



Jackson County Beekeepers Monthly Newsletter

Club Picnic 8/19/2023



Club picnic August 19, 2023

September 2023
TOP STORIES

2023 Club Meetings

We will be meeting on Thursday, September 7th, 2023, at the ALFA building on Hwy 72 in Scottsboro. The meeting will start at:

- **Start time: 6:00 PM,**
- **Agenda:**
 - Club Business
 - Discussion of upcoming events, etc
 - Q&A for beekeepers.

Current Management (2023)

As of February 2nd, 2023 our leaders are:

- Charles Smith - President (email: charlie2875@yahoo.com)
- Rob Woody - Vice President (email: rwoody@nehp.net)
- Maggie Smith - Secretary (email: oneloveneverfails@gmail.com)
- Trisha Jacob- Treasurer (email: tjacob04@gmail.com)

Current 2023 directors are:

- 1-Year Term: Tim Dalton and Marguerite McClintock
- 2-Year Term: Jeremy Mulkey and Terry McClendon
- 3-Year Term: Dale Orlofsky and Lane Walden

We are proud to have you as our leaders for the next season.

2023 Membership!

February is traditionally the month to renew your membership. If you haven't renewed, do it now.

It's only \$10 per year, and covers your whole household. You can pay the treasurer at the meeting, or if you want to mail it in, please forward your payment to:

- JCBA, attn Treasurer Trisha Jacob, 38380 US HWY 72, Stevenson, AL 35772.

Please include your Name, Address, Phone-number, and eMail. You will receive your proof of payment in return mail.

Club Resources you can use!

- As part of your \$10 annual membership fee, you can use, free of charge, various pieces of equipment. Please CALL or TEXT Keith Fletcher at (703)887-6071 and reserve whatever you need.
 - We have 2 extractors (1 small, 1 large (12 frames))
 - Uncapping box
 - Electric uncapping knife
 - EZ-Vape system to treat for Varroa (includes safety mask and goggles)
 - Tricia Davis (Dustin Davis' widow) donated his Observation hive, Teaching Hive, Mini Hive, several books, and posters. If any of you are asked to do presentations, we may be able to arrange for you to use these resources. We're still looking for a more permanent place to house these, and you can contact Keith if you're willing to take possession of these items.



Bumble bee nest. Discovery in a pile of shade cloth we use in our garden. June 8, 2023-M. Dijkhuis

Let's Talk Bees!

Hope everyone is doing well. I failed to produce a newsletter the last 2 months. The summer got in the way. Between spending time in Virginia and Florida, and getting moved, I just couldn't get myself to write or report on bee matters. Y'all need to supply me with stories, or questions to get my creativity going. (meindertdijkhuis@gmail.com)

I hope this summer's heat hasn't impacted your bee colonies too much. My 4 hives here in Sylvania are still thriving. I am not sure if I am mistaken, but it seems that the Goldenrod started blooming earlier than normal. At least it's a big help, and the bees are bringing in a lot of pollen right now (August 30). I noticed a big cooling off this morning. It was like Fall! Not sure if that's an effect of hurricane Idalia, but it's very welcome. If it just rained a bit more. It's incredibly dry.

To get back to my lack of creativity: I still didn't know exactly what to write about, so I went the AI (artificial intelligence) route. I got myself an AI-ChatBot app!

This is what I asked:

- robot: Hello, How can I assist you?
- user: I am a beekeeper in Northern Alabama. What should I do now to prepare for fall?

- robot: As a beekeeper in Northern Alabama, here are some essential tasks you can do to prepare your beehives for the fall season:

1. Monitor honey stores: Check the honey frames in each hive to ensure they have enough food to sustain the colonies over the fall and winter. If supplies are low, consider feeding the bees with sugar syrup or fondant to supplement their stores.
2. Reduce the hive entrances: Reduce the size of the hive entrances to make it easier for bees to defend against potential predators and to conserve heat during colder months.
3. Inspect and treat for pests and diseases: Conduct a thorough inspection of your hives for signs of pests and diseases such as varroa mites, European foulbrood, or nosema. If necessary, treat the affected hives accordingly following recommended methods.
4. Remove unnecessary equipment: Remove any excess equipment or unused frames from the hives to provide enough space for the bees to cluster during colder periods. This will help them maintain warmth and conserve energy.
5. Add insulation: Consider adding insulation, such as quilt boxes or rigid foam boards, to the hive bodies or covers to provide additional protection against the cold temperatures.
6. Provide water sources: Ensure the bees have access to a clean and reliable water source nearby as they may struggle to find water during the fall months. Consider using a water container with floating objects to prevent drowning.
7. Consider autumn feeding: If the honey stores are minimal or your bees endured a challenging season, supplement their food supply with syrup or fondant throughout the fall to help them build up reserves for the winter.
8. Fall maintenance: Perform routine maintenance on your beekeeping equipment, including cleaning and repairing any damaged parts, to ensure they are in good condition for winter.
9. Educate yourself: Take advantage of this time to expand your knowledge about beekeeping and stay updated on new strategies, techniques, and research in the field. Attend local beekeeping workshops, join online forums, or read relevant books and articles.

Remember, local conditions can vary, so it's always best to consult with local beekeeping groups, associations, or experienced beekeepers who are familiar with your specific region.

In general terms; I could live with this advice. It's a bit generic maybe. That part about insulation in item 5 may be a little premature, but when it gets cold here, I do wrap my hives in the silver bubble wrap insulation. First of all it helps with blocking the wind, and it adds a little insulation to the hive.

So, I thought; let's pose the question a little bit differently, and see what I get. The following is the result.

- user: I am keeping bees in Northern Alabama. It's September, and after a brutally hot summer, what should I do to prepare for winter

- robot: As a beekeeper in Northern Alabama, here are some key tasks you can undertake to prepare your beehives for the upcoming winter season:

1. Assess the honey stores: Check the honey frames in each hive to evaluate the bees' food supply. Ensure that they have enough honey reserves to sustain them throughout the winter. If the bees have less than 60-70 pounds of honey, consider supplementing their food by feeding them a sugar syrup or fondant. *(editor: I thought 40 pounds would be sufficient. (aka one honey super))*

2. Reduce entrances: To help the bees protect the hive from cold drafts and potential intruders, reduce the size of the hive entrance. This reduction will make it easier for the bees to defend the colony without exposing it to excessive cold air.

3. Protect from wind: Consider placing windbreaks or barriers around the beehives to shield them from strong winds. This extra layer of protection will help prevent heat loss and maintain the temperature within the hive.

4. Insulate the hive: In regions with particularly cold winters, insulating the hive can be beneficial. This can be done using hive wraps or insulation bee boxes. Ensure the insulation material is breathable and doesn't provide opportunities for pests or moisture buildup.

5. Varroa mite treatment: Assess the level of varroa mite infestation in your hives and apply appropriate treatments if necessary. Varroa mites can weaken the bees and increase their susceptibility to diseases during the winter months.

6. Ventilation: While insulation is important, it's equally crucial to ensure proper ventilation within the hive. Good ventilation helps prevent excess moisture buildup, which can harm the bees. Check that the hive's ventilation system is functioning correctly and clear any obstructions.

7. Monitor hive weight: Regularly check the hive weight during the winter months to ensure the bees have enough food. If necessary, continue feeding them sugar syrup or fondant to avoid starvation.

8. Emergency sugar stores: In cases where unexpected circumstances arise, such as a long period of inclement weather, keep emergency sugar stores nearby. These can be quickly provided to the bees if their honey supply depletes faster than anticipated.

Remember, winter preparations can vary depending on local climate conditions and individual hive requirements. It's always a good idea to consult with local beekeeping associations or experienced beekeepers in your area for personalized advice.

What do you think? Pretty much the same reply, Love to hear what you all think about generating advise or a story from an AI-Chat App. That's my story. Happy beekeeping. I hope to hear some of you'alls experiences at the meeting. I'll be there!

Business Opportunity.

No new opportunities reported

Future Events

Welcome back to the 2023 5th Alabama Honey Festival in October! We are so excited that you are joining us again this year. We've grown so much that we are now entering our next phase!

This year, the event is moving to Alabama A&M University, Winfred Thomas Agricultural Research Station at 372 Walker Lane, Hazel Green, AL. [Alabama A&M University Thomas Agricultural Research Center](#). This is an outdoor educational event and market with vendors that support bees and pollinators. Spaces for this event are juried. If you are accepted, there is a non-refundable fee of \$50.00 per 10 x 10 space. Non-profit educational programs are exempted.

This open, almost 1000 acres of research is an invaluable asset where education comes first. I am so excited and humbled that the Dean and Dr. Cebert allow us to hold this event here. Their support will enable us to have more demonstrations and gardens showing how we must work together as a community "super" organism in order to survive.

Your organization or business is part of this group because you have something that ties you to the honeybee, native bee or pollinator. We are all interconnected.

October 1, 2022 Sunday

Event is 1 pm - 5 pm

Setup is early as 11:00 am

Address: 372 Walker Lane, Hazel Green, AL 35750

This is for your information. You have been accepted into this event with no fees. However, please plan on a program that we will have for you to share with kids. (no charge) We will be sending families with kids on a scavenger hunt and they will come back to our booth for a free honey stick per participant. You just have to share something about your work and stamp their card.

If you have updated any of your logos, FB, etc, please send an attachment to the Attention: Angela Hawke at Alabamahoneyfestival@gmail.com.

If you have not filled out your application yet, PLEASE DO SO NOW!

FILL OUT IN GOOGLE FORMS

Again, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to text Marguerite McClintock @ 256 658 2234 or Sandi Billings (2023 Festival Coordinator) 321-795-4618, or Robert McClintock (The Market at Artisans Cove Manager) 256 658-8409

If you have information to share or bee related items you want to sell or looking to purchase, let me know, and I'll add a note in the newsletter.

Beekeeping CALENDAR

Based on the Beekeeping Calendar for our climate zone, we should: (Covers July-October)

For July and August, address the following:

1. Check ventilation. Use popsicle sticks to raise the cover slightly to improve airflow, for instance.
2. Check for surplus honey. This may be the start of harvest season. (July 4th weekend)
3. In Alabama, we may see a dearth during the hot summer months. Bees may start feeding on the honey they already collected.
4. Start putting out communal feeding areas. For instance, I keep a feeding table out near my apiary and feed sugar syrup. I also noticed bees heavily foraging on water. I have a pond nearby, and the bees use certain spots to collect water.

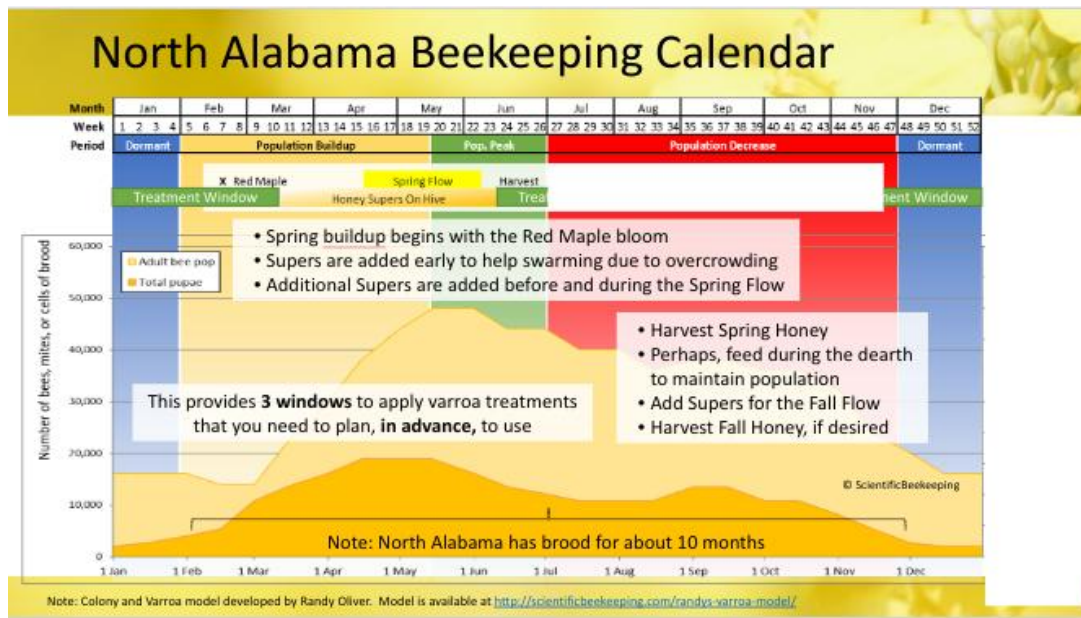
For September address the following:

1. Check for the queen, and see if she's still producing eggs
2. It's time to add a mouse guard
3. Medicate for AFB, EFB and Nosema
4. Medicate for Varroa mite if needed
5. Medicate for tracheal mites
6. Check for hive beetles, and remediate if needed
7. Check for surplus honey: harvest or redistribute to hives with low stores

For October address the following:

8. Check food reserves, and feed colony if reserves are low
9. Prepare hives for winter

(From Beekeeping for Dummies, 3rd edition by Howland Blackinton)



Copied from Bill Elliott's presentation about Varroa pests

Favorite Book List

What a bee knows - Exploring the thoughts, memories, and personalities of bees **(NEW)**

Stephen Buchmann

\$25.72 (Walmart Online). ISBN 9781642831245

Island Press, 2023

Keeping Bees in Horizontal Hives: A Complete Guide to Apiculture

Georges de Layens & Gaston Bonnier

Dr. Leo Sharashkin (editor)

374 pages, 250 ill.

\$49.95. ISBN 978-0-9842873-6-9

Deep Snow Press, 2017

Keeping Bees With A Smile: A Vision and Practice of Natural Apiculture **(I Like!)**

Fedor Lazutin

Dr. Leonid Sharashkin (editor)

402 pages, 140 ill., 32 full-color photos

\$34.95. ISBN 978-0-9842873-5-2

Deep Snow Press, 2013.

Honeybee Democracy Hardcover – Illustrated, October 10, 2010

by **Thomas D. Seeley** (Author)

Can be purchased Used for \$15.00. \$22.00 on Amazon

Honeybees make decisions collectively--and democratically. Every year, faced with the life-or-death problem of choosing and traveling to a new home, honeybees stake everything on a process that includes collective fact-finding, vigorous debate, and consensus building. In fact, as world-renowned animal behaviorist Thomas Seeley reveals, these incredible insects have much to teach us when it comes to collective wisdom and effective decision making.