

Lake Cumberland Beekeepers Association



July 2018 Newsletter

LCBA meeting Monday, July 16 2018

Join us at the upcoming LCBA meeting on Monday, July 16, 2018 at the Pulaski Extension Center. LCBA member **Doug Brock** is guest presenter for the evening, with a talk on the use of essential oils in bee hives to help protect the bees against varroa mites and other hive pests.

Doug attended the 2015 LCBA beekeeping class, and is now also a member of KSBA and KQBA. He and his wife Judy live on and take care of about 150 acres of land in Mount Vernon, Kentucky. Some of this land has been in the Brock family for over 100 years. Doug usually keeps some 2 dozen beehives on the property.

In addition to watching his own bees, Doug has been observing the wild bees in the woods on his property, and has noticed how these bees are able to take care of themselves by collecting essential oils from plants

growing in the area. Doug has been using these essential oils to keep his own hives healthy, and in his presentation he will demonstrate how to mix the oils and explain how to use them safely in the hives.

Attendees at the meeting are invited to bring a quart jar with 1 cup of honey in it to the presentation. Doug will mix in an essential oil in the correct amount to use in their hives. Doug will also reveal the 'secret weapon' that he uses on his bees to kill 100% of the varroa mites.

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

Birds and Bees event Saturday July 14

Volunteers are needed to help with the LCBA outreach table at the **Birds and Bees event on Saturday, July 14 2018, 8.00am-2.00pm* at the Somerset Farmers' Market** just south of the Somerset Mall. Mike Wooton and Pat Rizenbergs are setting up the LCBA table, and they will have the LCBA Observation Hive on show for the public. If you can help with the event, please take an hour or two and join in with the fun.

Do you have honey for sale? LCBA members are invited to bring their honey to sell, and in exchange are asked to assist with the LCBA display.

*The event may end a little earlier depending on the turnout and weather.

For more information, contact LCBA Vice President Mike Wooton on 606-492-5228.

Honey extraction equipment available for rent

LCBA has honey extraction equipment available for hire to members.

The equipment manager, Imants Rizenbergs, can be reached at 606-679-5087 to reserve either the large extractor for \$15 a day or the small extractor for \$5 a day. A refractometer to measure honey moisture content is available for \$2 a day.

LCBA member James Mills has a bee vac used to extract bees from inside walls, structures, etc., and he has kindly offered to make this available to members if needed. Contact James Mills direct at 606-305-4780.

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

Hot Time in the Bee Yard—July 2018

Whew, it sure has been hot. Remember to hydrate as much as you can in this July weather. Take plenty of water with you when working with bees. I don't stay very long when checking hives.

I have started collecting honey from both yards. The hives that have three supers have provided nine frames of good capped honey from each. The honey from one yard is just a little darker than the other but both yards are producing excellent tasting honey. Already have previous customers asking for honey. Pricing honey is up to each of us but be sure you do not price your supplies too cheap. I see pricing all over the board. My customers will pay a premium for honey because they know the origin.

July nectar flow is minimal, so I plan to feed and do brood breaks and requeen slow producing hives. It is also a good time to upgrade frames with new foundation. I am going to check and treat for mites, as needed. I have started two Nucs and collected two swarms and they seem to be doing good. One was slow producing a queen but I saw her the last time I looked: no brood yet, but she looks good.

I want to thank everyone who helps keep things going

at our club meetings. We have a good time meeting and discussing all things bees (and other things too). I haven't heard the results of the operation planned for our treasurer but, be sure we are praying for good results.

We are looking forward to our July meeting when Mr. Brock discusses essential oils. I am sure it will be entertaining. We invite all to our meetings. You will be welcome and will learn about bees and the need for keeping them healthy and active. **We love our bees and need them!**

Mike Wooton
Vice President

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Check out the LAKE CUMBERLAND BEEKEEPERS web site for information on our club and for additional information about bees.
BEE KIND TO OUR BEES!!!!

Honey extracting demonstration

At the LCBA meeting on June 18, 2018, a program on honey extraction was presented by Mike Wooton, LCBA vice president.

Mike talked about using a fume board sprayed with Fisher's Bee Quick to drive the bees from the honey supers within a few minutes. He removes frames of capped honey, brushes off any stray bees, and places the frames in a cooler keeping the lid closed. The actual extraction should take place within several days as eggs from small hive beetles may be on the frames and hatching larva will contaminate the honey. The extraction area should be clean!

Before extracting at the meeting the honey was checked for moisture content using the club's refractometer. A small drop of honey was dropped on the glass and the level was determined to be high (above 18.2%) The honey extracted at the meeting had been placed in a freezer and was expected to contain a higher level of moisture. When this happens putting frames of honey in a room with a fan or dehumidifier will help lower the moisture level to the acceptable level of 18.2% or less. Honey bottled with too much moisture will ferment in time.

Mike showed several ways to decap honey frames before extracting. His favorite tool is a scratcher which he

uses to lift the wax cappings off the honey putting the cappings in a container with a straining bag to be strained later.

Mike was using his 2 frame extractor without a motor. The frames were turned so that both sides of the frame would be extracted. Before the honey level in the extractor reached the frames, the extractor gate was opened allowing the honey to flow into a stainless steel double strainer sitting in a plastic 5 gallon gated bucket that was lined with a nylon straining bag. After all the honey has strained through, the double strainers are removed and the honey is strained a third time by lifting the nylon bag slowly out of the bucket. This will take some time and a chair is helpful for comfort. Put a lid to cover the bucket of honey until bottling 24 hours later. This allows the air bubbles to settle. A thin film of wax particles may need to be skimmed off before opening the gate and bottling.

- Pat Rizenbergs

LCBA Mentorship Program

Beekeepers are always willing to give their opinions on what they believe to be the best practices in the art of beekeeping. A new beekeeper would need to listen to all the opinions and make what they consider to be their best option. This is what makes attending bee club meetings a must!

In addition to giving opinions some beekeepers are willing to **show** new beekeepers what to do and not to do in working with their bees. We call these folks beekeeping mentors. They agree to take a new beekeeper under their wing helping them with their equipment use, showing them the basics of working in a hive, observation of brood and brood patterns, and generally how to take care of their bees. It's not always that they have more time than others to be mentors, but it is always that they care enough to share their knowledge when needed! Even though it is not always convenient, the weather hot, or the hives two counties over a mentor pulls himself/herself together for the honeybees! Their knowledge is shared on the phone, in the apiary, at monthly LCBA meetings, and more recently on Facebook at Kentucky Beekeepers where a few of our members are contributors.

Beginning in 2010 with the 1st LCBA Beekeeping School it became apparent with so many new beekeepers ordering bees following the school that mentors were needed to help these folks **immediately**. In response the LCBA Mentor List was started and then updated with each of the schools that followed in 2012 and 2015

when there were 100 enrolled. The school was held at the public library because the extension office was not large enough. Dedicated LCBA members hauled in additional tables, chairs, and supplies for each of the 8 sessions to the library. The number of new beekeepers following the 2015 school was comprised of people from as far away as Nicholasville and Williamsburg with folks from Monticello, Columbia, and all over Pulaski County. Providing mentors for such a wide area was an overwhelming task! I remember contacting a beekeeper from the Bluegrass Club in Lexington who agreed to help the Nicholasville couple and the president of the Lincoln Co. Club who stepped up to help some of those in the Stanford and Northern Pulaski areas. LCBA mentors were exhausted in that effort and perhaps that was why another follow-up school was not encouraged by the membership.

When the call came out for mentors to help new 2018 members- Donnie Hull stepped up to help he Kees in the Shopville area, Beth Wilson helped Mike Knittel down the road from her, Dan Luttrell agreed to help James Miller in the Windsor area and James Mills volunteered to help Max and Kathy Weldy in Nancy.

Anyone needing a beekeeping mentor, and anyone interested in being a beekeeping mentor, please contact Pat Rizenbergs direct at 606-875-3701, or email pat.rizenbergs@gmail.com.

- Pat Rizenbergs

Casey County Bees

It has been hot and humid, and the hives have been humming as the bees work hard to maintain the correct hive temperature for their brood. Cut up wooden paint stirrer sticks have been placed underneath the top covers to provide a small gap to increase air circulation within the hives. Evening temperatures have provided some relief, and bees have clustered out on their front porches enjoying the relative cool well into the night.

Despite the heat, the bees seem to be doing well, gathering good nectar stores and raising successive frames of brood. We have not taken much honey thus far, however; although the bees have many frames of nectar, they seem reluctant to go ahead and cap this over. The bees may sense that they still need access to their food stores.

Our hives have good populations, well able to control small hive beetle numbers. So far, we have only seen one or two small hive beetles during our inspections. Possibly the beetles, which pupate in the soil around the hives, did not survive in the saturated soil conditions following the high rainfall received during the month of June. There is good even in too much rain!

One size does not fit all:

In our bee yard, two identical hives had double brood boxes, with supers over a queen excluder. Our mid-June inspection showed that the brood boxes contained 5 full frames of brood in each box, and stores in the remaining frames. To give the queens space, we added a deep box of drawn frames to each hive.

Our early July inspections revealed that one of the hives had several frames of brood in their new box, in addition to maintaining the original brood frames in the lower boxes. The second hive, meanwhile, totally ignored the new deep, and seemed happy to squash into their original brood boxes.

Our conclusion is that it all depended on how close the capped brood was to emerging, providing the queens with new space for egg laying. The lesson is that we need to inspect all of our hives regularly, and not simply assume that what happens in one hive works in all the others. In fact, every hive is different—and we just acknowledge that the bees know what they are doing!

- Hilary Forsyth