



Upcoming Meetings

Tuesday, February 13th, 7:30 pm at the West Barnstable Community Building on Route 149.

New Business

The BOD has decided to put for a vote to the members in attendance at the February meeting the purchase from Vermont Wildflower Seed Farm, with a 4-color custom printed packets of the Deluxe pollinator mix to be handed out at club outreach programs, the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, members, Garden clubs, etc. Their seeds are non-GMO and guaranteed for 5 years. The mix is 30% annual seeds and 70% perennial seeds. The list of seeds that are included in the packet have been reviewed by Russ Norton of the Extension Service and have no invasive species. The list is included below before the Resources section.

If approved, a second vote is needed to determine whether we purchase 1,000 packets for \$800.00 or to purchase 2,000 packets for \$950.00.

The board recommends purchasing 2,000 packets for \$950.00.

Tonight's Program

It's been a while since we grilled board members for information on beekeeping and this crazy roller-coaster winter. Come ready with your questions. It's always a really informational evening!

SWEETS AND TREATS ALWAYS WELCOME FOR NIBBLING.

Bee School

Thursday, 15th, 7:30 pm at the West Barnstable Community Building on Route 149.

February 1st, we completed supply orders completed and practiced assembling their first frame! Hammers were in abundant supply and none were left behind. One water bottle was orphaned. If you would like it returned, you can get it at the monthly meeting on the 13th if you can describe it.

Board members who were not flu ridden were present and helped our newbees make their sizable investments solidifying their commitment to beekeeping! As always, students were inquisitive and enthusiastic. [Click here](#) for photos.

Our next class is on the 15th, when our students will learn about the occupants of the hive.

Beekeepers Saturday

Knights of Columbus

[91 Manville St, Leicester, MA 01524](#)

March 3, 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM

All Day Conference, Leicester, MA. This event is FREE for members, non-members pay \$10 or join the WCBA for \$15. Lunch will be provided for \$10, only available when pre-registering.

SPEAKERS: DR. JAY EVANS Research Leader, USDA-ARS Bee Research Lab DR. KEITH DELAPLANE University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

Dr. Keith Delaplane. He is a Professor at the University of Georgia college of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. He is leading the University of Georgia effort against pollinator decline and has published dozens of papers on honey bees. He is one of the nation's leading researchers and experts on honeybees.

Dr. Jay Evans is Research Leader at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Bee Research Lab (BRL). The BRL is focused on the development of management strategies to help honey bees thrive in the face of disease, chemical stress and inadequate forage. His own research uses genetic techniques to reduce the impacts of parasites and pathogens.

Links to details at [Worcester County Beekeepers](#)

Meet Your Local Farmers Event

Saturday, March 24th

Harwich Community Center gym

Harwich Conservation Trust and the Cape & Islands Farm Bureau are hosting the 9th Annual "Meet Your Local Farmers" event (free & open to the public) on Saturday, March 24, 2018 from noon – 3:00 p.m. in the gym at the Harwich Community Center ([100 Oak St., Harwich, 02645](#)). Kick-off the 2018 growing season, meet local farmers from around Cape Cod, and learn more about locally grown products.

From the Board

Attending the recent first session of this year's Bee School made me reflect on how fast time passes. It was hard to believe that it had been a decade since being in the same situation as a hopeful, totally inexperienced beekeeper. In the ensuing years I have progressed to a hopeful somewhat more experienced, beekeeper. The term experienced is very relative and subjective. Experience is an integral part of the pastime of keeping bees (along with hope). As the academic sages put it, "experience is the best teacher". Educators use the term "experiential learning", our elders called it "learning things the hard way". We can discuss the various aspects of keeping bees and listen to older bee whisperers pass on pearls of wisdom in the apiary arts, but until we've been engulfed in a cloud of buzzing creatures and dealt with the anxiety of that first package installation it's all rather abstract. The good news is that it does get more comfortable as we progress, not necessarily easier, just more comfortable. Experience is a commodity that we have to acquire on our own, we can gain some measure of it by observing and listening to others but it's best acquired by our own actions, and mistakes. For their part the bees as a species are quite adaptable and able to cope with the trials and tribulations of their relationship with humans, especially when we're new beekeepers.

While the initial lack of experience is intimidating, as it is in any new endeavor, that does pass. What doesn't necessarily pass is the fascination with bees and the many complex activities that make up their communal existence in the colony. Even the most wise and ancient of beekeepers will admit to constantly finding new and interesting features of the small beings of *Apis mellifera*. In dealing with them, and fellow beekeepers, it is surprising how quickly one can become an opinioned apiarist and a giver of profound guidance on the best methods of keeping bees. Human nature and human interaction with bees are interesting phenomena. Beekeeping provides ample opportunity to observe both.

As the New Year and the new class of Bee School begins we all look forward to the coming season of beekeeping. For the novice beekeepers we hope your journey into world of bees is the beginning of an interesting and fulfilling adventure. Relax, enjoy the process, and don't worry about making mistakes. If you do happen to make one or two, you will be joining the legions of beekeepers who have had the same initiation on the road to experience..

Club queens are a good choice for providing a queen to your new split as it will save you this two weeks. You are giving up the genetic characteristics of the mother hive, however. If you had that very

strong hive last year, and you want to propagate those characteristics, you need to let the bees do what they did before we started mucking up the works. Ordering a queen online will get

Forage

[Really Cool Pictures](#) - Anne Richards

[Great Article On Rethinking Pesticides Neonicotinoids Bee Health Crisis Narrative Media Get Wrong](#)

[Read The Latest In The Battle Against Varroa](#)

[Local Source For Product](#)

[Insight into a Commercial Beekeeper's Timeline](#) (video)

[Check out our club's Facebook page](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BarnstableCountyBeeA/>

you a fertilized queen for immediate laying. You'll ramp up faster, but again you lose the hive genetics. You also lose the local genetics provided by local drones.

If you would like to learn about adventures in swarm keeping and how BCBA members can take part, come to the February Meeting!

Brian O'Donnell

An Open Letter to the General Membership

Well, we finally had our first class of Bee School. It is fun to be involved each year, to see the enthusiasm and doubt. I often wonder how long it has been since some of our "students" have taken notes and listened so intently. I must admit, it is a good-looking group, the students we have this year...up to par with all the others in the past.

Many concepts and techniques were suggested, hinted at and introduced by members of the Board of Directors. Mentors were mentioned and their importance expressed (if you care for bees, you should consider becoming a mentor).

Can you remember your classes at Bee School? Can you remember the day you picked up your first package of bees and had to introduce them to their new home?

Spring is coming. Packages have been ordered (at least mine have). It is time to start thinking about the condition of your frames, deep and shallow boxes, and general inventory. Did you repair that tear in your suit? Where are your hive tools? Have you started stocking up on sugar?

Spring is coming...are you ready?

Andy Morris

I learned about Beekeeping from That

As a boy I remember reading a feature in an aviation magazine called "I Learned About Flying From That". The column described the experiences different pilots had that taught them a lesson about flying. It usually involved some bad decision the pilot had made that put him in a situation that required extreme skill, extreme luck, divine intervention or all of the above to extract him from the situation. Since bees are natural fliers and with them I had flown into a self-made disastrous situation, there appeared to be some parallels that could be similarly titled for beekeeping. At least it seemed that there might be a comparable thread in reviewing a hard lesson learned.

Our back yard apiary consisted of five hives, four full colonies and a growing nuc. The strongest of the colonies had produced two supers of honey. The others seemed to be doing well but had not produced any honey to be harvested. After extracting about thirty five pounds of honey from them, I put the two wet supers back on the hive they came from and put the wet extractor and equipment close to that hive.

I had heard of bees robbing other colonies but hadn't given the idea much attention. I assumed that the strong hive was so much bigger and vigorous than the others that it could readily defend itself. Because it was so strong, I had not put a restrictor on the opening, thinking that the larger opening would provide better ventilation in the hot weather.

After placing the wet supers and equipment in the yard, I departed and left the bees to their work. I didn't return to the yard but did notice a lot of aerial activity and assumed it was just the bees doing their thing cleaning up on the bonus of residual honey.

Two days later when I went to retrieve the honey supers and the equipment I noticed thousands of dead bees around the number one hive. There were dead bees in the vicinity of the other hives but the majority of the casualties were around the strongest hive. When I went into the hive to check it out I was shocked at how few bees remained of the once flourishing colony. Within two weeks it was a dead out.

In talking to a more experienced and sage beekeeper I learned that it appeared to be a classic case of robbing. In retrospect I had set up the strong hive for disaster. With no entrance restrictor and by not dispersing the wet supers and equipment around the bee yard they were overwhelmed. The combined bees from the other colonies were able to force their way in and rob out the strongest hive in the yard. As an additional aspect of the disaster the attrition to the "winning" colonies weakened them to the extent that they ultimately did not survive the winter.

"I learned about beekeeping from that." In the future I'll certainly pay a lot more attention to robbing and get myself more educated on the subject and ways to prevent it. A very painful lesson in beekeeping.

Buzz Doff - Beekeeper Impersonator

Beekeepers' Ball 2018

We're looking for a new venue to host the Beekeepers' Ball this September. The Cultural



Beekeepers' Ball

Center of Cape Cod is booked every Saturday in September (National Honey Month), and we'd like to find a location of similar character and charm. We need a venue that will allow alcohol to be served and access to a kitchen to hold our food donations.

If you know of any place or anyone that can help, please email kconcra@msn.com. If you feel comfortable approaching a location to see if they'd be interested in helping before emailing Kim, that would be appreciated as it will help us know who is really available and willing.

Bee Ball Committee

Looking For A New Bee Protein “Chow”

This protein supplement is designed to perform in patty or liquid form to fit the needs of your operation. Purina® Hearty Bee™ supplement includes a flavoring ingredient to optimize intake and is less attractive to hive beetles than a leading competitive supplement. We believe Hearty Bee™ supplement is the best choice for your bees.

<https://www.purinamills.com/bee-supplement/products/detail/purina-hearty-bee-supplement>

I hear it has dried chicken blood in it?? Hmm.

Claire Desilets

Barnstable County Beekeepers Calendar



Like late fall, the snowless days as we head into spring are not big times for picture taking. Please take a stroll with your camera and think about how to see your beekeeping differently. Not all of your pictures have to be outside. You can take pictures of changing out the dirty brown wax and how you melt it down. Maybe your building new boxes and frames, and your cat want a box of her own. Is your dog your supervisor?

If you have a story to go with the picture, send it along. Pictures of members and families are always welcome. We want to show the joy of beekeeping and the challenges as well.

Joe McClure

BOOK NOOK

Along with building and repairing equipment during the winter months, a few good books help to pass the chilly winter days. So, after listening to Tom Seeley, PhD in September, I grabbed a copy of his new book *Following the Wild Bees*. Such patience it takes to hunt bees in the wild. Not that I intend to learn bee-lining (where on Cape Cod?) but the book creates an appreciation of the memory of our honeybee and its very keen senses.

At one point, the club had among its property, a bee lining box but few knew what it was and how it was used. Plenty of direction in this interestingly little book. And there are instructions on how to build one if interested.

What I found of most value is just how to interpret the waggle dance, where and just how far the forager had traveled to load up on nectar. With a keen eye, a stopwatch and compass and local map, those of us with observation hives just might be able to find the local garden where the dancing bee had just tanked up. The book is available in the CLAMS library system and is a quick read.

Claire Desilets

International Honey Competition

Each August the International Honey Grading Competition invites beekeepers all over the world to submit their honey for grading and awards. The event is held in Semič, Slovenia. In Slovenia are alpine mountains and foot hills with small farms, vineyards, meadows and dense forests. Wildflowers and trees with nectar laden blossoms and pollen are abundant. Pastures remain emerald green throughout the year from nightly mist and fog. The Carniola bee, *apis mellifera carnica*, has been native to the general boundaries of Slovenia since the last Ice Age.

The International Honey Grading Awards event was on 29 October 2017 in Semič, Slovenia (The writer's family villages are near Semič).

Submissions are encouraged and solicited from around the globe. One hundred and eighty-five honeys were graded in 2017. When received each sample is transferred into a uniform bottle with a number that is recorded with special software designed for the grading. Identities of the beekeepers remain secret until the results are compiled after grading is concluded.

Ten judges evaluate each sample. The criteria for consideration is: Color, fragrance, taste, humidity, cleanliness and pollen. With the assistance of the software any sample that is judged by three judges in a manner that is significantly lower than the other seven judge's evaluation is automatically resubmitted for evaluation with a new number. A maximum of thirty points are awarded. Two additional points are available to be assigned when one or more of the criteria

are considered to especially superior.

The honey receiving the most points at the 2017 awards had a measured water content of less than 14 % and received 32 points.

Each year a few entries are received from America. Anyone desiring to enter can obtain details from Mark Simonitsch at: fishweirs@capecod.net

Honies graded best in their category (Forest, Wildflower, Acacia (Locust), Spruce (Honeydew) and Chestnut) receive these awards. Each honey receiving a grade of honorable mention receives a certificate with the beekeeper's name that is suitable for framing.

Slovenia is a land where traditionally three generations of the same family typically live in the same house (with apartments). Grandparents often teach grandchildren beekeeping. The grandchildren are frequently part of the awards ceremony.

Mark Simonitsch

Should You Beekeeping Records?

Yes!

Now that the question is settled, the next question is how best to do it. The answer depends upon you - your style, needs, and preferences.

I admit to being less than the perfect record keeper, even though I am a scientist, well trained in the art of data collection. I've kept a bee journal for years (since I took the BCBA beekeeping class in 2005), but I've always felt that my journal was inadequate. Why? For my taste, the journaling style makes it too tedious to distill the critical points that I might want to look back on quickly – salient features of each hive. It's certainly better than nothing, but I'd like a more efficient way to pack information into my notebook.

So, as the dust of Christmas settled and the deep cold settled in, I perused the internet for models of how to keep beekeeping records. I found some good advice, which I hope to use of to make my record keeping more powerful.

The big divide in record keeping is whether to go electronic or stick with pencil and paper. Each approach has its pros and cons. Electronic methods allow you to organize, analyze and plot data with a few keystrokes, but you either need to collect data by hand and transcribe it later, or expose your devices to propolis, honey and other potentially unfavorable conditions in the bee yard. On the other hand, you can easily link photos to your records and share data with others, maybe even contributing to a big picture database of beekeeping in your region. You can make up your own system or take advantage of canned software programs designed for beekeeping. A listing of some of the packages available online can be found at <http://www.thunderbaybeekeepersassociation.ca/newsletter/Hivemanagementsoftware.pdf>.

Paper and pencil has its upsides and downsides too. One of my big failings has been to try to remember everything until I get to my pencil and paper back in the house. Even with only 3 hives, I know I don't always get it right - my random access memory is not what it used to be. My other failing has been to not get around to designing a data collection sheet that works well for what I'm interested in. I would like to be able to see trends in a hive (stores, mites, population size, etc) at a glance, but still be able to record observations that might not fit into a check box. I found an example in a nice article at <https://www.easternapiculture.org/images/stories/extentions/Recordkeeping.pdf>, which I plan to modify for my own use. This system uses a looseleaf notebook with a page for each hive (the hives being tagged for individual identification). Each page has a set of checkboxes, and room for brief notes. With good use of abbreviations and codes, a lot of information could be packed onto each line. Here is the draft form I made up based on this model.

Now I'm ready for spring, and I hope you are too!

Anne Richards

Recipes

Bee Fondant

Microwave recipe (feeds 1 or 2 colonies)

1. In a 1-quart or larger microwave dish, thoroughly mix 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar and 1/2 cup light corn syrup (no water).
2. Microwave on high, stirring every few minutes until the mixture is clear and bubbles become thumb-nail size (about 10 minutes). Stop immediately if the mixture starts to brown. A wooden spoon is very effective for stirring, as it can be left in the dish during cooking.
3. Pour into a mold made from cardboard or a container lined with paper to cool. The candy will become brittle and can be slipped on top of frames where the bees will consume it.

Stovetop recipe (makes nine 5-by-6-inch pieces)

1. Mix 5 pounds granulated sugar, 1 pint corn syrup, 1 1/3 cups of water in a large pot.
2. Hold over medium heat to 240 degrees on a candy thermometer. VERY IMPORTANT TO HOLD THE 240°.
3. Stir only occasionally; it takes a while.
4. When at 240°, place the pot in a sink of cold water.
5. Change the water a few times.
6. Beat with a mixer, cooling the mixture to 190°.
7. Pour onto greased (Pam) cookie sheets to quarter-inch thick.
8. Cool and slice into patties.

Mike Smith

Seed Package Contents

Botanical Name	Common Name	Life Cycle	Approx. Height & Color
Asclepias incarnata	Red Milkweed	Perennial	2-5 ft. Pink/White/Mauve
Asclepias tuberosa	Butterfly Weed	Perennial	2-3 ft. Orange
Aster novae-angliae	New England Aster	Perennial	3-6 ft. Purple
Centaurea cyanus	Multi Cornflower	Annual	2 ft. Blue
Cheiranthus allionii	Siberian Wallflower	Biennial	2 ft. Orange
Chrysanthemum maximum	Shasta Daisy	Perennial	3 ft. White

Coreopsis lanceolata	Lance-leaf Coreopsis	Perennial	3 ft. Yellow
Coreopsis tinctoria	Plains Coreopsis	Annual	2-3 ft. Yellow/Red
Cosmos bipinnatus	Wild Cosmos	Annual	3-6 ft. Pinks/Whites/Maroon
Cosmos sulphureus	Sulphur Cosmos	Annual	3 ft. Orange
Delphinium consolida	Giant Larkspur	Annual	3-4 ft. Multi
Dianthus barbatus	Sweet William	Biennial	2 ft. Multi Pinks
Echinacea purpurea	Purple Coneflower	Perennial	3 ft. Purple
Eschscholzia californica	Orange Poppy	Tender Perennial	2-3 ft. Orange
Gaillardia aristata	Blanket Flower	Perennial	3 ft. Yellow/Red
Gypsophila elegans	Baby's Breath	Annual	2 ft. White
Helianthus annuus	Wild Sunflower	Annual	3 ft. Yellow
Helianthus maximiliani	Perennial Sunflower	Perennial	3-5 ft. Yellow
Liatris spicata	Blazing Star	Perennial	2-3 ft. Purple/Pink
Linum perenne lewisii	Blue Flax	Perennial	2 ft. Blue
Linum grandiflorum rubrum	Scarlet Flax	Annual	2 ft. Red
Lupinus perennis	Perennial Lupine	Perennial	3-4 ft. Purple
Papaver rhoeas	Red Poppy	Annual	2-3 ft. Red
Dalea purpurea	Purple Prairie Clover	Perennial	3 ft. Purple
Rudbeckia gloriosa	Gloriosa Daisy	Perennial	2-3ft. Red/Yellow
Rudbeckia hirta	Black-eyed Susan	Biennial	2-3 ft. Yellow
Silene armeria	None-so-pretty	Annual	2-3 ft. Pink

RESOURCES (accurate as of 1/17)

The following officers and directors are a great resource to answer questions and requests for assistance.

Officers		
President	Michael D. Smith	michaeldgetsmail@gmail.com
Vice President	Kayleigh Cronin	kcrone@gmail.com
Corresponding Secretary	Claire Desilets	beekeeper@gmail.com
Recording Secretary	Deborah Carmel	deborahcarmel429@gmail.com
Treasurer	Lynn Heslinga	lynneheslinga@gmail.com

Directors						
Marthe	Ayers	mfoura32@aol.com		Mary Anne	Mann	hummann@outlook.com
John	Beach	john.a.beach@comcast.net		Joe	McClure	joegetsmail@gmail.com
Maria	Cashdollar	winter64@aol.com		Andy	Morris	andymorris02553@gmail.com
Todd	Cashdollar	thruheavenseyez@aol.com		Brian	O'Donnell	bjmdod98@gmail.com
Melissa	Caughey	pcmc2000@msn.com		Steven	Pelletier	steven@pelletienet.com
Kathy	Clobridge	clobridge@comcast.net		Melissa	Sanderson	melissa.a.sanderson@gmail.com
Kimberly	Concra	klconcra@msn.com		Lisa	Sheehy	lissasheehy@msn.com
Peter B	Cooper	brpbc1@gmail.com		Mark	Simonitsch	fishweirs@capecod.net
Mary	Johnson	mrj9922@msn.com		Miguel	Zamora	zamorasmiguel@gmail.com
Paul	Lefebvre	lefbvr@gmail.com				