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# April 2014



**NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY**

A division of New Jersey Beekeepers Association

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2 <sup>nd</sup> V. Pres.	Bobby Slanzi	845-304-4333	Treasurer	Karl Schoenknecht	201-891-0947

Meeting on: **Friday, April 18th 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. Someone needs to kick-start Spring to get it going but the inevitable will happen. This month's speaker, Lorette Cheswick will share the science and sources of planting for pollinators.**

**From hedges to perennials, gardens can bloom after spring, and many of them are rich food sources for pollinators, migrating birds and insects. The NJ Beekeepers Association has collected a list of plants that provide late season nectar and pollen for pollinators. Lorette will be talking about how these plants give pollinators, and you, reasons to keep coming back to your gardens.**

## BEEKEEPERS

**Yearly Dues are payable now!**



Your \$20 yearly dues goes to fund all of our activities, our post meeting refreshments, club supplies and all the 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."

## **Message from the President:**

Happy April Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

This has been one of the slowest starts to spring bee season in recent years. BUT, it does look like spring is about to be here, and my guess is that once it starts, we are going to have one big, blooming raging spring! Hopefully everyone has been in their hives, looked around, and reversed their boxes. Remember, you want to get the brood and the queen in your bottom box, and any frames with honey should remain in the top box. When I reverse my boxes, I also move the frames around to try and give the queen plenty of room to lay in the bottom box, and organize the top box for honey and honey storage. If you are getting nucs, make sure your hives are ready. You will need to put the 5 frames from the nuc in the middle of your bottom box. So, now is a good time to pick the 5 frames you want to pull out of your hives to make room for the nucs. Also, pulling your 5 oldest and/or grossest frames out is a great way to cycle new wax into your hives.

Now is an exciting time for beekeepers. We are at the starting line, and our honey season is about to start. I do think this is going to be a big year for honey. I think the most important thing this year will be a queen who builds up fast, so the hive is bubbling over with workers to bring in all the nectar.

On a side note, the club will be bringing in queens in June, so if you are not pleased with your queen, you may want to consider requeening. Details about the queens for sale will follow when we're closer to June.

I'd also like to remind everyone that just as spring is the start of honey season, it is also when the general public starts enjoying the outdoors, and thinking about plants, nature, and sometimes bees. I mention this because one of the goals of our club is to educate people about the benefits and gentle nature of honeybees. Now is the time when people will become interested in what bees do, what beekeepers do, and what role each of them should play. Every April, our club receives requests for someone to come and speak to various clubs, groups and schools. The good news is that we are doing a great job of spreading the word, because each year we receive more requests. But, the bad news is that we have to turn down different invitations because all the regular speakers are already booked. So, as a member of the Northeast NJ Beekeepers, I would ask that everyone commit to speaking to one group in their town. It is amazing how many people want to learn about bees, groups from cub scouts, to Rotary Clubs, to churches are all looking for someone to talk about bees. If you cannot find a group to speak to, please talk with me, and I will send you some of the requests the club receives. Remember that the best part of talking about bees, is that every time each of us speak, a few more people learn about how important bees are, and a few more people are educated about the true gentle nature of honeybees. And, the more people that are armed with the truth about honeybees, the more support beekeepers get from the community, and the easier it will be for all of us to enjoy the hobby we love!

I look forward to seeing you at Friday's meeting!

**Frank Mortimer**

**President, Northeast NJ Beekeepers**

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### Attention Members:

**New Bee books will be on sale at the meeting this Friday. Stay in the know and help your bee club.**

### Timely Bee Tips for April

The overriding objective is for all colonies to be queen-right, healthy, and well-nourished so they can build up to maximum populations for the onset of the major nectar flow. This all needs to be done while keeping a fine balance between the growing population and the amount of space available so that the bees do not have the chance to think about swarming.

On a calm, warm day go through your hives and do a thorough inspection.

Remove mouse guards.

Replace poor quality frames or brood frames with new comb or foundation.

Move brood down (if you can), honey frames to the side, and empty comb over-head. Note: Both boxes will probably be filling up with brood by mid-April. In many cases, the queen may start heading down on her own to find more space to lay.

Clean up bottom boards.

Is it time to make splits? Each split will require a new queen. Before your queen emerges, mature drones are needed. Drones are mature 8-10 days after they emerge and hang out on the edge of the brood nest. As of April 5th, it's a little early here in SE Indiana. Queens prefer sunny, 75 degree days, with winds less than 10mph. Use the splits to replace winter losses or increase your hive numbers. If increasing your hive numbers, pick out your next location.

Splits are a great way to create increase or replacement nucs. It also helps facilitate a robust honey crop and is a form of varroa control as it disrupts the brood.

Consider adding disease free dead-out brood boxes to booming two-story hives in anticipation of making splits with them when your new queens arrive. It will relieve congestion and give these overly populous hives something to use and will make an excellent split later.

If you already have queen cells, what kind are they: swarm, emergency, or supersedure? Note: This can also indicate the timing is right to start making queens. What will you do with the queen cells?

- ❖ Move them to make nucs or splits.
- ❖ Try to cut them all out and keep rechecking.
- ❖ Make a nuc with the queen mother.
- ❖ Let the bees be



## **The Secret Life of Bees**

Adapted by Gina Prince-Bythewood from the best-selling novel by Sue Monk Kidd, [“The Secret Life of Bees”](#) unfolds in a sentimental, honey-glazed land that vaguely resembles South Carolina in 1964. It would be wrong to say that the troubles of that time and place have been wished away — on the contrary, the movie begins with a scene of horrific domestic violence and includes child abuse, a racially motivated beating, suicide and the threat of a lynching — but from the opening voice-over to the final credits, every terror and sorrow is swaddled in warm, therapeutic comfort.

The film insists so strenuously on its themes of redemption, tolerance, love and healing that it winds up defeating itself, and robbing Ms. Kidd’s already maudlin tale of its melodramatic heat. At first there is a jolt of pure Southern Gothic, as [Dakota Fanning](#) matter-of-factly tells us that when she was 4, she shot her mother dead. Ms. Fanning plays Lily, who, at the age of 14, when the story takes place, lives with her mean-drunk peach farmer dad, T. Ray (Paul Bettany). He tells her that her mother never loved her and makes her kneel on grits when she misbehaves.

One night Lily, who dreams of being a writer and keeps a box of keepsakes buried in the orchard behind her house, runs away with Rosaleen (Jennifer Hudson), a black employee of T. Ray’s who has been beaten and jailed for trying to register to vote. The two of them find their way to an upcountry town called Tiburon, where they are taken in by three beekeeping sisters named August ([Queen Latifah](#)), June ([Alicia Keys](#)) and May ([Sophie Okonedo](#)).

May, who seems a little simple-minded, is also so deeply empathetic that her sisters have built a “wailing wall,” where she can go to cry when the world’s grief overwhelms her, which is often. June, who plays the cello, is also a political activist (or at least a collector of N.A.A.C.P. T-shirts), and, as such, is a bit leery of the white girl who comes around in need of mothering. But August is a person of such boundless maternal wisdom and generosity that neither June nor Lily nor any of the million [bees](#) in August’s care need worry.

In case they didn’t have enough problems of their own, August and her sisters also have Lily to deal with, and the film seems to struggle with an awkward and unstated tension. You can almost feel how badly it wants to be about the lives, not of bees, but of black women at a pivotal moment in the recent past.

Despite Ms. Prince-Bythewood’s best efforts to retain a sense of history, and Queen Latifah’s shrewd refusal to play her character according to stereotype, the film becomes a familiar and tired fable of black selflessness, in which African-Americans take time out from their struggle against oppression to lift the battered self-esteem of white people who have the good sense not to be snarling bigots. Even Ms. Fanning, weeping on cue and looking uncomfortable otherwise, seems a little abashed that the movie, in the end, has to be all about her.



## Over 1,100 Strong!!!

We quickly blew through the 1000 member milestone and are, as of this writing 1,100 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.njbees.org> is your website! Check that site for everything Northeast New Jersey Beekeeping!

### Next Month

In May, as we have no speaker scheduled, we plan to dedicate the entire meeting to speaking about typical beekeeper issues for this nectar flow. We will also be taking questions from you and dispensing sage and timely advice. Bee there to ask, hear and learn.



**Mary Ann's Gourmet Market**  
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Mahwah, NJ 07430  
201-962-8611  
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**All Beekeepers Receive 10% Off!**

### ❖ Volunteers ❖

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

## IN MEMORIAM

Our oldest beekeeper, Mary Planten is gone at age 108. After knowing Mary for more than 40 years I will truly miss her. So many memories come to mind that I could write a book. I remember her and her husband Frank used to squeeze into my Ford Ranger so I could take them to our beekeepers meetings. Mary always helped set up tables for refreshments, made a variety of articles with bees wax and encouraged our newest beekeepers but if a guest speaker was a little boring she would start knitting something while she listened. Just over a year ago when we visited Mary, she was walking as fast as me and I am more than forty years younger. Mary always appeared to enjoy every living moment, an inspiration to me and her friends. If Mary had not recently fallen and broken her hip she would probably still be with us. Mary is gone now but will remain in our hearts forever. Karl