

Lake Cumberland Beekeepers Association



September 2017 Newsletter

Next LCBA Meeting: Monday, September 18, 2017

Greg Whitis, agent for the McCreary Extension Office and member of Big South Beekeepers will talk about the 4-H beekeeping club they have organized in McCreary County. We will also discuss beekeeping preparations for winter.

6:00pm Doors open for informal discussion with fellow beekeepers.

6:30pm Business meeting

7:00pm Greg Whitis is our guest speaker.

Meeting venue: Basement meeting room at the Pulaski County Extension Office, 28 Parkway Drive, Somerset.

Meagan Lucas, Pulaski County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development Education, was welcomed to the August LCBA meeting.

Meagan would like to set up a Junior Beekeepers Club, starting in November. Meagan will run the club, but needs at least one experienced beekeeper at the sessions. The classes will be held at the Extension Center, for 1 hour a month, for kids aged 9–18. Greg Whitis runs a similar program in McQuairie County. Greg Whitis will be our guest presenter at the September meeting, and we look forward to hearing more of his experiences with 4-H then.

If you are interested in assisting with this program, contact Meagan Lucas at Meagan.lucas@uky.edu, phone 606-679-6361.

Also at the August LCBA meeting, **Beth Wilson**, Pulaski County Agent for Horticulture, announced that she is planning on presenting a bee program for inmates at the Pulaski Detention Center, and needed experienced beekeepers to assist. Sessions run for up to 3 hours, at a time and date to be arranged. Contact Beth at phone 606-679-6361, email beth.wilson@uky.edu.

Of Solar Eclipses and Hurricanes

We didn't get the complete eclipse here in Casey County, but the light levels were significantly reduced and temperatures fell noticeably as the moon covered most of the sun. As the eclipse increased, bees came streaming back to their hives. For a minute or so, with light levels similar to those at dusk, all was quiet and still. Then as the light levels increased, the bees resumed their normal flights. Guess the bees hardly noticed!

Of greater concern must be the effect of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma on bees and beekeepers in Texas and Florida. While a few days' notice was given of these

devastating weather events, that may not have given sufficient time for those beekeepers to move their hives from harm's way.

Looking at photos of the destruction caused to houses, it is difficult to imagine that beehives would survive such winds, however well they may have been tied down. Flooding would mean total destruction of the hives and the bee colonies.

Our thoughts are with all of those people—and bees—in the affected areas.

Editor: Hilary Forsyth

LCBA email: lakecumberland.beekeepers@gmail.com

LCBA website: www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com

Photo credits: Hilary Forsyth

LCBA President: Ginger Renaker

Phone: 606-416-0041

LCBA Vice-President: Michael Wooton

Cell phone: 606-492-5228

Email: mikewooton@hotmail.com

Laura Rogers' presentation at the August LCBA meeting

Kentucky State University agent Laura Rogers (pictured below) gave an excellent presentation on Fall Hive Management at the August LCBA meeting.

Laura emphasized the importance of getting our hives into good condition now, to give bees the best chance of surviving the winter months. Her main points were:

Fix up your hives: make sure the boxes are in good order, and repair or replace where necessary;

Put in mouse guards when the weather gets cooler to prevent robbing and for mice;

Make sure your hives have good ventilation to prevent moisture accumulating on the inner covers: water droplets will chill and kill the bees in winter;



Tilt your hives forwards, so that water runs off the covers and does not accumulate inside the hives;

Protect your hives from wild animals: a single-strand solar-powered electric fence will deter bears. You could also strap your hives together with metal straps, to make it harder for the bears to break into the hives. Place hives on stands to make it more difficult for skunks to reach bees at hive entrances.

Inspect the hives to ensure that the brood chambers are not pollen bound; if there are frames of pollen in the brood chamber, swap these out for empty drawn frames to give the queen space to lay.

Varroa mites are the biggest killers of bees, both because they transmit viruses and because they weaken the bees by feeding on them. Test and treat for varroa mites now.

Check for the queen, and if necessary requeen.

Bees do swarm in the fall, if the hives are full: too many bees means that the queen pheromone is too widely distributed, and the bees will make swarm preparations.

Leave space in the hive now for goldenrod honey, and keep this as feed for the bees during the winter rather than feeding them sugar syrup; sugar encourages egg laying, while honey encourages food storage.

Casey County Bees

One of our hives has had the same queen for 3 years—she bears a green dot—and she has been a prolific egg-layer during that time. In mid June, we noticed that less brood was being produced, and while we found eggs and brood in the hive, we couldn't find the green queen. The worker bees had set up numerous swarm cells and were obviously making plans to requeen the hive. The bees in this hive were not happy to see us, and we decided to let them do their own thing and observe the results. Not professional beekeeping strategy, for sure, but of interest to us nonetheless.

Subsequent brief inspections in July revealed eggs and brood, and eventually at the end of July we found and marked a new queen. There were several frames of brood including eggs, and the hive was still bubbling with bees, so we presumed all was well and requeening had taken place. These bees were just as mean and bad-tempered as they had been earlier, so once again our inspection was curtailed.

Our hive inspection in late August revealed a somewhat diminished bee population with a markedly calmer temperament—and a new unmarked queen. The new queen is laying well, the hive has sufficient stores for the winter, and there are still plenty of bees in the hive. Did the hive swarm twice? Did the first marked queen not make it? So many questions.

Food for bees

The last of the goldenrods are in flower now, and white wild asters are just starting to bloom. As Laura Rogers pointed out in her presentation, these plants may provide some welcome nectar and pollen for the bees' winter supplies. Unfortunately, persistent rain from Hurricane Irma may wash out this late food supply.

In the garden, sedum "Autumn Joy" (pictured below) is a favorite of honey bees, and all sorts of bumble bees and smaller wild bees. This is an easy plant to grow, and certainly worth having in your garden.

- Hilary Forsyth



News from Dorothey Morgan of KQBBAI

A one day seminar on Queen and Drone Management for Successful Honey Bee Colonies will be held on October 7, 2017 at the Kentucky State University Research Farm in Frankfort, KY. Details are set out in

the seminar announcement below. Bios of the guest speakers and a seminar registration form are available on the LCBA website at www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com, under "News".

KENTUCKY QUEEN BEE BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION INC.



QUEEN AND DRONE MANAGEMENT FOR SUCCESSFUL HONEY BEE COLONIES AND CERTIFICATION FOR KENTUCKY SUSTAINABLE GENETIC TECHNOLOGY

This is a one day event designed to help the beekeeper manage and produce high quality drones and queens to be used for colony growth and sustainment, and also to provide high quality stock for other beekeepers. For those beekeepers desiring to produce quality queens for sales and for insemination events, after the successful course completion, an optional certification will be available.

A three year course certification fee for non-members will be \$125.00. To receive a certification card, you must pass a written test at the end of the day. Successful students will receive a serialized certification card and be authorized to use the course logo in any advertising documentation.

Date: Oct. 7th

Time: 9am to 5pm

Place: Kentucky State University Research Farm, 1525 Mills Ln, Frankfort, KY

Cost: \$25.00 to members of KQBBAI, and HHBBC, \$35.00 to all others if registered by Sept. 30th., \$10.00 extra fee to register at the door.

Certification fee for non-members: \$125.00

Lunch is provided

Contact Dorothey Morgan for more information at 606-871-7300 or lavenderlanefarms@gmail.com,
Mail registration to D. Morgan, 544 West Farm Rd. Nancy, KY 42544

Instructors:

Krispn Given: Apiculture Specialist at Purdue University Bee Lab

History of the mite chewing honey bees

Genetics and the loss of traits with each generation

Collecting mites correctly

Dwight Wells: President of West Central Ohio Beekeepers Association

Importance of nutrition from larva to laying of queens and drone semen

Challenges to becoming a bee farmer

Jamie Walters: President of Black Swamp Beekeepers

Building nucs

Introduction of virgin, open bred, and instrumentally inseminated queens

Trouble shooting loss of queens during introduction

Shipping queens

Pamela Rizkallah: Queen instrumental inseminator

Drone Flow Hive: building a hive to raise and collect drones for I.I.

LOOKING AT MITES UNDER MICROSCOPES

Date: October 6th

Time 7pm to 9pm

Place: Kentucky State University Research Farm, 1525 Mills Ln, Frankfort, KY

Cost: Free

Instructor:

Dorothey Morgan: President KQBBAI, HHBBC board member

This is a free event designed for the traveler who comes in the evening before. It is open to anyone. Dorothey will show how to collect mites for detection of chewing behavior. You are encouraged to bring your mite boards from your apiary. Microscopes will be available for you to use.

New Kentucky Beekeeping flyer from Dr. Tammy Horn Potter

We often receive queries from the public about how to get started in beekeeping. While we want to encourage people to keep bees, sometimes it seems that people have unrealistic plans for their beekeeping endeavors.

culture sets out some great information and tips on beekeeping, and an indication of just how much a commitment is needed. Copies of the flyer are available at LCBA meetings and the Pulaski Cooperative Extension Office.

This new flyer from the Kentucky Department of Agri-

State SERVICES

The Kentucky State Apiarist:

- Identifies and controls disease
- Educates non-beekeeping community on importance of honey bees
- Offers best practice advice
- Performs hive inspections by appointment*
- Provides health certificates for transport
- Speaks at beekeeper functions*
- Publishes monthly Beelines
- Maintains Kentucky's Pollinator Protection Plan
- Collects USDA samples

*Based upon time availability

Getting STARTED

An investment of about \$1,500 in equipment, bees and supplemental feed will get you started. We recommend the following:

- First, join a beekeeping association and attend meetings for at least a year before you invest in beekeeping. The veteran beekeepers can help you find reputable sources for bees and supplies – and avoid expensive pitfalls.
- Start with three to five nucs (nucleus colonies).
- Put up a bear-proof fence if you live in an area where bears are present.

Beekeepers may apply for grants and join Kentucky Proud.

For grants, a local club directory and additional information, visit the KDA website.

kyagr.com/statevet/honeybees



Tammy Horn Potter, Ph.D., State Apiarist
 Mobile: (502) 229-2950 Email: Tammy.Potter@ky.gov

Kentucky Department of Agriculture
kyagr.com
 Ryan F. Quarles, Commissioner

KENTUCKY BEEKEEPING



Beekeeping CLUBS

Kentucky State Beekeepers Association
ksabeekeeping.org

Kentucky Queen Bee Breeders Association Inc.
kyqueenbeekeepers.weebly.com/



85 of the 110

CROPS PRODUCED IN THE U.S.

Depend Upon Pollinators.

Honey bees produce honey, and they also pollinate fruits, nuts, vegetables and flowers. Without honey bees, up to one-third of the food we eat would be drastically affected.

Buying BEES

We recommend that you buy only from a reputable source. The Kentucky State Apiarist or experienced beekeepers at your local beekeeping association can help.

You also can find a list of suppliers at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's beekeepers website, kyagr.com/statevet/honeybees.html.

Honey PRICES

Honey prices fluctuate for a variety of reasons. To find suggested honey prices, go to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture beekeeping page on the website.

State SERVICES

Fifty pounds a year is considered the state average of honey production per hive, although some Kentucky hives produce more. Remember, do not plan to take honey your first year!

Beekeeping CALENDAR

EARLY SPRING
Inspect hives every two weeks for adding hive bodies; perform mite and disease treatments and feeding; queen checks

LATE SPRING
Inspect hives every 1-2 weeks for swarm control; super and manage your growing colony

FALL
Inspect hives every 2-3 weeks, check for mites and apply mite treatments; cull old equipment; winterize




SUMMER
Inspect hives every 2-3 weeks; harvest honey; re-queen; check mite load levels and treat as necessary

WINTER
Repair and construct equipment; order new packages and queens; check hives during the first warm spell (over 60 degrees) of late winter; treat with oxalic acid for Varroa mites; attend bee school or conference; renew association dues

Keeping BEES

Honey bees are commonly kept in rural areas, but it is possible to have honey bees in suburban and urban areas. Abundant cultivated flowers and flowering shrubs make these areas good for hives. Avoid placing a hive near roads, confined animals, neighboring properties and where small children may be present. Bear-proof fencing is essential if you live in an area where bears are present. We strongly recommend that you communicate with your neighbors and notify them about your colony locations.

Reducing RISK

Wear protective clothing, including gloves, and use a bee smoker to reduce the risk of being stung. We strongly recommend that you keep an epinephrine auto-injector for an allergic reaction due to a bee sting.

