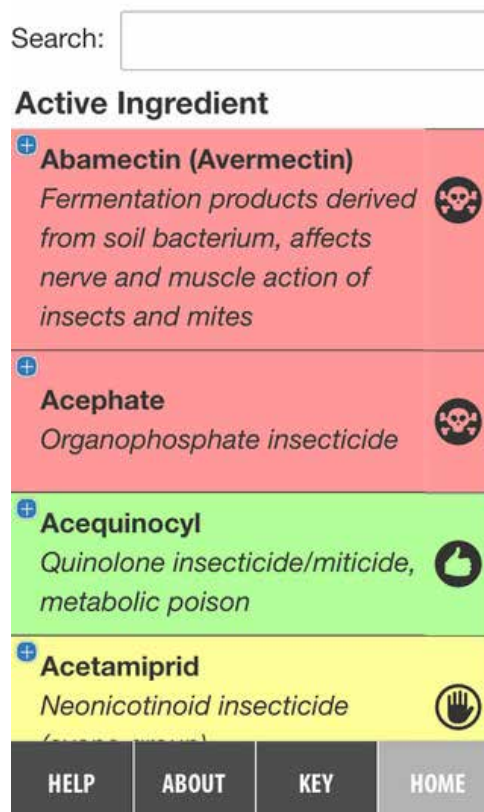
Read an overview of how a variety of wild and managed bees and their pollination activities are affected by pesticide application. Provides guidelines for how beekeepers, growers, and pesticide applicators can work together to prevent bee poisoning.

<https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw591>

Get this app for iPhone or iPad by going to:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/reduce-bee-poisoning-from/id1089761441?ls=1&mt=8>

### Screenshots





## 2016 Texas Honey Queen Hope Pettibon

### Honey

Honey is absolutely remarkable and has some fascinating properties. Did you know that honey has healing attributes and never spoils? Have you ever wondered why this is? In this article we will explore the answers to these questions and learn a little bit about how honey is made and how it can be used.

Although many animals help produce food for people, the honey bee is the only insect that makes food for human consumption. How is honey made? The first step is to gather nectar. Scout bees will fly up to a five mile radius to find a good nectar source. When the nectar source is found the scout bees fly back to the hive and perform an intricate bee dance to tell the pollinators of the hive how far the flowers are, what direction the flowers are, and the quality of the flowers. The pollinators then fly to the flowers and gather the nectar, which they store in a honey sack found in their abdomen. They will also gather pollen, which is stored in the pollen baskets on their hind legs. Once they have gathered enough nectar and pollen they will begin their flight back to the hive. While the bees are flying, they mix several enzymes into the nectar. Entering the hive, the honey bees will roll the nectar on their tongue back and forth to dehydrate it a little before placing it in a cell. A cell is the small hexagonal compartment made of wax. Next they will flap their wings so fast the air current could blow out the flame of a candle. They do this to further dehydrate the nectar and make it the consistency of honey. The honey is then capped over with a thin layer of wax to keep it clean and fresh. That is how honey bees make honey!

One important part of the honey making process is the mixing of enzymes into the nectar. There are three different types of enzymes honey bees mix into the nectar. What is an enzyme? An enzyme converts one thing into another. One enzyme used in honey, called Invertase, converts most of the sucrose of nectar into glucose and fructose. In other words, it converts one kind of sugar found in nectar into two alternative sugars. Another enzyme called Diastase becomes an essential part of the honey breaking down starch into glucose. It is important that this takes place because glucose is the easiest sugar molecule to digest. This means that these first two enzymes help make honey healthy for consumption. The last enzyme is called Glucose Oxidase. This enzyme works to produce Gluconic acid and Hydrogen peroxide, each of which helps protect unripe honey against bacterial contamination and help to protect against fermentation. These enzymes are put into the honey while it is still nectar and are

essential for the production of honey. Without these enzymes, honey bees could not make honey. Honey could easily become spoiled, would be harder to digest, and could even become contaminated with bacteria if the honey bee did not utilize these three special enzymes. Because of honey bees, humans have honey to eat.

Honey is often used for baking within the kitchen, but honey can also be used outside the kitchen. It can be used for allergies, all-natural energy drinks, memory boosting, cough suppressant, sleep aid, dandruff treatment, wound and burn treatment, immunity system strengthening and even anti-cancer treatment. Let's look at how honey is used in each of these examples.

First, honey can be used to reduce allergies. How does this work? Honey has small trace amounts of pollen in it. When you eat honey, your body learns how to fight against the pollen in the honey. This strengthens your body so that when spring and summer bring pollen in the air, your body already knows how to stand strong. Honey will not always completely get rid of allergies because some plants that people are allergic to are not pollinated by bees. These plants are wind pollinated and can still affect people's allergies. However, honey can help greatly reduce allergies for some people.

Honey can also be used as an energy booster. Honey has 17 grams of carbohydrates per tablespoon. Carbohydrates are important for giving people energy. Instead of eating foods with artificial sugars to get energy, you can take honey because it contains unprocessed sugars such as fructose and glucose, which goes into the bloodstream and raises your blood sugar and gives you a fast boost of energy! This is great if you are going to run around some or just feel tired.

Honey also helps improve your memory. Honey is a liquid gold loaded with antioxidants that help prevent cellular damage as well as damage in the brain. A study in 2011 shows that taking a spoonful of Malaysian honey may help with women's memory. After 4 months of taking honey, the women's memory was better compared to other women taking hormone pills. The human brain needs calcium to think properly and make decisions. Honey contains this necessary calcium.

Have you ever gotten a cold? Did you know that honey can help get rid of your cold? When you can't stop coughing or your throat is tickling or scratchy, taking 2 tablespoons of honey helps coat your throat, which helps stop the tickling you feel in your



throat. Honey also helps build up your immune system. Honey is an antioxidant and anti-bacterial which helps you fight diseases. You can mix honey and lemon in hot water in the morning and drink it as a tea. This is one effective way to keep your immune system strong.

Honey has been used to treat wounds and burns though out history. Honey is not only good for internal use such as strengthening the immune system, but it is also good for external uses such as treating burns. Last year I burnt my finger terribly at summer camp. We were camped out in the woods and didn't bring any burn ointment to put on my now infected finger. I started digging through my backpack and found a small honey bear that I had with me. I put a bit on my finger and the next day the infection was gone. It not only helped fight infection but also helped to reduce scarring. One tip is to put a bandage over the honey so that it's not so sticky.

Lastly, honey can help fight cancer. Sadly, over 13 million people have cancer just in the USA. But what many people don't know is that honey can help fight cancer. Honey is anti-cancer! Gelam honey has been found to kill cancer cells in the liver. A lot of studies have been done to research the special anti-cancer properties of honey, and even more research is taking place in both cell and animal research. Much of the research has focused on the following types of cancer: bladder, endometrial, renal cell carcinoma, skin cancer cells, cervical, non-small cell lung cancer, mouth cancer and bone cancer. Although there is still a lot more research to do, one thing is for sure, honey is amazing and has wonderful healing abilities.

Honey is truly remarkable! The honey bee is a fascinating insect that produces a delicious food for people. Without the honey bee, and the special enzymes they produce, we would not have honey and that would be a shame. Honey has so many health benefits. We can be thankful for the honey bees and what they mean for all people.



*Texas Master Beekeepers Test*



*Hope and her Sisters Tend Their Hives*



*T. H. Rogers School in Houston*



*McKinney Master Gardening Show*



## 2016 Texas Honey Princess Willow Lanchester



Honey bees have produced medicines for us forever, whether it is the honey, propolis, royal jelly, or even the venom, but have we ever stopped to think that the bees themselves can be a different form of medicine?

PTSD. Everyone has heard of it in one form or another. It affects thousands of people every day. PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is a disorder that can develop in some people who have lived through a traumatic life experience, PTSD can even wait years to manifest itself [1]. In recent years more and more awareness has arisen around this topic, and as a result many methods to help deal with PTSD have been developed. One former Welsh serviceman, Richard Jones has found that beekeeping helps him to cope with the effects of PTSD, and he didn't stop there. Jones decided to share his coping mechanism with his fellow servicemen, but I am getting a head of myself.

Richard Jones, a former soldier who served in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. After he returned home to Llanelli, Wales he was diagnosed with PTSD. After his diagnoses he found that certain activities associated with beekeeping can help those who suffer from PTSD. Jones has had a fascination with bees ever since a young age and after he became involved in beekeeping, found that beekeeping helped him with memory retention, carrying out tasks in a logical way, as well as providing him with a coping mechanism for dealing with obtrusive memories [2]. As a result Jones wanted to share his method with other veterans. So he teamed up with Rhodri Owens, a commercial beekeeper from Llanelli, Wales, to establish the Bee Free Project.

The Bee Free Project aims to help Welsh ex-servicemen who suffer from PTSD. The Bee Free Project seeks to aid these servicemen by providing them with a friendly and understanding environment in which to learn a new skill at a pace tailored for the individual. They have found in their own experience that

beekeeping helps them to concentrate and remain focused. This focus helps them to manage their ticks and any undesired

memories [3]. Managing bees also requires a certain amount of calm because beekeeping needs careful meticulous movements to avoid bee stings. Not only does beekeeping provide anxiety management mechanisms but also offers a sense of achievement, as any beekeeper knows after harvesting their first crop of honey. Beekeeping also provides a sense of community with fellow beekeepers, giving a common factor though which they can use to reconnect to other people. Jones says that the Bee Free Project is not made to be used in lieu of traditional treatment but as an extra supplement to aid them in their recovery. It is exciting to see how this project will improve the lives of so many people, in so many ways.

Using bees to fight PTSD is a growing movement not just in the UK. Planting Hope with Bees is a fledgling charity in Delaware to help veterans cope with PTSD. They have designed this new project to help veterans transition back into civilian life. The first participant was U.S. Marine Corp veteran Ronnie Hazlette who was trained so that he could teach those who followed him [4]. While this is still a small charity, it has incredible potential to impact many lives.

It just goes to show that maybe bees provide medicine for us in more than just products of the hive. Maybe the bees themselves are medicine for the soul. Now I don't pretend to be an expert on PTSD, and it may not be the solution to everyone's problems, but don't you think that if it can help just one person that it is worth it? I have never ceased to be amazed by honey bees and the people who work with them.

### Works Cited

- [1] National Institute of Mental Health. [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)
- [2] How beekeeping is helping Welsh ex-servicemen cope with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. [www.walesonline.co.uk](http://www.walesonline.co.uk)
- [3] The Bee Free Project. [www.beefreeproject.org](http://www.beefreeproject.org)
- [4] Beekeeping Project Aims to Help Vets Cope with PTSD. [wdel.com](http://wdel.com)

### Pictures on Page 31:

*Willow Lanchester with American Honey Queen, Kim Kester  
Observation Hive with Texas Honey Queen, Hope Pettibon*

## Club Buzz “Extra”

### Trinity Valley Beekeepers Association

[www.tvbees.org](http://www.tvbees.org), [info@tvbees.org](mailto:info@tvbees.org)

#### **Earth Day Texas – [www.earthdaytx.org](http://www.earthdaytx.org) April 22-24, 10am – 6pm**

Fair Park, Dallas, TX

FREE Family-friendly event focusing on environment education and awareness. TVBA will have a booth featuring an observation hive, educational materials on bees and beekeeping, and information on joining TVBA and TBA as well as TVBA member representing “Honey Bee Relocation Services.”

#### **Native Plants and Prairies Day April 30th, 10am – 3pm (<http://public.ntmn.org/>)**

Bath House Cultural Center, White Rock Lake, 512 E Lawther Dr, Dallas TX

Hosted by: North Texas Master Naturalist. FREE family event. TVBA will have an educational booth promoting bees and beekeeping (Live bee observation hive) as well as information on TVBA and TBA.

### Walker County Beekeepers Association

Mark Short [mshort5150@yahoo.com](mailto:mshort5150@yahoo.com) (281)387-8124

**Texas Thyme Herb Festival - April 9, 8am – 2pm**– Event behind Wynne Home on Hwy 30 in Huntsville, TX (close to Arby’s)

Varied arts, crafts and plants sale. WCBA will have an educational booth and honey products for sale.

### Montgomery County Beekeepers Association

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

**Montgomery County Fair & Rodeo – April 8-17th** Educational Honey Bee Booth, featuring a Live Observation Hive, educational materials and hands on learning about beekeeping. Texas Honey Queen, Hope Pettibon will be at the booth April 11th & 12th talking to the public about bees and beekeeping. Booth located in the AgKnowledge Barn at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds in Conroe, TX [www.mcfa.org](http://www.mcfa.org)

### Harris County Beekeepers Association

Pasadena Strawberry Festival – May 20-22nd

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

Pasadena Fairgrounds, Pasadena, TX

Elaine Michalik (281)487-2384 or (281)853-5934



# Greetings from Dr. Juliana Rangel at Texas A&M University

*Assistant Professor of Apiculture, Department of Entomology, Texas A&M University*

Greetings TBA members! Spring is finally upon us and with it comes our busiest time of the year research wise, especially for those of us who work on reproductive biology. By now you have probably witnessed at least one swarming event, or have been called by the general public to remove unwanted swarms from their properties. Let's not forget that, although swarming can be an undesired nuisance given that you can lose up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a colony's population in a few minutes, colony fissioning is a reproductive instinct that indicates that a colony is strong enough to split up and send off a swarm to found a new nest, thus spreading its genetic material to a new location in the landscape. But enough on that, I guess I'm biased toward liking swarms in the sense that they are fascinating to study, and they remind me of the benefits of reproductive fitness.

Now for some updates. The most exciting one is that two Rangel Lab students walked away as winners at the Southwestern Branch of the Entomological Society meeting February 22-25 in Tyler, TX. Masters student Pierre Lau placed second in the Masters 10-minute oral presentation competition for his presentation "Analysis of pollen collected by honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) in developed areas." In the Ph.D. Student Ten-Minute Paper competition, Adrian Fisher II received third place for "The synergistic effects of almond protection fungicides on honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) forager survival." Congratulations guys, you make me very proud!!

Some of our lab members attended the annual American Bee Research Federation (ABF) meeting in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, 7-10 January 2016. Our own Adrian Fisher II was one of the 5 students that received this year's Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees Scholarship, which includes a monetary stipend and all expenses paid for by the ABF to attend the meeting, network with beekeepers from around the country and showcase his interesting research on the effects of agrochemicals on honey bee health. So congratulations Adrian! Also, our own Liz Walsh was invited to give a workshop during ABF on queen rearing and effects of miticides on queen health, which was also a great success!

Within the ABF meeting, the American Association of Professional Apiculturists (AAPA) conducted its annual American Bee Research Conference (ABRC... I know, too many acronyms to keep track of!!!), which is the scientific conference dedicated to university and industry scientists to share results from important and cutting-edge studies with *Apis mellifera*. I helped organize the conference, and with participation from me, Adrian, Liz, we had a total of almost 40 talks and 6 posters, with 14 student presentations. We took note of attendance as best as we could, and since ABF participants were offered to enter the ABRC for free, we counted about 200+ people attending the scientific conference, which is a great number!

During the ABRC we had great talks by many well-known bee scientists from the USA, and our keynote speaker was Dr. Geraldine Wright from Newcastle, UK, who among her many talks, brought "clicker" technology to do a live questionnaire from participating beekeepers on the type of nutritional supplements that they use to feed their bees during thin months. Her goal is to tally up the results and write a short report on the American Bee Journal, talking about the importance of nutrition to bee health. We also had a report from Dr. Mary Purcell-Miramontes, National Program Leader for the Division of Plant Systems-Protection at the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). She talked about the next round of funding opportunities within the USDA pertaining to bee

health, and mentioned that funding for that realm of research has gone up by about \$6 million this year alone, showcasing the need for more of the research that all laboratories across the university are conducting to help solve the crises surrounding pollinator health.

On Saturday, 17 January, Liz Walsh and I presented at the 5th Annual Bee Day organized by the Austin Area Beekeepers Association. This event had more than 450 participants, was as successful as usual and it offered learning opportunities for beekeepers from the beginning to the intermediate level. Thanks to the TBA delegates, especially Lance Wilson for putting this event together. As you may know already, the Austin Area Beekeepers Association again contributed this year some of the funds obtained for registration during this event to our research fund, without which we would be unable to offer the Introduction to Beekeeping Laboratory course we offer for undergraduate students at Texas A&M University ever Spring. So thank you Austin Area Beekeepers Association!!!!

On Saturday, 20 February 2016, we hosted the annual TBA Delegates meeting at the Janice and John G. Thomas Honey Bee Facility (our research apiary) in Bryan, TX. At this important meeting, over 80 delegates from county and regional beekeepers association in our state were able to network, reported last year's accomplishments, reflected on what needs to be done in the future, and lined out a plan of action for 2016 and beyond. I believe the meeting was a GREAT success and there are many exciting plans for the future of TBA and its member associations.

Lastly I want to mention that we have been lucky enough to line up Ms. Sue Cobey again this year to hold the 2nd Annual "Art of Queen Rearing" workshop at our research apiary. This will take place on Saturday, 7 May 2016, from about 8am to 4pm. The cost of registration will be \$125 and it will include lunch, a goodie bag with queen rearing supplies, and a binder with printouts from all materials covered in the sections. Registration is filling up, as we have 40 paid registrants out of the cap of 50, so hurry up if you want to take part in this all-day event. The registration form in this issue of the TBA journal, or on our Facebook page. It will open sometime in March, so be on the look out via this column in two months, or through our Facebook page (below), where we post all the news.

That is all for now folks! If you have any questions, it is best for you to email me at [jrangel@tamu.edu](mailto:jrangel@tamu.edu), as my schedule is very variable and I am often out of my office and away from my phone. For the most up-to-date information regarding Rangel Lab news and activities, and interesting research that comes out of our lab and from others around the world, please visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/TAMUhoneebeeclub>.

Thank you all for your continuing support, and we hope to see you in Brenham or at our queen rearing workshop!

Happy Spring and prosperous beekeeping!





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<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 Johnson 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 Bell/Coryell County 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 Valley 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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## Texas Honey Queen Chair Report

*from Rachael Seida*

Hello everyone! Spring is right around the corner and my bees are gearing up for the busy season, which our Honey Queen and Princess doing too! April and May are pretty solidly booked at this point, but we have lots of openings for June-August.

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 time, we will discuss fairs and festivals.

Especially during spring and summer fairs and festivals are happening nearly every weekend. Typically this is the type of event where you would set up a booth to educate the public about honey bees and possibly sell honey. Booth space can be free or the event may charge a small fee for the space. These are a fantastic chance for you to reach a lot of people in just a few hours and these are prevalent in your community! Check out the tips below for some helpful hints are finding a fair/festival and how to make it a success.

Tips:

- To find out about local fairs/festivals scheduled in your community: check with your local chamber of commerce, keep an eye out for posters advertising upcoming events, or do a Google search.

- Types of fairs/festivals that are common
    - Farmers Markets
    - Earth or Green Fairs
    - Fun Runs
    - Music Festivals
    - Historical Fairs/Festivals
    - Arts and Crafts Fairs
  - Try to bring lots of show and tell items to attract people to your booth. If you can, bring an observation hive. This really grabs people's attention.
  - Ask your club members to help run the booth. If the fair/festival runs for more than a few hours, set up shifts and ask club members to sign up for a shift.
  - 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).
- That's all for this time! As always, if you would like to schedule the Texas Honey Queen or Princess, email me at [texas\\_honeyqueenchair@gmail.com](mailto:texas_honeyqueenchair@gmail.com).



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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)

---

## 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

## Bell/Coryell Beekeepers Association

Dennis Herbert - (254) 947-8633

[conservation1@earthlink.net](mailto:conservation1@earthlink.net)

7986 Rita Bend Dr., Salado, TX 76571

**Meetings:** 3rd Thursday of each month (except Dec.)

Trinity Worship Center, 1802 MLK Dr., Copperas Cove, TX 76522 at 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

[rdjarr@gmail.com](mailto:rdjarr@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

Ruth Ramos (361) 688-1119

[ruthramos3@gmail.com](mailto:ruthramos3@gmail.com)

4002 Lowman St., Corpus Christi, TX 78411

**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, 611 West Columbia Street,

San Augustine, TX 75972 @ 6 pm

## 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@jkgray.com](mailto:grayjamesk@jkgray.com)

675 Turkey Ridge Road, Stephenville, TX 76401

**Meetings:**

## Fayette County Beekeepers Association

Ron Chess - (979) 525-9254

[ragdale@industryinet.com](mailto:ragdale@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'Shields Community Center

1330 Band Road, Rosenberg, TX 77471

## 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

# Local Beekeepers' Associations in Texas

## Harris County Beekeepers Association

Gary Parks (713) 906-1805

*gparks@geparkslaw.com*

*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*

**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

*obygoutit@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*

7806 Braeburn Valley Dr. - Houston, TX 77074  
*www.houstonbeekeepers.org*  
**Meetings:** 3rd Tuesday of each month; Bayland  
Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St.  
Houston @ 7:30 pm

## Johnson County Beekeepers Association

Scott Crowe, Don Russell

*boatshop6@yahoo.com - jcbeekeepers.org*

**Meetings:** Cattle Guard Cafe, 901 S Parkway Dr.  
Alvarado, TX. 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 6:30 pm

## Lamar County Beekeepers Association

Scott Brinker - (501) 307-5111

*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*

2300 Belevvedere Dr., Baytown, TX 77520

*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*

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*

*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*

*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@sbglobal.net*

*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@hotmail.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*

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*

9874 Wier Loop Circle, Austin, TX 78736

*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@sbglobal.net*

8266 Barbaree Blvd., Dallas, TX 75228

*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*

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 - 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

## Texas Beekeepers Association

Chris Doggett, Editor  
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