



nnjbees.org

February 2014



NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

A division of New Jersey Beekeepers Association

President	Frank Mortimer	201-417-7309	3 rd V. Pres.	Bob Jenkins	201-218-6537
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2 nd V. Pres.	Bobby Slanzi	845-304-4333	Treasurer	Karl Schoenknecht	201-891-0947

Meeting on: **Friday, February 21st at 7:30 PM**, Location: **Ramapo College of NJ, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430**



Bee Enthusiasts & Bee Curious always welcome!



Weather permitting.



Welcome New Jersey Apiarists. Snowy and cold February is on her way out (hopefully) and spring is just around the corner (believe it or not). The ancient cycles persist and the longer days and warmer weather inevitably get closer. Is everyone ready? Well ready or not, here it comes! This month we are pleased to present Chris Cripps of BetterBee. Chris will be speaking about beekeeping trends in the Northeast and an insider's view of new and innovative products carried by BetterBee.

Yearly Dues are payable starting now!



Your \$20 yearly dues goes to fund all of our activities, our post meeting refreshments, club supplies and all other necessities required to bring the best possible programs, classes, mentoring and to introduce new beekeepers to the art and craft of the hobby we all love so much. See Karl Schoenknecht to make your timely dues payment and from all the officers, "Thank you for your continued support."

This will be the last Newsletter to last years' members who have NOT paid their 2014 dues.

Message from the President:

Hello Northeast NJ Apiarists!

Beekeepers start your engines! I always love this time of year, because the start of the season is just a few weeks away. If you have not done so already, please get into your hives as soon as you can to see how your bees are doing. Most hives die, usually from starvation, in February, and it would be a shame to get your bees this far only to have them run out of food right before spring. You can feed your bees fondant, bee candy, or even granulated sugar. It's still too cold to feed them syrup, so stick to "solid" sweets for now. Also, if you have not looked at your bees, remember to suit up from top to bottom before going into your hives. Because, no matter if you had the gentlest of bees back in the fall, a hungry cold winter bee is never a happy bee.

This time of year is also a good time to get all your equipment into shape. If you need to build any new or repair any older woodenware, do it now, before you need it. Also, now is a good time to clean your hive tools and smoker. For your smoker, you can either burn off all the creosote buildup, or scrape out as much as you can.

I'd also like to ask everyone to find a member that lives close to you, or is someone you feel like you could call. Knowing someone who you can call in a pinch, or can talk through what you're seeing, is one of the benefits of being part of our club. We will have a lot of newbees this year, and if you remember when you first started, you will recall how much it helped when you could call on a more experienced beekeeper to lend a hand or an ear. So, I would ask you to play it forward and reach out to someone in the club and do what you can to help.

We have a lot of good meetings planned this year, and I think you will be pleased. We are always looking for new ideas for meetings and speakers, so if you have any ideas, please let us know! We are always looking for ways and ideas to make our club better. We are also hoping to hold some hands-on workshops this year, so stay tuned.

This year's winter was so different than last year's, and I am excited to see what that will mean for our hives, especially when spring has finally sprung. Before you know it, all this snow will have melted, the air will be getting warmer. Then, before you know it, a dandelion, or two will start bloom. Then, the race is on!

Sincerely,

Frank Mortimer

President, Northeast NJ Beekeepers





NEW! Beekeepers of New Jersey Legislative Action Page Now on Facebook!

Please visit the new Facebook page Beekeepers of New Jersey Legislative Action Page



<https://www.facebook.com/BeekeepersofNewJerseyLegislativeAction>

Karls' Korner

My 2 box and 3 box hives were alive and flying about a week ago with the temperature at only 18 degrees. I am sure they want spring as much as I do. My hives sit high on concrete platforms plus I added 8" concrete blocks for more height. This is only the second time in thirty seven years that snow came above the hive entrances. Both hives were heavy with honey in December and if this weekend is as warm as promised, I am hoping to find good queens and lots of brood. After losing 3 of 4 hives back in 1995, my remaining hive got through the heavy snow in 1996 and gave me 120 LBS of honey. The extended cold and heavy snow should prevent excess food consumption and give the spring blossoms plenty of moisture. This could be a great year for honey production. - Karl



More Than Honey

Over the past 15 years, numerous colonies of bees have been decimated throughout the world, but the causes of this disaster remain unknown. Depending on the world region, 50% to 90% of all local bees have disappeared, and this epidemic is still spreading from beehive to beehive – all over the planet. Everywhere, the same scenario is repeated: billions of bees leave their hives, never to return. No bodies are found in the immediate surroundings, and no visible predators can be located.

In the US, the latest estimates suggest that a total of 1.5 million (out of 2.4 million total beehives) have disappeared across 27 states. In Germany, according to the national beekeepers association, one fourth of all colonies have been destroyed, with losses reaching up to 80% on some farms. The same phenomenon has been observed in Switzerland, France, Italy, Portugal, Greece, Austria, Poland and England, where this syndrome has been nicknamed “the Mary Celeste Phenomenon”, after a ship whose crew vanished in 1872.

Scientists have found a name for the phenomenon that matches its scale, “colony collapse disorder,” and they have good reason to be worried: 80% of plant species require bees to be pollinated. Without bees, there is no pollination, and fruits and vegetables could disappear from the face of the Earth. *Apis mellifera* (the honey bee), which appeared on Earth 60 million years before man and is as indispensable to the economy as it is to man’s survival.

Should we blame pesticides or even medication used to combat them? Maybe look at parasites such as varroa mites? New viruses? Travelling stress? The multiplication of electromagnetic waves disturbing the magnetite nanoparticles found in the bees’ abdomen? So far, it looks like a combination of all these agents has been responsible for the weakening of the bees’ immune defenses.



BEEKEEPERS

We quickly blew through the 900 member milestone and are, as of this writing 937 members strong, and growing on our Facebook page! Be sure check it out. See the great pics and stories posted by the Facebook fans we have at our page.

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



Next Month

"Spring Prep: Installing Nucs & Making Splits" presented by Bob Hughes will include topics such as tips on installing nucs, the benefits of making splits from overwintered hives and other preseason chores to ready your apiary. Bob is a two-time President of the NJBA, teaches the Bee-ginners Beekeeping Course at Rutgers University and owner/beekeeper of Bob's Buzzy Bees.



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All Beekeepers Receive 10% Off!

❖ Volunteers ❖

Judy and Terry Regan	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies, brownies, tea, etc
Tom Miller	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies, brownies, tea, etc
Rachel Avenia-Prol	Web site creation and training: www.njbees.org
Jennifer Phillips	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies and other treats.
John Gaut	NJBA Constitution Committee.
Michael Miller	Apparel production, beekeeping instructor
Hugh Knowlton	Workshop/Event coordinator and presenter
Rob & Gloria Leustek	Legislative Liaisons and Craftsman's Corner

FEBRUARY TIMELY TIPS

- This is the prime time for starvation. Check your food sources and add emergency supplies if it is needed.
- Do the bees have pollen? The queen can start laying eggs in February and pollen will be needed as a brood food source. Be careful about feeding pollen too early though. In addition to stimulating brood production which might exhaust food supplies prematurely, pollen causes bees to defecate. Late winter weather may be inappropriate for cleansing flights, increasing the likelihood of dysentery which can quickly convert to a nosema infection.
- Clear bottom entrances of dead bees and other debris.
- Check for dead outs. If you think the hive is dead wait for a warmer 40-degree day and peek in the top to make sure. Do autopsies and decide if the hive succumbed to queenlessness, starvation, or disease?
- Is your equipment ready for the year?
- Spring usually brings some of the wildest and windiest weather. Make sure the lids are secured after you break the seals.
- Brood production also brings mite production. Determine your method for counting mites, your threshold, and control method.