



Jackson County Beekeepers Monthly Newsletter



# Unconventional Hives



by Meindert Dijkhuis on June 9, 2022 (Layens Horizontal, Warré, and 5-frame Nuc)

## 2022 Club Meetings

**Club meeting on Thursday, July 7, 2022**, at the ALFA building on Hwy 72 in Scottsboro. The meeting will start at:

- **6:00 PM.**
- **PLEASE NOTE: Damon Wallace was our featured speaker.**
- **Speaker Summary: Damon Wallace is the past president of the Alabama Beekeepers Association. He is a Georgia Master Beekeeper. Wrangles bee packages every spring and sells them, and does swarm removals as well. Damon speaks at various bee clubs around Alabama and Georgia.**
  - **Mr. Wallace's presentation was not about the usual beekeeper/bee issues, but about tools and gadgets you can use to make beekeeping more enjoyable. Here is a summary of what you missed:**
    - **Excluder cage. Homemade frame cage fabricated from 2 queen-excluders. To contain a frame with drawn comb ready for egg laying. The queen is put on this caged frame, inserted in the hive, where it can now lay eggs. Monitor for eggs each day, until day 4 when emerged larva can be extracted for queen rearing. Unused eggs/larva can be returned to the hive, and life goes on. Great gadget for accurately assessing age of eggs and larva.**
    - **Bee Watering feature made from a 32 gallon garbage can. Requires a garbage can, small electric or solar fountain pump, ½ inch tubing, coconut fiber matting, potting mix medium or chips, a brick, moss. Drill ½ inch hole in middle of lid, and add'l holes around the center to allow water to drain. Attached pump to brick, and add hose. Place in can. Thread hose through center hole of upside down lid, and place on can. Add coconut fiber mat, and add growing medium and moss on top. Fill can with water, Turn pump on and voila. Cut hose to appropriate length.**
    - **Have ants? Get Tanglefoot. Used as an application on fresh cut trees/plants to protect from invasive insects, etc. Get some scrap wood strips, just big enough to place under the 4 corners of your hive. Apply the Tanglefoot, and place under hive corners. This will keep ants out. Watch; it's sticky stuff. Wear gloves. (use Goop to remove)**
    - **For those of you who use wired frames for wax foundation. After use, the wires may not be tight any longer. Get a \$7 Wire Crimper. (see [www.wish](http://www.wish)) Run the device over the wire, and it crimps it to where it is nice and tight in your frame.**

# Annual Picnic - August 20th

We're planning our Annual Picnic for August 20th. Traditionally, we'll have BBQ meets provided, and ask you all to provide a dish that can be shared. Sign-up lists will go around for food, drinks, and supplies on 8/4/22. Keep your calendar for August 20 open! It will be held at the ALFA building (our meeting room)

## Current Management (year 2)

February is traditionally our changing of the Guards so to speak, and as of February 4th, 2022 our leaders are:

- Ray Latham - President
- Keith Fletcher - Vice President (Acting president while Ray has surgery)
- Dustin Davis - Secretary
- Meindert Dijkhuis - Treasurer/editor

Current directors are:

- Lane Walden and Jeremy Mulkey will be up for re-election since their 1-year term is up this year. (They fulfilled the remaining term of 1 year left vacant by Ray Latham and Keith Fletcher when they were elected President and VP last year).
- Rob Woody and Charlie Smith were elected for the full 3-year term. (This is year 2)
- Terry McClendon will continue to serve the remainder of his term. (year 3)

**Deb Davis has requested to be dismissed from her duties. (This was her last year too) We're looking to fill her spot. Let us know if you like to volunteer. (Calling all ladies!!!! This is your chance.)**

## Club Resources you can use!

- If you want to use any equipment, like the extractors, or EZ-Vape, for instance, CALL or TEXT Keith Fletcher at (703)887-6071 and reserve whatever you need.

## 2022 Membership Renewal Continues

February is traditionally the month to renew your membership. Although we voted to have monthly face-to-face meetings again, some of you may not feel comfortable to join in person. the Board would like to encourage you to renew your membership by mail instead.



Please forward your \$10.00 membership payment (remember, it covers your whole household) to:

- **JCBA, attn Treasurer Meindert Dijkhuis, 794 Hendrix Rd, Sylvania, AL 35988.**

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

## Be a Contributing Editor.

If you have ideas, articles, YouTube video links, or subjects you would like to share with our Club Members, please let me know by sending me an email to [meindertdijkhuis@gmail.com](mailto:meindertdijkhuis@gmail.com)

Feel free to write something, and I'll be glad to add it. We want to share information.



Bee foraging for water on a rock in my pond

# Let's Talk Bees!

It's July 1st as I am writing this. Finally, we had a nice rain shower this morning. This was the first good rain we had here in Sylvania (at my house) in about 3 or 4 weeks. I went out of town during the hottest week, and when we came back home, everything looked pretty sad and dry. Hopefully, we'll receive a little more in the coming days.

Right now, I am only feeding my Nuc box. On June 8th, they had 3 of the 5 frames filled out with comb. I did place a honey super on the box, but decided to remove it the next day, because I was afraid they would have too much space, and it would just invite trouble from ants or hive beetles. They do use the sugar syrup though. I am already on the 2nd Quart since my return home, and need to refill it as we speak. The Nuc is due for a check; they may want that honey super now. On July 5th, I inspected the nuc. The situation has not changed much. Still on 3 frames. But wait, they went through 3 quarts of sugar syrup already. Where did that go? Based on our discussions at the 7/7 meeting, I now believe my other bees made a visit, and helped themselves to the syrup as well. They left the rest of the hive alone, but I guess, you can still call it robbing.

That leads into the next observation. What do the bees feed on? The rest of my hives are not very interested in supplemental feeding. I placed a communal feeder out in the yard, but not a bee went to it. I had to remove it, because ants were taking over. Ants are a serious issue in my yard. I am keeping them at bay with cinnamon powder. (I am going to try Tanglefoot, see above) That seems to work, but you have to stay on top of it. My pasture was pretty fried from the hot summer weeks, and even the clover has a hard time regenerating flowers. Clover still blooms, but only in places where it gets some shade during the day. I did notice that we have a lot of Mimosa trees blooming in my area. Wonder if the bees search them out. Crepemyrtle is starting to bloom in places. The white ones at my house are a big hit.

**Horizontal Layens hive Update:** Well, this turns out to be one big disappointment. On July 6 I inspected this hive as well. It was mid-day, so I did not find many bees inside, but the most striking problem was that there was not a drop of honey in the whole hive. All frames were clean, except for some pretty yellow pollen. The frames did have scattered capped brood, but they all looked to be drone cells. I thought I found the queen, but after looking at the pictures I took, I think it was a drone too. I reduced the hive chamber down to 9 frames again, but I think that will not save them.

Below is a picture of what I found. About 9 of the 20 frames looked like this. The rest were empty. I suspect that this hive was robbed also. I think the swarm this hive generated decimated the hive too much, and the remaining bees could not hold the fort.



Layens frame: No food, no brood, except drone brood (M Dijkhuis 7/6/22)

**Warré Hive experiment box Update:** The Warré hive is still doing well. As I wrote before, this hive has currently 3 boxes. The top 2 are now fully filled out. From what I could see through the screened bottom board, the bees are starting to build comb in the 3rd box. I do not expect them to make a lot of progress, due to the heat and or dearth. However, I need to keep an eye out for progress, because it would be time to add the 4th box at the bottom.

Based on the writings from Mr. Warré, as soon as I add the 4th box, I would also remove the top box. This would contain any extra honey the bees stored for the winter. This hive mimics a tree hollow, and as the bees ascend down, the brood chamber ascends down with it, and the top of the hive becomes now the store for winter supplies. As Fall/Winter approaches, the brood chamber will have ascended down to box 3. By placing box 4 under



it, the bees will still feel they have room to expand, and the beekeeper can now take the top box (box 1) out. This leaves box 2 as the top box with Supplies for winter. Since the boxes are square, less space is required to be kept warm, and the bees can easily move up to access honey supplies if needed during cold winter days.

Below is a view up into the hive.



Warre hive view from below. The top slats are in box 3, and the bees are starting to build comb. (M Dijkhuis 7/6/22)

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# CALENDAR

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

For June, address the following:

1. Keep monitoring for supercedure cells
2. Keep monitoring for swarm cells
3. Check ventilation. Use popsicle sticks to raise the cover slightly to improve airflow, for instance.
4. Start checking for surplus honey. This may be the start of harvest season. Seen some impressive harvests on Facebook!
5. Survey flowering plants in your area. We'll start seeing a decline soon. I noticed that Privet is not very abundant near my house this year. Still have a lot of white clover.

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.

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

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# Favorite Book List

## ***Keeping Bees in Horizontal Hives: A Complete Guide to Apiculture***

Georges de Layens & Gaston Bonnier

Dr. Leo Sharashkin (editor)

374 pages, 250 ill.

\$39.95. 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

\$24.95 (on sale). 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 \$14.00. \$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.

## ***Raising Honeybee Queens***

by Gilles Fert (Author) Dr. Leonid Sharashkin (editor)

144 pages, 150 full-color illustrations

\$29. ISBN 978-0-9842873-8-3

Deep Snow Press, 2020

**Note: The above books are available in the JCBA Library.**