



[nnjbees.org](http://nnjbees.org)

# May 2017



## NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

A division of New Jersey Beekeepers Association

President	Frank Mortimer	201-417-7309	3 <sup>rd</sup> V. Pres.	Karl Schoenknecht	201-891-0947
V. President	Rich Schluger	201-693-6949	Secretary	Jaimie Winters	551-486-7479
2 <sup>nd</sup> V. Pres.	John Gaut – <b>Mentor Coordinator</b>	201-961-2330	Treasurer	Bob Jenkins	201-218-6537

Meeting on: **Friday, May 19th 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 **May 19th** when The Northeast NJ Beekeepers presents our first **Sell it or Swap it** event! Do you have bee equipment that you never use, just sitting in your garage taking up space? Have you ever bought some bee equipment that you never use and you'd like to get rid of? Is there any equipment you've been meaning to buy, but just haven't gotten around to getting it yet? If you answered, yes to any of these questions, then our May 19th meeting is just for you! At May's monthly meeting, we will be hosting our first ever **Sell It or Swap It Meeting**. Grab any equipment you'd like to sell or trade and bring it to our monthly meeting. We will have our very own Bee Equipment Swap meet! We will also discuss summer hive management and inspections. Bring your questions.

### **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:

Hello Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

Our weather continues to be wet and cold, which is the complete opposite of last year's honey-making paradise. If this is your second or third year keeping bees, then you should be prepared for making a lot more bee interventions with your hives. If this is your first year keeping bees, know that many years the weather makes beekeeping a lot easier for us and for the bees. All the rain we are having this year, combined with the cooler weather, is keeping the bees in the hive for longer periods of time. Since this is also when colony populations are rapidly increasing, means we are going to continue to see a lot of swarms. Please remember that a lot of swarms make for a lot of freaked-out neighbors, so it is very important to always be a good neighbor and either get the swarm yourself, or call another beekeeper who can remove it as soon as possible. Letting a swarm sit too long can lead to problems and does not reflect well upon any of us who keep bees in a suburban area.

Also, if you have a new colony, you have to keep your feeders full so that your bees have a continuous supply of sugar syrup to draw out the wax in all the frames. It is extremely important to remember that your bees need the sugar syrup MORE on cloudy and rainy days than they do on sunny days. The syrup is meant to feed the bees when they can't leave the hive, which this spring has meant just about every other day.

The good news about this weather is that it will help you--or force you--to be a better beekeeper. To do so, you must go into your hives and look to see what your bees are doing. Being a beekeeper means going into your hives, pulling out at a minimum 4-6 frames per box so that you know what your bees are doing. Also, you have to look at the frames, not at the bees, which means if "there are too many bees in the way", then you have to move them out of the way to see what's in the cells on that frame.

Beekeeping requires active participation, and success depends on beekeepers who actively manage their hives. Before asking a mentor, or club officer for help, first you, the beekeeper, must do his or her part. Specifically, a beekeeper should answer these questions every time he or she goes into his or her hives:

- 1) Did I see the queen?
- 2) Did I see signs of the queen, specifically:
  - Capped Brood?
  - Larvae?
  - Eggs?
- 3) How many frames of brood did I see?
- 4) How much honey/nectar do the bees have?
- 5) Did I see anything weird?
  - Swarm cells?
  - Pests?
  - Lack of bees?

If you can answer these five questions, then you have done your part, and AFTER you have answered these five questions, then you can reach out to someone for help. You might still have a lot of questions, and you might not know what to do next, but if you can answer these five questions, then based on the details about your hive, another beekeeper can offer you advice on what to do.

If you're not sure how to tell the difference between capped brood and honey, then pick-up a book on beekeeping so you know what to look for. There are many excellent books on beekeeping, and the club carries and sells several of them. There are also many great resources you can rely on, like Bee Culture Magazine, the NJ Beekeepers New Members Handbook that is available for download on our website, or even your bee club's newsletters.

The main thing to remember is that you wanted to become a beekeeper, and it is you who will determine how successful you are at keeping bees. Don't worry about having to do it all on your own, or that you have to know all the answers, the club is here to help. BUT, you do have to do your part and have answered those five questions. The answers to those questions will help the more experienced members in the club help you to continue to do what's best for your bees, and help you continue to be a better beekeeper.

If you've answered those questions, then I look forward to helping you at Friday's meeting!

**Frank Mortimer**  
**President, Northeast NJ Beekeepers**



## Beekeeping in May

John A. Gaut

May has had a lot of good foraging weather for the bees. Most of my colonies are bringing in a surplus nectar. All the colonies are bringing in enough nectar to feed the brood and some are storing some in the honey supers. The rain will interrupt the bees from gathering nectar and pollen for a day or two and should enable a good nectar flow once we get some sunny days again.

I have been very busy with swarm prevention and queen rearing. And catching swarms!

Swarming is a very natural behavior in the spring. Reproducing is a very high priority once the bees have survived the winter. Most colonies survived the winter in very good condition, so now they want to swarm. While there are swarm intervention techniques, they are not 100%. Personally, I find it easier to prevent colony loss in the winter than prevent swarming in the spring. The activities and behaviors of honey bees haven't changed much in thousands of years. Swarming is one of the behaviors. Although we understand more about honey bee behaviors today; there is still a lot to learn. The best way I know to minimize swarming is to keep open comb above the brood nest, or at least a mix of comb and foundation. The colony senses there is not enough honey to swarm; sometimes...

I keep track of both Growing Degree Days and Bee Degree Days (like GDDs but using a base temperature of 40F). My area is about the same as last year; about 2 weeks ahead of normal (historical average). Last year the swarming started a little earlier and lasted until May 22. This year the swarming started a little later. I hope it is over soon. I look at the colonies weekly at least to verify they have room to store honey above the brood nest.

There were a few questions about inspecting the colony after it swarms. I usually do not go into the colony for two to three weeks after it swarms. A colony typically swarms any time after the first queen cell is capped. If the hive is opened up too soon after a swarm, the queen cells will likely be damaged. If all the cells are damaged, the colony will become queenless. Once a cell is capped, the queen will not emerge for 8 days. The new queen then needs to mature for a few days, take her mating flight(s) and then begin laying eggs. The earliest a queen will lay after she has emerged from her cell is about 13 days; usually a few days more. There is really no reason to inspect the colony until about 3 weeks after it swarmed. If you do not see eggs, look again in a week. If you do not see eggs a month after the swarm, the colony may be queenless. I will add supers to the colony during the 3-week period if needed, I will not disrupt the brood nest so I do not damage the queen cells or disrupt the queens mating flights. Finally, I will look at the queens laying pattern after a month and half to verify she has a good pattern. If not, I replace her with a queen that does.

A Varroa treatment tip for swarms: I have treated swarms from an unknown source with an Oxalic Acid dribble to knock down any mites they may have brought along with them. (The unknown source could be a feral hive or another beekeeper; the mite levels are unknown and could be high.) Treating a swarm with Oxalic Acid dribble is very easy and inexpensive. Since there is no brood, the treatment is very effective. I use a solution of 2.8% Oxalic Acid and Sugar Syrup (1:1). Once the

swarm is established in a hive (a few days to a week), I treat each seam of bees with 5 mL of the solution or a maximum of 50mL per colony.

If you bought Nucs through the club, they should still have an ApiVar strip. This strip should remain in the hive until at least June 1st and removed before June 12th. The strip can be repositioned to the brood nest area if necessary. Once the ApiVar treatment is finished, you will want to check the mite count in late June. If it is high, treatment will be needed.

Keep feeding the new nucs and any swarms you catch. Both need to draw out comb and the nectar flow is not strong enough to support comb building. Swarms are “primed” to build comb; if they are fed they will build comb quickly. Bees that are producing wax need a lot of carbs and some pollen. There is usually enough pollen coming in; they need sugar syrup! Randy Oliver did a little experiment feeding 1:1 syrup or 2:1 syrup to see how they build comb. He found both mixes worked equally well. Other researchers have found similar results. The difference was the bees needed twice as much of the 1:1 syrup as the 2:1. I usually feed a thicker syrup to reduce the number of times I need to feed. His article has other useful information too: <http://scientificbeekeeping.com/light-or-heavy-syrup-for-drawing-foundation/> It is important to continuously feed the colony. If there is an interruption in feeding, the wax producers will shut down and then a new generation of wax producers must be engaged before comb building begins again.

I'll see you at our May meeting on the 19th. Members are bringing any surplus equipment for sale including some nice 8 frame hive bodies, bases and covers.



## Hive Report from Karl

As of last week, my hive is gaining weight again and the bees are flying today and ignoring the 50 degree cold and rain. My bees seem to like going into the pots I filled with screened soil for my vegetables. I know they like to take moisture from lettuce or cabbage leaves but they crawl into the small holes at the bottom of the pots to take water from the soil. Maybe it is more convenient than flying another 100 feet to the pond and risk getting eaten by a frog. I'll see you all at the next meeting. - Karl



## Intermediate beekeeping training

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture office of the State Apiarist is pleased to announce its first intermediate beekeeping training June 23 + 24, 2017. Beekeeping is full of challenges, beekeepers need to keep up to date on the latest strategies to hone their craft and improve their skills. This class is designed with that in mind. This class is not for the beginner but for those who have a few years' experience.

### **The following are required skills:**

1. Understands the annual lifecycle of the honey bee.
2. Several years keeping bees.
3. Understand honey bee terminology.
4. Ability to see eggs.

### **Topics to be covered:**

1. Do you think like a beekeeper?
2. Easy splitting of colonies for swarm control and increasing numbers
3. Manage colonies to prevent or minimize swarming
4. Varroa Mite management - The most important skill for successful beekeeping. Evaluate your mite levels using an alcohol washer. Strategies for control, biology of the mite
5. Basic queen rearing using a cloak board
6. Bees wax processing – make your own lip balm
7. Is feeding necessary? When, why, how of feeding bees
8. What is the nosema and Varroa level of your hives? Each student will bring in a sample of their own bees for Varroa and nosema analysis. Alcohol wash to estimate mite load.
9. Good Neighbor BMP's

I understand I will be working with live bees, appropriate personal protection equipment is my responsibility. I am responsible to bring my own food and water, no lunch will be served and it is too difficult to leave and get food and return. The morning sessions will be lecture and lab, the afternoon will be hands on in the bee yard. Signature \_\_\_\_\_.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Address \_\_\_\_\_

Student Cell Number \_\_\_\_\_

Student E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Students Automobile License Plate \_\_\_\_\_ Needed to Pass State Police Check Point.

Please print clearly! This class is limited to 25 students.

Please fill in the above information and cut at the bold black line and return to:

**New Jersey Department of Agriculture  
Division of Plant Industry  
PO box 330  
Trenton NJ 08625**

ATTN: Tim Schuler

**You must enclose a good check or money order for \$300.00 made Payable to NJDA Division of Plant industry.**

Instructors: Tim Schuler Jeff Burd and Plant Industry Lab staff.

**Tim Schuler** started keeping bees as a young boy with his dad, John P. Schuler, and his brother in Prospect Park, Pennsylvania, a small suburb of Philadelphia. Tim graduated in 1982 from Delaware Valley College, Doylestown, PA with a BS in Animal Husbandry. He began his career helping to manage a large cattle and hog feed lot in central NJ. In 1986 he began working for the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) as an Animal Health Technician in the Division of Animal Health. In 1989 and '90 Tim served a short time as a bee inspector for the NJDA, during Jake Matthenius's 42-year tenure as State Apiarist. In 1991 Tim started a side business managing 300 colonies of honey bees providing pollination services to South Jersey farmers and producing honey in Warren County NJ. In 2007 he took his present position of State Apiarist with the NJDA Division of Plant Industry. He has taught beekeeping to beekeepers, non-beekeepers, Rutgers University undergraduates and subsistence farmers in poor countries. He inspects colonies throughout the state for diseases and pests, helping beekeepers keep strong healthy colonies of honey bees and promoting New Jersey's beekeeping industry in any way he can. In 2016 he was awarded the Divelbiss award by the Eastern Apicultural Society for his efforts in beekeeping education.

Jeff Burd has been a hobbyist beekeeper for nearly ten years. He is the immediate past president of EAS; the current First Vice President of the New Jersey Beekeepers Association and is in his second year as president of the Mercer County Board of Agriculture. Jeff became an EAS Master Beekeeper in 2015 at Guelph, Ontario.

Jeff grew up on his Grandfather's farm near Pennington, New Jersey. He was a member of his local 4-H Dairy Club and showed his Holstein cows at county, state and national events. Currently, Jeff teaches an Introduction to Beekeeping class at Mercer County Community College twice each year. Jeff was also an assistant Instructor for the Rutgers Bee-Ginner class with Tim Schuler and Bob Hughes for the last 3 years.





### **Drastic Price Reduction on Last Items**

Contact [larry.barbara@verizon.net](mailto:larry.barbara@verizon.net)

Barbara's Cell 201 820-7711

Remaining Items:

Prices: 2 complete nuc boxes (painted green) for 5 frame nucs, with outer cover, inner cover, bottom board and frames of drawn comb inside. **\$50 each**

2 brand new and unpainted supers from Hudson Valley Bee Supply, special construction. They come with 10 frames of wired foundation. I paid \$100 for each one last August. Will sell for **\$40each**

10 sheets wax foundation for deeps **\$5**

10 assembled deep wooden frames **\$5**

8 assembled frames for medium supers **\$4**



Custom made stand for setting frames on while examining hive	<b>\$15</b>
1 frame holder	<b>\$5</b>
2 bee brushes	<b>Free</b>
Pair of extra large heavy duty men's gloves	<b>\$1</b>
2 plastic strainers	<b>\$2 each</b>
wooden board for wiring foundation	<b>Free</b>
embedder for wiring foundation	<b>\$4</b>
jar feeder	<b>Free</b>
candle making mold	<b>\$2</b>
woman's NJ Beekeepers shirt size medium	<b>\$4</b>
Bee Cozy (black plastic)	<b>Free</b>
Cinderblocks	<b>Free</b>





Stiles Apiaries has single colonies for sale:

Includes: 8 frames of bees, 2 gallon cap and ladder feeder, deep box, bottom board, migratory lid with 1/2 inch rim. All for \$235\$ each.

Call Stiles Apiaries ([732-661-0700](tel:732-661-0700)) for more details.

Contact Stiles Apiary: [Grant@stilesoney.com](mailto:Grant@stilesoney.com)





Northeast New Jersey Beekeeper...

Public Group

Joined ▾

Share

Notifications

...



**1,698 Strong!!!**

We quickly blew through the 1,600 member milestone and are, as of this writing **1,698** members strong, and growing on our Facebook page! Be sure check it out. See the great pics and stories posted by the Facebook fans from all over the world!

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

❖ **Volunteers** ❖

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

**Next Month**

The Northeast NJ Beekeepers is proud to present NJ State Apiarist **Tim Schuler**. Tim will speak about mite treatments and why it is essential that you treat your hives for mites.