

# Lake Cumberland Beekeepers Association



May 2018 Newsletter

## LCBA meeting Monday, May 21 2018

Guest presenter: Sarah Preston

Varroa mites are decimating our bees! Understanding the damage these pests do to bees and the steps that should be taken to control varroa mite infestations is key to successful beekeeping.

Our guest presenter at the LCBA meeting on Monday May 21 is **Sarah Preston**, who will be discussing the detrimental affects of hive pests such as varroa mites on the health of the queen bee and of the entire bee colony.

Ms. Preston has a B.S. Degree in Biochemistry from Auburn. Thereafter she worked on medical diagnostic health development and mosquito virus testing for Ohio Department of Health; human virus testing at Commonwealth of Ky Health Lab; and mosquito research at UK.

Ms. Preston and her husband have a farm in Anderson County where she fell in love with bees. They have 12 bee colonies. So now, it's back to school for her Masters in Entomology where she is studying how stress of queens affects the health and behavior of her offspring.

Sarah's goals are to continue research, develop a queen breeding program and to continue working with the UK Extension Service.

Doors to the meeting open at 6pm for general discussion, followed by a brief business meeting at 6.30pm, and Sarah's presentation at 7pm. Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

## Nectar Flows: What are they and when do they occur?

The program at the LCBA April meeting was entitled "*Nectar Flows: What are they and when do they occur?*" It was presented by Barren County beekeeper Shannon R. Trimboli who is the author of the new book "Plants Honey Bees Use in the Ohio and Tennessee Valleys".

Nectar sources will affect the taste of honey. We need to look out the window to see what is blooming and what plants the bees are visiting. Nectar is composed of water, sugar, amino acids, and minerals and the bees collect the nectar from flowers to feed their brood and make honey. Bees are particular which plants they visit to obtain nectar and when. The time of day, the age of the flower, the air temperature and the moisture level of the soil all affect the number of visits to obtain nectar.

Nectar flows occur in spring and fall with the early spring minor flows coming from red maple, red bud,

fruit trees, henbit, purple dead nettle, wild mustard and canola. The major spring nectar flows in this area depend on blackberries, black locust tree, tulip poplar tree, holly shrubs and clover. Sourwood trees in the higher elevations of Eastern KY are a major source.

In the fall the major flows involve goldenrod and asters. A hot dry summer will lessen the nectar flow and feeding may be necessary. Nectar dearth occurs when plants aren't producing much nectar usually in July and August. Shannon cautioned beekeepers to check the weight of their hives during this time.

Following the program refreshments were served and many picked up a copy of Shannon's book. The meeting ended at 8:30.

- Pat Rizenbergs

**Editor:** Hilary Forsyth

**LCBA email:** lakecumberland.beekeepers@gmail.com

**LCBA website:** [www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com](http://www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com)

**LCBA President:** Ginger Renaker

Phone: 606-416-0041

**LCBA Vice-President:** Michael Wooton

Cell phone: 606-492-5228

Email: mikewooton@hotmail.com

## **Mike's Ramblings—A note from Mike Wooton, LCBA Vice President**

It seems that all the rain we are getting is really slowing our nectar flow. Bees are busy trying to get their workers in gear, but the rain is slowing their progress. I have checked all my hives and have a good brood pattern in most of my hives. We need to keep a close watch for supersedure cells so that we can decide how to manage swarming possibilities. Splitting a good hive is a great way to increase your apiary.

I have removed a hive from an old house but not sure I did it correctly. We need a lesson on removing hives from structures. We are now getting some calls for swarm removal and, so far, having good results. Kroger's north had a swarm that was almost on the roof. Too high for me but one of our new members was able to collect it. Kroger's staff were pleased that we could get the swarm without destroying it. Others in our club have reported swarms. Keep up the good work!

May is the busy month for beekeepers. Many of us have reversed the hives which allows the Queen to lay in the bottom brood box and move upward. Reversing the boxes may break the cluster so a couple days of warm

weather is needed. Check hives weekly and add supers when the flow is strong. I think the redbuds are almost through blooming. Drones are busy now and are looking for mating. I just learned that when nectar falls out of a frame it means the girls are hard at work. This watery nectar will be eaten or thickened into honey. Beekeeping is fascinating and a learning experience every time I get into a hive. It is hard work but very rewarding when things go as planned.

We had a great April meeting with Shannon Trimboli presenting a talk on plants for bees and nectar flow. Thank you Ms. Trimboli. Thanks also are in order for all the good treats and refreshments that were provided. We are expecting Sarah Preston at the May meeting to inform us about mite control. Bee sure to attend. Everyone is welcome.

*Mike Wooton  
Vice President  
Lake Cumberland Beekeepers Association  
[Mikewooton@hotmail.com](mailto:Mikewooton@hotmail.com)*

## **It's swarm season!**

Bees are doing their best to catch up with the late spring and to increase their populations, and that means swarms. Below is the current list of LCBA members who are prepared to collect swarms in our area. The list is posted on the LCBA website at [www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com](http://www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com) under "Resources", and are available to the general public.

### **LCBA SWARM CATCHERS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Home #</b>	<b>Mobile #</b>	<b>General area</b>
Greg Barron		606-875-6765	Southern Pulaski County
David and Bill Begley		606-872-2389	Ferguson
Larry Burton	606-871-7745		Nancy area
Kathy Campbell	270-343-5697		Russell County, near dam
H.E. Beaver Corder II	606-305-4848		Science Hill
Dan Crockett	606-678-8338	606-224-9433	Somerset
Don Davis	606-219-5090		Bronston area
Rob Edwards	606-875-8309		Somerset
Bobby Goodin		606-416-7141	Eastern Pulaski County
James Mills	606-305-4780		Somerset
Dorothy Morgan	606-871-7300		Western Pulaski area
Ray Tucker	606-679-5257	859-221-1994	Somerset
Beth Wilson	606-305-6647		Nancy area
Michael Wooton	606-492-5228		Science Hill

If corrections, additions or deletions to the list are needed, please let me know by email to [www.lakecumberland.beekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:www.lakecumberland.beekeepers@gmail.com).

- Hilary Forsyth, Editor

## "Beelines" and news from KSBA

In her email sending out the KSBA newsletter for May, Dr. Tammy Horn Potter noted:

"Just want to remind folks who are buying bees this time of year of that old adage, "buyer beware". Nucs should have relatively new equipment (frames should not be broken, woodenware relatively new, wax foundation should not be black). A nuc should have this year's mated queen and her brood, nice patterns of worker brood, a good population of workers, and no diseases. Typically, there will be four frames with a less-developed fifth frame to give the bees room to work. There are variances to this approach to nucs. Some beekeepers sell 3-frame nucs, for instance, rather than 5-frame. These variances should be communicated to customers well in advance of transaction, and customers should inspect their purchases before leaving the yard (i.e., take your veil).

This "buyer beware" advice applies to packages too. Package bees should have this year's mated queen, good population of worker bees, and a relatively -full feeder can. If there are a lot of dead bees on the bottom, reconsider buying the package."

The May edition of "Beelines" is packed with news, including the visit by 2018 Honey Queen Kayla Fusselman to the Kentucky State Fair, and tips from KY State Apriarist Dr. Tammy Potter on dealing with small hive beetles and laying workers.

Also in "Beelines": LCBA member Doug Brock and his colorful hive-painting project feature in the May edition of "Beelines". Doug has spoken at recent LCBA meetings about his work with school art students, and his efforts to draw attention to bees and beekeeping. Great work, Doug!

Kayla Fusselman, the **2018 American Honey Queen**, will visit Louisville, KY August 16-22. She will make appearances at the Kentucky State Fair during her stay, speaking to fairgoers about the importance of honeybees to the public's daily lives and how honeybee pollination directly shapes our livelihood. She will also share information how honey's beautiful spectrum provides endless possibilities and the many treats that honeybees provide. Kayla will make appearance throughout the fairgrounds and will be present at the Kentucky State Beekeepers Association exhibit.

"Beelines" and further KY State Fair news are posted on the LCBA website under "Resources", at [www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com](http://www.lakecumberlandbeekeepers.com)

## Casey County Bees

This is a busy time in the beekeeping world. As Mike Wootton notes in his "Ramblings" on page 1, several bee swarms have been reported in our area—and some even successfully captured and rehoused.

I received a plea for help on the LCBA website from somebody in the Nancy area who had an unwanted bee swarm. There is always the worry that somebody who does not know about the value of a bee swarm may be tempted to kill the bees off. It is LCBA's mission to help save bees, so thanks to those folks who have signed up as swarm catchers—see the list published on page 2.

As well as feeding their increasing broods, bees have managed to get in reasonable stores of nectar and pollen thus far; this despite the stop-start early nectar flow due to variable weather conditions in April. Beekeeping lore has it that you should not add supers to the hives until after the redbuds have bloomed; this adage proved a little difficult to apply up here in our corner of Casey County, as a late cold snap destroyed most of the redbud flowers before they even had a chance to open up.

Likewise, black locust bloom is sparse up here, though that could be more a case of the trees taking a year off as they had a mast year in 2017. Fortunately that other major nectar flow producer, the tulip poplars, are covered in flowers, and should more than make up for the sparse locust flowers. Now the worry is that heavy rainstorms will wash away the nectar collected in those big, open tulip flowers. As Shannon Trimboli, our speaker at the LCBA meeting in April, noted: Nothing in beekeeping is easy!

- Hilary Forsyth