



nnjbees.org

May 2012



NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

A Division of The New Jersey Beekeepers Association

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Meeting on: **Friday, May 18th at 7:30 PM**, Location: **Ramapo College of NJ, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, N.J 07430**



Bee Enthusiasts & Bee Curious always welcome!



Weather permitting.



We will be continuing our BeeTalk® series where our meetings are dedicated to answering your beekeeping questions. May is when the nectar flow increases. Hive populations start to ramp up and beekeeper questions start to appear. We are here for you. We will do our best to get you opinions from our more experienced members and we will deal with all kinds of situations.

Message from the President:

Hello Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

Whenever I meet with people who are interested in beekeeping, the one question I get asked the most is, what is it like to be a beekeeper? And, that question is usually followed with something about dreams of gorging on tons of honey. The reality is that everyone, including each one of us, thinks about eating our own honey, created from our own bees, and all the other things we will do with the riches extracted from our hives at the end of the season. So, while it is good to daydream of our sweet rewards, to be a beekeeper means doing all the steps and attending to all the details we know we need to do now, and throughout the summer season. Being a beekeeper first means creating an optimum home for the bees to live in, and if everything goes right, to also produce an excess of honey for the beekeeper. To achieve our goal means that it is important to do all the little things that we know we have to do, have read about doing, or our mentors have advised us to do. In many ways, being a beekeeper is exactly like the Aesop Fable, "The Grasshopper and the Ant." If you play all summer like the grasshopper and just expect that a giant vat of honey will be waiting for you in August, chances are you'll end up empty. However, if you put in the work this summer, then you will be happy with your results. So, be sure to check over your woodenware and confirm that it is solid, is painted, and totally ready to go. Get your frames assembled and ready now. Double-check that your stand is level, that you have all the supplies you need, and go ahead and read and reread any books you have on your shelf.

You see, beekeeping is just that, nailing all your frames together, painting your hives, getting advice from other beekeepers, anything you need to do to be on top of your game before you have your bees, and every time you check on them. Being a beekeeper is going to the meetings, talking with your fellow beekeepers and trying to be the best beekeeper you can possible be. Then, later this fall, when you do look back, you'll realize three things: The work was fun, it didn't take too much time, and your honey tastes that much sweeter because of everything you did to get it.

Last, always remember that none of us will ever have to work as hard as our bees do, but each of us still has to do our part, for the honey, for the success of our hives, and most of all, to be able to call ourselves beekeepers.

Happy Beekeeping Everyone!

--Frank Mortimer

Message from Lynn Paglia:

Spring is the time for swarms. This year, due to the warm winter and the early buildup of bees and strong populated hives swarms have been much more prevalent. In a swarm the bees raise a new queen or queens with swarm cells hanging at the bottom of the frames in the brood box. When the new queen emerges the old queen flies out of the hive with a group of bees to start a new hive. It is a bold move for the bees since they never even know if they will find a suitable home. There is a positive and a negative to swarms. To swarm the hive must be healthy and flourishing. The downside is that the bees that leave are no longer in the original hive and in many cases fly away.

One of my hives has swarmed this year and it is truly fascinating to watch. The swarming bees sound like a freight train flying out of the hive and fly around wildly. Then, all of a sudden, they start landing on something, hopefully low enough to get at. One by one they land and form a live sculpture surrounding the queen. The scout bees look for a good home and once they have found one the bees take off again for that location. The trick is to get to the bees before they take off and are gone forever. Place a box or container under the swarm and shake the branch firmly or brush the bees into the box. If you are successful the bees will smell the pheromone of the queen and start fanning to tell the other bees that they have a new home and that the queen is well. I was lucky. My bees landed on a low branch of our pine tree. I gave the branch a hard shake, and the bees have a new hive with their queen. The swarm accepts their new accommodations much more readily if there is one frame of drawn comb with frames of foundation. It seems to get them interested and gives them some place to get started.

May is here and the nectar flow is on. There should be many different groups of beekeepers at this point. The first group are the beekeepers with established hives. You should have supers on the hive to give the hive room to store nectar and not feel like they should get ready to swarm. The next group are the members who have their nucs and are beginning to care for them. Even though the nectar flow is on, give them sugar water to help them to draw out the foundation. If they don't need it they won't take it but if they don't have it they could stop wax production. Your hives need to have 2 boxes of drawn out foundation for the bees to go into the winter. The last group are the members who are waiting for their nucs at the end of the month. Make sure that you have your woodenware ready and that you have planned the location of your new hive. You will need to have a feeder that holds at least a gallon of sugar syrup so that the bees do not run out. It is very important to check the feeder often. I cannot emphasize this enough.

The hive at the Havermeyer house is doing very well. They have organic gardens that the students help tend, and the whole property is beautiful. The hive was started from an overwintered 5 frame nuc and by spring it had grown to a 10 frame nuc with 8 frames of eggs and capped brood and a wonderful queen from E and M Gold. The hive has its first super almost filled and is almost ready for the second super.

Club Happenings:



We are very close to placing the Warre Hive, built and generously donated by Ken Hyman, at Ramapo College. I expect this to be completed in the next two weeks.



We all had a great time at the Ridgewood Earth Day Celebration. We attracted easily over 200 people to our table with our observation hive. Many questions were asked and answered. I want to thank all the members who showed up and helped field questions from the general public and you were all excellent ambassadors of beekeeping. Great job!






Hugh Knowlton and Mike Miller presented an educational, useful and very entertaining woodenware assembly workshop. Many hive boxes and frames were assembled. Thank you Hugh for opening your workshop at the school for our club. BCC Students were also in attendance and accomplished much. You can see pictures of the workshop [here](#).



Club hats and shirts will be on sale at the May meeting. Support your club by buying them. They are \$20 each and they look great. Show your Northeast New Jersey Beekeeper pride by wearing our gear.

Remember: <http://www.njbees.org> is your website. Check that site for everything Northeast New Jersey Beekeeping!

Next Month: We continue our BeeTalk® series where we focus on the month and what beekeepers should be doing with their hives, what to look for on a frame during an inspection, when and how and what to feed etc., equipment questions, tips and tricks and techniques. You are not in this alone. We are here to support you! We will be talking bees and taking questions from our members and devoting each meeting to providing answers designed to insure a prosperous and healthy colony of bees. No question goes unanswered.

Attn: Members who ordered Nucs from Tim Stewart. The time is rapidly approaching when these nucs will be delivered up to our area. (Expected on or about June 1st.) Please remember the following: **You are responsible to pay the balance and pick up your nucs on the day they arrive here.** You will all be contacted via email shortly before the delivery date. If you cannot be present to pick up your bees you must make arrangements for a surrogate to pay and pickup. There will be time slots assigned to insure orderly and secure receipt of the bees. If the time assigned to you is not convenient feel free to contact other members to switch.   

Swarming Continues! Be aware, Be ready, Catch 'em!



❖ Volunteers ❖	
Judy and Terry Regan	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies, brownies, tea, etc
Katie Devitt	Hard mailings for the Newsletter, Club shirts
Rachel Avenia-Prol	Web site creation and training: www.nnjbees.org
Ken Hyman	Built a Warre hive and donated it to the club
Michael Miller	Apparel production, beekeeping instructor
Leigh K. Lydecker	Beekeeping Instructor
Hugh Knowlton	Workshop coordinator and presenter

Thank you all! If any members want to volunteer to help our club please contact me either at the meetings or via [email](#). There is lots to do!



The following letter was written by a request from Mike Palmer, a beekeeper who spoke at one of our meetings from Burlington VT. This is where EAS 2012 is taking place. It is about how to enter a honey show, specifically the one at EAS this summer.

Plenty of Time to Prepare for the EAS Honey Show

by Anne Frey

EAS is speeding towards us, with only a few months left to wait! What do you need to do to besides register, reserve lodging, and hire a pet sitter? Well, plan out your Honey Show entries, of course! Check out the new informative Honey Show Page on the Eastern Apicultural Society website and you'll find tips, instruction, photos, videos, webinars, rules and more. This webpage is extremely useful for simply preparing items for market even if you don't plan to enter a Show. It has been created with learning in mind, and the highest-quality links, articles, and presentations on the internet have been gathered here for you. Take a look at the recently added Photography segment provided by Zachary Huang. Just search for Eastern Apiculture 2012 using any search engine.

While you work your hives this spring and summer, remember to leave some time to get your Honey Show entries ready. Instead of being bummed out on that rainy or a cold day that's no good for beekeeping, why not melt some wax and make some candles or a 'Wax Cake, 2lbs. or More' ? Also, a Gift Arrangement takes some thought and attention. It should include a variety of hive products, arranged attractively. What about that weird little thingy you built a few years ago that works just right but will never be found in any catalog? That would be great for the Gadgets classes (small or large device). Do you have a basement full of mead or honey beer? Check out all those bottles for the best ones. Do you have a computer file or an actual box of prints of bees and beekeeping-themed subjects? Riffle through those and find the best ones. There's still time to get them mounted according to the Show Rules. This is a good spot to mention that you should consult the EAS Honey Show Rules before preparing any entries. Read the General Rules as well as the rules for the classes you are entering. Heck, read all the rules.

Honey Show Foibles

As a novice, I was so excited to enter shows, I tended to skim the Rules and rush to prepare my entries. Early on, I arrived at the County Fair with my submission, a lovely jar of honey with my own label on it. No labels allowed! Another time, at EAS, I proudly showed up at the drop-off table with a single jar for each honey class I was entering. Foolish me – you need to bring 3 jars for each class. I once arrived at EAS and immediately went out to lunch with friends, forgetting my creamed honey entries were still locked in the car. Hot cars also endanger comb, candle and wax entries. Transportation is a serious consideration. If you're flying, think about passing your entries to a friend who is driving. No glass jars in carry-on bags!

Hmm, what else? I've never yet entered a photography class, but I've heard of people arriving with their photos framed (not allowed), mounted incorrectly, or wanting to enter whole stack (only one entry per class permitted). I've heard of exhibitors getting pretty steamed at the volunteers at the drop-off table. Before the Rules were published they were examined with a fine-tooth comb by the Honey Show Committee, and are very clear. Please read them carefully! EAS volunteers and judges will be using the same Rules you are using and there should be no need for any disputes. Have you ever noticed that the angriest you've ever been was when you were angry at yourself? Please be kind to the volunteers and honest with yourself.

It's fun to enter a Show, and later you'll learn a lot from your score card which will help you improve for future Shows. Let's all bring lots of entries and make the classes as full as possible! It's more fun that way, better than if a class only has a few entries. Check out the Honey Show page on the EAS website, and let's make 2012 a year to remember!

Remember, EAS is 8/13-17. People can come to the Short Course (2 1/2 days of workshops and beeyard instruction), or the Conference (2 1/2 days of presentations both large and small), choose a single day to visit, or stay the whole 5 days! Registration begins in May.

