



njbees.org

January 2016



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.	Karl Schoenknecht	201-891-0947
V. President	Rich Schluger	201-693-6949	Secretary	Jaimie Winters	551-486-7479
2 nd V. Pres.	John Gaut – Mentor Coordinator	201-961-2330	Treasurer	Bob Jenkins	201-218-6537

Meeting on: **Friday, January 15th at 7:30 PM**, Location: **Ramapo College of NJ, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430**



Bee Enthusiasts & Bee Curious always welcome!



Weather permitting.



Please join us on **Friday, January 15th** when we kick off our BeeTalk® Series with Master Beekeeper Billy Davis from Leesburg VA. Please join us this Friday and learn about sustainable beekeeping!

Yearly Dues are payable now!



Your \$25 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, headline speakers, classes, mentoring and to introduce new beekeepers to the art and craft of the hobby we all love so much. See Bob Jenkins to make your timely dues payment and from all the officers,

“Thank you for your continued support.”





Message from the President:

Happy 2016 Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

The calendar New Year is here, and now it's time for all of us to start thinking about the start of the HONEY Year. Do you want to expand your colonies? Do you need to replace any colonies? Do you need more or new woodenware? These are all questions you should be asking yourself and be ready to assemble, repair and bee ready. The club has a lot of exciting speakers lined up this year, and many club favorites including Tim Schuler (June) and Grant Stiles (February). The club will also be securing nucs for our members, and we will start taking deposits very soon.

This has been a weird winter for us, and all the warm weather could wreak havoc on our hives. Remember that you need to go into your hives and make sure they still have plenty of food. The warm weather means the bees were more active, and therefore consumed more of their honey supplies. It's now too cold to feed syrup, so make sure you have a supply of fondant, candy, or in worse-case, regular granulated sugar. Now through April is when most hives die due to starvation, so be vigilant and keep your bees alive.

I know this month's meeting is going bee great, because we have Master Beekeeper, Billy Davis, from Northern Virginia who will be speaking on sustainable beekeeping and the importance of keeping beekeeping local. I hope all of you will attend Friday's meeting, and join me in getting 2016 off to a great start!

I wish you a great new Honey year, and look forward to seeing you at Friday's meeting.

Frank Mortimer
President, Northeast NJ Beekeepers



2016 American Beekeeping Federation Conference

John A. Gaut

The ABF Conference was held in Jacksonville, Florida last week. New Jersey was well represented by Jeff Burd, John Gaut, Megan McConnell, Lou Naylor, Chris Yates and Stan & Fran Wasitowski. The conference was great! The weather was cool and rainy so we were not too tempted to be on the beach. The conference was loaded with very informative sessions.

Marla Spivic presented some recent research at the University of Minnesota. Marla was excited about the research related to propolis and its contribution to the overall colony immunity system. Bees have an innate immune system that includes the exoskeleton and blood cells, but no antibodies. The colony does have social immunity, mostly grooming and hygienic behavior. Research is showing that propolis also supports a healthier colony. Propolis has antimicrobial and antifungal properties that serves as an immunity envelope if the interior of the hive is propolized. Bees typically do not propolize the interior of the smooth hive though. The interior of the hive must be made very rough (like the inside of a tree) for bees to deposit the propolis envelope. Also, a new Bee and Pollinator Research Laboratory is being built at U of Minn.

Sue Colby has established a gene bank. Genetic diversity increases colony fitness. She is collecting and storing germplasm from Europe and Asia for future use.

There were several presentations related to Nosema. The EU does not allow any antibiotics in the hive such as Fumigellin. The European beekeepers have been using phyto-pharmacological preparations instead. Nozevit and Plus were effective in the studies. EkoZeo was not. In Canada, Complete (a combination of Nozevit and other minerals and amino acids) has demonstrated some success.

Many of the presentations were related to enemy #1, Varro destructor. Mites continue to be the primary cause of colony losses. New information about how the mites feed on bees may help with their management. 99% of the mites on adult bees are found under the abdomen. (This is why it is hard to see mites on the bees.) The mites pierce the abdomen and inject saliva to digest the fat bodies (containing Vitellogenin) of the bee. Fat bodies are a very nutrient rich source of food for the mite. Mites feed on both the hemolymph and fat bodies of the adult bees and larvae!

Hygienic behavior is one of the ways bees defend themselves against mites. Research has shown hygienic behavior is triggered by the chemical signaling of the larvae. The brood signals it is under stress resulting in uncapping and removal. This is amazing altruistic behavior: The brood is saying "I am sick; I need to die and be removed."

Dennis vanEnglesdorp presented information related to the Bee Informed Partnership. He described the Nuclear Bomb of Beekeeping: An irresponsible beekeeper allows the mite level to kill their colony. The colony dies but the mites spread to nearby colonies resulting in a sudden and devastating mite problems for the other colonies. Above 3 mites per 100 bees, there will be some colony damage. Above 5 mites per 100 bees, there will be severe damage. If you start with 0 mites at the beginning

of summer, you will exceed 3 percent by fall due to the natural growth rate of the mites. Therefore you must aggressively treat. A nuclear mite bomb can happen anytime; more typically in the late summer and fall. A colony that exceeds 5 mites per 100 bees will likely collapse in the late fall or winter. Frequent monitoring is needed to determine if treatment is needed and if the treatment was effective.

Megan McConnell presented her recent work on mite reduction. Commercial beekeepers noticed mites falling to the bottom boards during transportation of the hives. Megan is investigating various devices to vibrate or shake the hive to determine if there is a significant reduction in mites. She is also one off the recipients of the Fellowship Award so she can continue her Masters program at the University of Maryland.

Queens were a topic of several presentations. When a hive needs to supersede the queen, there is evidence that the bees pick specific larvae. These larvae are typically from a relatively rare sub-family in the colony. (Each drone that mates with the queen results in a sub-family in the colony.) While there is apparent preference for this "Royal" line, the reasons for selection are not clear. It could be reproductive capability, colony fitness or other factors (e.g. Are there "Royal" genes?). More research!

Krispn Given presented his recent work with colonies that aggressively groom and chew mites. Mite chewing is a genetic trait that has been selected into the colonies at Purdue University. The survival rate for these colonies is high. The mite chewing colonies can still be overwhelmed with mites (from another collapsed hive in the area) so monitoring and treatment is still needed. (I hope to get a "Mite Biter" Queen from Purdue this season. I'll be raising mite biting queens along with VSH queens from overwintered stock.)

There were many informative and entertaining presentations. One presentation I enjoyed was given by Gene Killion. He began beekeeping more than 65 years ago; his father was already in the business. Gene Killion and his family produced award winning comb honey, and a lot of it! He shared his methods and thoughts with a PowerPoint presentation full of pictures from the 1950's and later. Making comb honey is part science (understanding bee biology) and part art.

Overall the conference was great. I got to see some old friends and made a few new ones. It is really amazing to be surrounded by people who love bees and willing to share so much knowledge.

The ABF conference next year is in Galveston, Texas.

The Eastern Apiculture Society will meet at Stockton University in Galloway, New Jersey this year. The short courses begin on July 25th and the main conference starts the 27th and ends the 29th. The EAS conference is also a great opportunity to learn more about beekeeping and network with other local beekeepers. More details can be found at <http://www.easternapiculture.org/>





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1,427 Strong!!!

We quickly blew through the 1000 member milestone and are, as of this writing 1,427 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

The Northeast NJ Beekeepers will welcome our special guest and friend Grant Stiles who will speak about late winter and spring management. He will also speak about the Nucleus hives he will be supplying to the club. Bee There!!

❖ Volunteers ❖

Tom Miller	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies, brownies, tea, etc.
Jennifer Phillips	Refreshments – Cakes, cookies and other treats
Billy Neumann	Club photographer
Hugh Knowlton	Workshop/Event coordinator and presenter
Mike Miller	Club apparel
Emma Stein	Resident artist
Bob Slanzi	Meadmaster