



Jackson County Beekeepers Monthly Newsletter



Bee on Buttercup



by Meindert Dijkhuis on April 6, 2022

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May 2022
TOP NEWS

2022 Club Meetings

Monthly Meetings are back! We will be meeting on Thursday, May 5, 2022, at the ALFA building on Hwy 72 in Scottsboro. The meeting will start at:

- **Board members!!** Please plan to **be there by 5:30 PM** to discuss Club Business.
- **Everyone else!!** Please be there **no later than 6:00 PM**, and we can commence with the regular meeting.
- **PLEASE NOTE: We will have a speaker this evening: Yappy Beeman Ulbrich. YouTube sensation. See him in this link.**
▶ **You Won't Believe What I Found In An Old Pickup Truck (wait for it)**
- **Yappy Beeman performs live honey bee removals in Alabama and relocates them to apiaries away from residential areas so they can rebuild and thrive as a honey bee colony producing honey. Yappy is an Alabama Beekeepers association member that has performed over 500 live bee removals. Yappy, along with the help of his great friends, Jp The Beeman, 628DirtRooster, Jeff Horchoff, and many others has learned many ways to remove bees safely for the bees and homeowners alike. (YouTube)**
- **This should be an awesome evening; entertainment for all.**

The dreaded Covid Variant is still here. We highly recommend you bring a mask to the meeting, and wear it if we can't maintain social distancing guidelines in a crowded room

Other Club News.

Jackson County Beekeepers Specialty Crop Grant Proposal *"Increasing Alabama's Honey Production through Sustainable: Beekeeping"*

Keith Fletcher, our Club Vice President, submitted a Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) Proposal to the Alabama Department of Agriculture & Industry (ADAI) in Montgomery on April 12th. If successful, we may receive \$25,000 to help further beekeeping and ultimate honey production in our state. Below is a summary & purpose description of what the Grant entails. We should be notified in October this year if we get to play. The funding would cover expenses for one year, and will cover money for hive equipment, speakers, and a mobile honey extraction unit.

Summary:

The Jackson County Beekeepers Association (JCABA) seeks this specialty crop block grant to provide needed education and outreach for local honey producers and others interested in promoting beekeeping in Jackson County, Alabama and the greater Tennessee Valley.

Honey farming in the Tennessee Valley has been hit in the past five years with bee colony losses, surpassing the national average. In some cases, beekeepers are seeing a 70-80% rate of death of their bee colonies each year. The reasons vary with weather; how colonies are managed; the availability of colony management training; equipment and resources to produce honey in greater quantities; and pesticide application on crops and flora in the forage area.

If awarded, JCABA will establish an agreement or contractual relationship with the State Department of Agriculture to lead and help execute the project. The funded education will provide members and participants with a holistic hands-on learning opportunity, focusing on the development of beekeeping skills by teaching both technical and entrepreneurship techniques. Students will learn how to manage their apiaries for better survivability, along with the procedures and equipment necessary for collecting, extracting, and packaging of honey, wax and pollen. The education portion of this project would require funding speaker fees, travel and lodging for renown educators and researchers in the beekeeping industry. It will also help defray the costs to JCABA. Lastly, the resource supplemental portion of this grant will promote the design and development of a mobile honey extraction unit to serve the needs of the project participants.

Purpose:

Honeybee colony survivability, and subsequently local honey production in the Tennessee Valley area, have been suffering in heavy numbers (50-70% honeybee colony losses are NOT uncommon in this region) since about 2017. This project will attempt to find solutions through honeybee management education and sustainable honey extraction methods.

Objectives:

- 1. Increase honeybee colony survivability through beekeeping education**
- 2. Increase harvested honey yields through better and more available harvesting equipment**
- 3. Increase harvested honey yields through safe pest management practices**
- 4. Promote honey as a specialty crop to high school students interested in beekeeping as a career**

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
- Dustin Davis - Secretary
- Meindert Dijkhuis - Treasurer

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)
(I previously reported Micheal Twilley, but that was an error)

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.)

2022 Membership Renewal Due Now!

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.

Let's Talk Bees!

As I am writing this, it's already April 26. From all the postings on FB, it looks like we're all doing well in the SWARM department. I caught 5 swarms so far.

My number 2 hive has gone crazy this season. As I told you last month, the 1st swarm came from this hive on 3/29, and I placed them in my **Horizontal Layens hive**. So far this is a great success. When I checked on them on 4/13, they already built 9 frames with comb, and the frames were loaded with capped brood. I added 6 more frames. I really need to check them again, and see if I should add the remaining frames to fill the hive up to its capacity of 20 frames. (I did check, and added the remaining 5 frames. The 6 frames I added on 4/13 were being built out, but there was still room.)

A week later, the 2nd hive swarmed again. This time a much smaller swarm, and I decided to put them back in the mother hive. I added a box, and separated it with newspaper to allow them to regroup. That worked, but 3 days later, they swarmed again. This time the swarm was a little larger, and I decided to put them in my **Warre Hive experiment box**.

As of today, they are doing well. This is a top-bar hive, and the bees have to build it up from scratch. They are doing great, and only 3 more bars need to be built out. I do feed them heavily, since a lot of time and effort goes into building a colony from scratch. I have 2 1-Quart Boardman Feeders in the 2nd box on top of the Top-bars of the 3rd box. It's a perfect fit.

Subsequently, I had 2 more swarms within 2 days of each other. I captured these swarms and put them in nuc boxes. The 1st nuc has since been moved in a 10-frame box. The 2nd one will go in a bigger box tomorrow. (**check!** All is well) The only thing is, I don't know which hive these ladies swarmed from. I am pretty sure one of them came from the 2nd hive again. The other is most likely from my 1st hive. The 3rd hive has yet to swarm. Surprisingly, everything is otherwise working out well for me this year. I also noticed that the bees are much more docile than they have been in the past. Maybe it's just me being more comfortable around them, since I have been able to do work without much protection. Just light smoke has done the trick.

How do you all treat against ants. This is such a nuisance. It's not an infestation, but they're everywhere. In my beehouse I use diatomaceous earth, which helps a lot, but I am afraid to use that where bees can touch it.. I do have my hive-stands in a tub of water, but that's no real deterrent, since ants can walk on water. The water barrier was intended for hive beetle larvae. Now I sprinkled cinnamon powder around the bases of the hive to see if that helps any.

Below are a few pictures.



9 Horizontal Layens hive frames full on 4/13, 14 days after these bees were put in this hive.



4/13: This swarm was re-homed to the Warre Hive. They are working from the top box down.



Warre Hive Project: April 13 to April 30. All top bars have been built out. The far left one still has a bit to go. (as seen through viewing window)

CALENDAR

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

In April we should have thought about the following:

1. Check for eggs and or the queen
2. This would be a good month for new bee installation in new hives
3. Continue to check for capped brood and brood patterns
4. Feed pollen substitute
5. Look for supercedure cells. These are queen cells attached toward the top of a frame. These cells indicate the queen is no longer performing well, and the bees are preparing for a replacement queen. (remember; swarm cell are at the bottom of a frame)

For May, start thinking about the following:

1. It may be time to add a queen excluder and honey supers. Since we're in AL, you may want to do this late April.
2. As the honey flow increases, keep monitoring your honey supers, and add one as soon as 7 frames in the honey super are filled.
3. Keep monitoring for supercedure cells (see 5)
4. Keep monitoring for swarm cells (see 5)

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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.

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

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 will be available in the JCBA Library next month.