

Joco Beekeepers

A monthly newsletter brought to you by the
Johnston County Beekeepers Association



JOHNSTON COUNTY
BEEKEEPERS
ASSOCIATION

Officers

- President** Barney Biles
- Vice President** Al Hildreth
- Secretary** Adam Pendergrass
- Treasurer** May Markoff
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- 1st Director** Thunderhawk Chavis
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- 3rd Director** Troy Fair
- Extension Agent** Brandon Parker
- Webmaster/Social Media** Adam Pendergrass

Meeting Information & Agenda

- ✓ The April meeting will be "Rick Coor - President of the NCSBA will be presenting - Reading Your Hives: How to Tell the Health of Your Hive and Queen Even If You Cannot Find the Queen."
- ✓ 2018 Spring beeschool ended 4/5
- ✓ Be sure and check out the recent updates to the JCBA website, like the new Beekeeping Glossary
- ✓ Sign up for the Swarm List
- ✓ Free door prizes
- ✓ Reminder that memberships for 2018 are due ([link](#))
- ✓ Reminder to renew your NCSBA membership for 2018 ([link](#))

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BEE Basics before each meeting!

This is a new program started in January 2018 and still running. "BEE Basics" is a general talk held before each meeting. At 6:30 - 6:55. The purpose is to gain basic info for NEW Beekeepers & Reminders for experienced Beekeepers.

Bee School 2018

April 5th, we completed the 2018 Beginning Beekeepers class. Thanks again for everyone's participation!



Have a story? Would you like to be featured in the newsletter?

Please submit your request to Newsletter@jacobee.org

Businesses and Services

Businesses and Services offered by JCBA are listed on our website at [click here](#)

Native Plants for Bees!

Link for native plants good for bees ([click here](#))

Like us on social media 

This Month's Bee Tips!

From: Nancy Ruppert, Apiary Inspector, NCDA & CS
CALENDAR FOR BEEKEEPING IN CENTRAL NORTH
CAROLINA

April

- ☑ Nectar flow is often heaviest this month: make sure that all medications are out of hive unless required for bees' survival, be prepared to add new supers every 7-10 days, and remove feeders from all except new or weak hives.
- ☑ Bees should be very busy; closely examine hives that are not, and trim weeds that may be hindering flight.
- ☑ Swarming usually heavy---continue prevention/capture measures.
- ☑ Look closely at brood pattern; replace queen if needed.
- ☑ Have everything ready to install nucs/packages that you've ordered; feed upon installation.
- ☑ Consider adding queen excluder to prevent brood in honey supers.

From the President:

At JCBA our purpose is "EDUCATING TODAY'S BEEKEEPERS". During this first part of the year, we have brought to you a top-notch bee school taught by the very talented Al Hildreth. We've also had outstanding club presentations to help you with your hands-on beekeeping. Looking forward, on Monday evening we have the President of NCSBA (Rick Coor) talking about how to evaluate your queens. Personally, I am really looking forward to that!

During this first part of the year we have been providing a lot of information to new beekeepers. This is a good thing, as we can all remember what it feels like to be the new guy and not having the instruction manual for bees. If you are new to beekeeping, please keep coming and especially for the Beekeeping Basics at 6:30 on the nights of meetings. We are intentional about making all of us better beekeepers.

At JCBA, we want to provide education and help to ALL levels of beekeepers. For the intermediate beekeeper (or any other level if you are interested), we are going to have a special meeting of the JCBA to watch an outstanding presentation by Mike Palmer (of the nation's leaders in beekeeping knowledge), and then have a discussion on what he presented. The topic is "Maintaining a Sustainable Apiary". The presentation is not about green beekeeping, but how to maintain an apiary where you don't need outside help. This is about becoming that beekeeper who has everything you need right there ... bees, brood, queens, nucs, splits, extra brood & queens, etc. How good would you feel knowing that you never have to go shopping for bees again? How would you like being in the position of having more than you need and able to sell bees for additional income?

The date / time is tentatively set for Monday, April 30 / 6 to 8PM in the JoCo Ag Center's Kitchen where we had the first few bee school sessions. This will be firmed up by meeting time on Monday.

This is a good Spring so far. The bees are growing, pollen count is high, plants are blossoming out and the bees are moving. I personally have caught 2 swarms, and created 7 new colonies so far. The flow is almost upon us. Exciting times, and I'm so glad that I decided to be a beekeeper and can be a part of it.

Thanks for supporting JCBA, and I look forward to seeing you all on Monday for the meetings, hearing Rick speak about queens, and then getting together for the special session.

-Barney

2018 Spring - Beginning Beekeeping Class

On April 5th, we completed the 2018 Beginning Beekeepers class. This year, we had 30 students who devoted three hours per week for eight weeks to attend class and learn how to raise honeybees. They learned everything from the History of Beekeeping, Honey Bee Biology, Insect Pest Management, and Disease Management. Of course, it wouldn't be complete without covering seasonal management for Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. Lastly, they covered products of the hive. During the last night, they were given Certificates of Completion and a thumb drive containing all the class presentations with some extra information for each topic. Twenty-three students took the extra step to take and pass the written portion of the Certified level of NC State Beekeepers Association Master Beekeepers Program. They have at least three months to explore their hives and practice what they've learned before taking the field portion of the certification.

The Johnston County Beekeepers Association tries to provide this vital training to the local public interested in keeping honeybees. Al Hildreth wants to thank Brandon Parker, Charlene Lassiter, Thunderhawk Chavis, Tom Anderson, May Markoff, and all the other supporting folks who helped make this class a success. Many hands made this class easier to teach.

Those who take the class are urged to continue learning monthly at the local associations meetings. Life is about continuously learning and adapting to new methods as things change and we learn better way to care for the honey bees.

Thanks again for everyone's participation!

-Al

Flow Hive Experience by May Markoff

My experience: Took 2 beekeeping courses in Fall of 2013. Started beekeeping in spring of 2014 with 2 nucs. After lots of mistakes and learning from them and after joining 2 clubs and reading as much as I could get my hands on, I decided to try a Flow Hive in the spring of 2016. It was disappointing to me because it didn't go as smoothly as it did on the Flow Hive Videos! Why weren't the bees interested in my Flow hive? Why did they swarm shortly after I put it on my strong hive? Why did they swarm after I moved it to another hive? Was it my hives, the weather, the location, the forage, the bees? I didn't give up in spite of the nay-sayers, the non-"believers" (LOL) and those that mocked the whole concept as a fad. I was sent articles saying "Never buy a Flow Hive" and "10 reasons a Flow Hive is a bad idea", etc...

The folks at the F.H. company had great suggestions: I sprayed the frames with sugar water, I tried brushing on some melted wax cappings, I rubbed burr comb on them, I even tried substituting a Langstroth frame of drawn comb with a Flow Frame to entice the bees to come up to the F.H. ...and then something happened.. I don't know which action did the trick but...the bees crowded the F.Frames...they were so busy...but didn't seem to be capping honey?!? Why???? Here's why...

I look at a problem as something that I am missing...what did I not know, what could I do differently and what do the experts say? (So if Edison gave up, we'd still be burning whale blubber to light our homes.) Bottom line, I love beekeeping and learning about bees.

By the end of September 2016 when I removed my Flow Hive in preparation for fall, all I had to show for my efforts was an area the size of my hand of capped honey on one side of one frame.

Club members asked me if I'm ready to give it up. My answer was, "I'm not going to judge by my first year with this. Let me see what happens after one more year. Then I'll decide." I removed the Flow frames, placed them individually in large bags and put them in my chest freezer. During my downtime, I did more research.

What were the bees doing all that time? Answer: They were preparing all the cell surfaces to receive nectar to cure into honey. That's the ground work that must be done before anything else can happen. That's what the bees spent all summer of 2016 doing because the nectar flow was not great and I had not confirmed that this colony was not brood or honey bound--- hence they swarmed!

Well, to my delight, by the end of May 2017, after making adjustments to my beekeeping skills, I harvested 60 pounds of honey from that hive alone. I know it was 60 pounds because I participate with the Bayer Hive Scale program and I was given the accurate reading by them after I harvested the honey.

So in review:
In the spring of 2017, about the middle of March, we got the start of a good nectar flow. I let the Flow Frames defrost for a day and placed them on one of my strongest hives and they didn't swarm. In guarded optimism, I reviewed the Flow Hive website for new videos. I learned that the first thing bees do is coat all the deep cells and crevasses with wax and that takes a lot of nectar and energy. What's needed is a very strong nectar flow! The frames are solid plastic and

they needed a coating of wax from the bees. If the hive swarms that cuts the work force down by less than half! It takes about 7-8 pounds of honey or nectar to make 1 pound of wax...in other words, wax is very expensive for the bees and a high labor force is critical. I needed to make sure my hive was healthy, queen rite, had room for the queen to lay



brood and for foragers to put pollen and nectar, I needed a hive with high number, a metal queen excluder over the 2 brood boxes and only 1 Flow Hive body. The F.H. is a honey super, nothing more. You only need one on each hive. You will need to do inspections for varroa mites and other little nasties, and each hive dive should tell you if the colony is happy with their accommodations. If they don't have room for brood, provide it or consider rotating hive bodies, If they need room to store their food stores, provide it. Whatever honey ends up in the F.H. is for the beekeeper. Some people want to leave it on all winter after a harvest...well, that's another story for another time.

2018

I have 7 hives. Two have F.H. on them. The new system I just bought will need to go through the same time consuming process and will depend on the strength of this years nectar flow. If we lived in FL, TX, HI, Australia or somewhere where they don't have a winter or summer dearth then I'd say it would be much easier to see faster results the first year of set up...or you could be very lucky. The best part is the ease of harvest and nothing to clean up except the honey bucket after you jar your honey. 😊

So, living in Garner or Clayton, we don't have the best nectar flows some years, but don't give up.

Let me know if you have any other questions,

Here's a picture of my husband holding a Flow frame ready to harvest...

May

From the Bee Yard!

If you have pictures you would like to have in the newsletter send them to newsletter@jacobee.org



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