



nnjbees.org



June 2019

NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
A division of the New Jersey State Beekeepers Association

President	Frank Mortimer	201-417-7309	3 rd V. Pres.	John Matarese	201-481-5426
V. President	John Gaut – Mentor Coordinator	201-961-2330	Secretary	Rich Stellingwerf	201-693-2571
2 nd V. Pres.	Jaimie Winters	551-486-7479	Treasurer	Bob Jenkins	201-218-6537

Meeting on: **Friday, June 21st at 7:30 PM**

Location: **Ramapo College of NJ, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430**

 *Bee Enthusiasts & Bee Curious Always Welcome!*  *Look for the Bee-u-tiful Yellow Signs* 



This Month's Meeting:
Tim Schuler
Mite Treatments





Message from the President:

Hello Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

The theme of my letter for this month is, “Bee Prepared and the Awe of Beekeeping.”

One of the things that I love about beekeeping is that no matter who you are or how much you know, there is *always* more to learn. Last year, I decided that I needed to be better about marking my queens, and I implemented an OCD regime to stay on top of it. I purchased a one-handed queen catcher from Mann Lake, (Item # HD-101) and it’s a product that I highly recommend! I also purchased marking pens and queen clips, so that I would have all the gear that I needed for my future in queen tagging.

One of the best features about Mann Lake's queen catcher is that it has a stopper to prevent you from squishing your queen. Since I have never been the most graceful of clumsy people, I was always worried that marking queens would more closely resemble running chuck roast through a meat grinder. But thanks to Mann Lake, I didn't have to worry about becoming the bee butcher of Bergen County.

Initially, I kept the queen catcher in my jacket pocket, but I found it to be bulky, especially when I didn't end up using it. Also, I was afraid that I'd somehow crush it when I was moving supers, so I began keeping it in my bee equipment box. Then if I saw an unmarked queen, I'd slowly put the frame down and run over to my bee box, find, and then grab my queen catcher. I found that by the time I returned to the hive, the queen was long gone, so I either had to search every frame to find her, or wait until I spotted her again.

Both scenarios were not working, and since I wanted to make marking my queen a habit, I decided to try another approach. I began keeping a queen clip in my upper jacket pocket. It wasn't bulky, unlikely to get crushed, and it was always within arms reach. Success!

My motivation for wanting to mark all my queens was swarm prevention. When a colony decides to swarm, the attendant bees put the queen on a low-cal diet, forcing her to slim down, regain her flying physique, and making it extremely difficult for the beekeeper to see her. But, if she's marked, then no matter how many sizes she goes down, the big colored spot on her back will give her away.

Once I could easily see the queen, anytime I see swarm cells, I could prevent the hive from swarming by grabbing the queen and a few frames to start a new colony. Since their queen is missing, the colony will think it has swarmed, and the workers will get back to work making me more honey. No reduction in the work force means a more productive colony, especially when the new queen gets up and running within a few weeks.

My new system has been working great, but a few weeks ago it became magical.

As I was inspecting one of my hives, I saw multiple textbook-perfect, fully drawn, queen cells. The cells were in the middle of the frames, and their location, along with the knowledge that the queen was over two years old, suggested they were supersedure cells. The hive was still jam-packed with bees, but with a dozen plus queen cells, I knew this hive was likely to swarm multiple times. Then, I heard it.

“Churt-Churt-Churt-Churt...Churt-Churt-Churt-Churt...Churt-Churt-Churt-Churt”

It was piping! A virgin queen was piping! Then in an instant, I saw her running across the comb on an exposed frame in the hive. I quickly grabbed the frame and pulled it out of the hive. With my other hand, I took the queen clip from my pocket and with the speed of someone who almost knows what he’s doing; I grabbed the queen and had her securely in my clip.

I took the two best-looking queen cells and placed the frames they were on into 2-frame nuc boxes. I wanted to have a few back-up queens, and this was a perfect opportunity to make that a reality.

Next up was to cut out all the remaining queen cells. Since I already had the queen caged, frame-by-frame, I shook off all the bees and cut off anything that even remotely resembled a queen cell. After I was certain that all the cells were removed, I got my queen catcher and green marking pen. I laid an empty frame on top of the frames, released the queen from the clip and immediately recaptured her in the one-handed catcher. Once the green spot on the queen had dried, I released her, and closed up the hive.

Hearing a queen pipe and then being able to catch *and* mark her was one of the coolest beekeeping experiences I've ever had! I was happy that I had made the commitment to mark my queens and I was even happier that I was prepared to do it.

I also realized that the lessons I learned from my experience could be applied to all of beekeeping. The secret to all beekeeping successes is; commitment, preparation, and a strong desire to always be learning.

Bee well and see you at Friday's meeting!

Frank Mortimer
President
Northeast NJ Beekeepers



Beekeeping in June

by John A. Gaut
EAS Master Beekeeper

The bees have been busy all spring and summer so far.

We had plenty of rain in Northern New Jersey. All the moisture kept the nectar flowing. And there were plenty of nice warm sunny days for the bees to collect all that nectar. I started extracting in early June. I only pulled a super or two from each hive that was capped, extracted the honey and put the supers back on for them to refill. Many other beekeepers did the same.

July and August typically have very limited if any nectar flow. Most beekeepers finish up the honey harvest by mid-July. I try to get the honey extracted before the dearth fully sets in to minimize robbing. I take the supers off in the early morning and keep the supers covered. If there is no nectar flow and we are in the dearth, the foragers will be at the open hives and supers in seconds. That is no fun!

Any remaining nectar brought into the hives after extracting is finished will be stored with the brood. The colony needs about 30 pounds of honey (4 or 5 full frames) in the brood boxes to survive during the dearth.

July is also when I treat again for Varroa Mites.

I'll check the mite levels in each hive before treatment and again about 2 to 3 weeks after the treatment is completed. I have used both MAQS and Formic Pro successfully in July (a full 2 pad treatment).

I pick a period when the weather will be cool and apply the pads on a cool evening while minimizing the disturbance to the colony. Checking the mite levels in every colony is very important after treatment. While the treatments are highly effective, sometimes I find a colony or two that still has high mite levels. If I did not check every colony, I might have missed the high mite counts and had a mite bomb in my yard ready to explode in a few months.

A high mite count is anything over 3 mites in a 300 bee (1/2 cup) sample. If I do get a high mite count, I will use an alternate treatment on that colony right away.

Happy Honey Harvest!



Catching Swarms In Downtown Ridgewood



A Throne for NJ's King of Beekeeping & His Queen



Finished Chairs (Photo by Bob Vitali)

Our own Bob Vitali fitted, assembled, and finished two chairs as a retirement gift for Tim Schuler and his wife, Patty from the *New Jersey Beekeepers Association*. The chairs were purchased as a unassembled kit, and the true craftsmanship can be seen in the final fitting and finishing. Jeff Burd, Frank Mortimer, and Bob Vitali presented Tim and Patty with the chairs at the NJBA State Spring meeting.

Bob's description of the chairs, was also presented to Tim:

“Your Chairs are classic 1740 Philadelphia Comb Back Windsor chairs, which are considered the earliest of true American Windsor chairs. Note how the posts stand straight up to support the arm rail; how the shape of the seat looks like the letter “D,” and how the end of the legs are shaped like blunt arrows where they touch the floor. All of these features are consistent with 1740 period Windsor chairs.

The legs and undercarriage, as well as the spindles supporting the arm rail, are all Hard Sugar Maple that provide strength. The seat is Tulip Poplar, chosen for its strength and stability. The arm rail, comb, and long spindles are White Oak, chosen for its ability to bend nicely in a steam box for shaping, while not splintering.

All the components were hand worked while still green with draw knife and spokeshave. Everything is hand-sanded with 220-grit sandpaper before final fitting and assembly.

The chairs were given 5 coats of Old Fashion Milk Paint. Three coats of Barn Red, followed by two coats of Pitch Black, hand burnished with OOO steel wool between each coat. The chairs were then given 3 coats of Bioshield Penetrating Oil Sealer to seal the finish over a six-day period. Minwax finishing paste wax was then used for the final coat.

Hand crafted Windsor chairs have been handed down from generation to generation. Your chairs are a blank tableau ready to record the history of your interactions with them; the milk paint will help tell that story as your chairs get handed down to your family for generations to come.

Your Chairs were born in the spring of 2019 along with your retirement and the next exciting chapter of the Patty and Tim Story.”

Bob also attached a nameplate on the back of each chair, inscribed with “King Bee” and “Queen Bee” in Chichewa, the language of Malawi.



King Bee (Photo by Bob Vitali)



Queen Bee (Photo by Bob Vitali)



Tim and Patty already using their chairs

Back row: John A. Gaut, Angela Juffey, Bob Vitali, and Frank Mortimer

(Photo by Kevin Inglin)

ODE TO TIM

Tim, our State Apiarist is planning to retire
With his knowledge of bees, one can't help but admire.

Toiling each day among bees and their hives,
He taught us methods to ensure that Varroa didn't thrive.

But his efforts in New Jersey didn't stop here,
Since off to Malawi, he traveled each year.

Spreading his wisdom to workers in the field
Led to better bee health and higher honey yields.

As you retire, we wish you the best
Of health and happiness and a well-deserved rest!

We are so grateful for all you have done,
Our State Apiarist, Tim Schuler ~ THERE IS ONLY ONE!

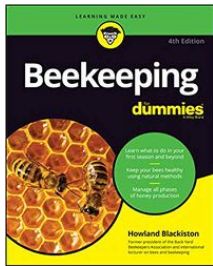
~ Angela Juffey



John Gaut & Angela Juffey presenting Tim with his commemorative scrapbook. (Photo by B. Vitali)

You can still send or give Tim pictures and notes for his scrapbook.

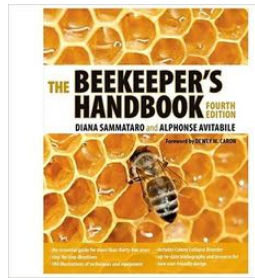
Northeast NJ Beekeepers Bee Books for Sale



Beekeeping for Dummies

An excellent basic intro guide to beekeeping

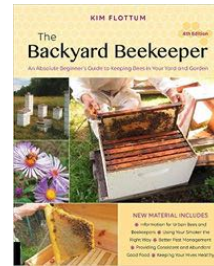
Price: \$20



Beekeeper's Handbook, 4th

If you're only going to buy one book, this is the best guide to the hobby & profession of beekeeping

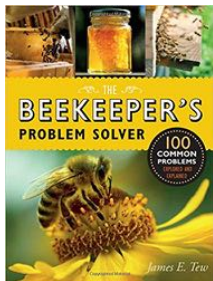
Price: \$25



Backyard Beekeeper 4th

The premiere introduction to backyard beekeeping

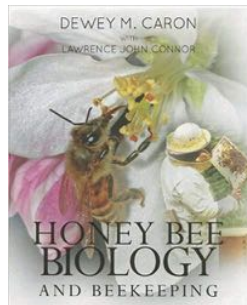
Price: \$20



Beekeeper's Problem Solver

100 Common Beekeeping Problems Explored and Explained

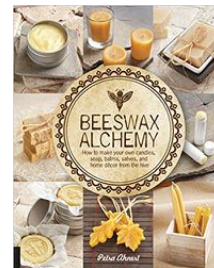
Price: \$20



Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping

The only beekeeping textbook teaching college students & beekeepers the science & practice of bees & beekeeping

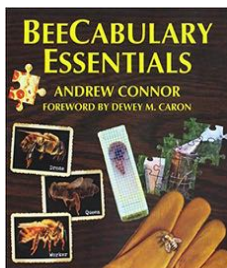
Price: \$45



Beeswax Alchemy

Over 40 DIY projects that's the perfect combo of recipe, craft book, & beekeepers' guide

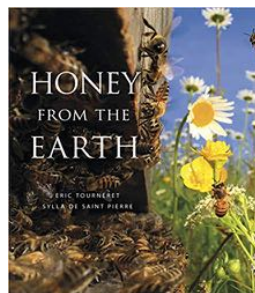
Price: \$20



BeeCABULARY ESSENTIALS

All the special terminology about bees and beekeeping

Price: \$30



Honey From the Earth

Internationally acclaimed honeybee photographer Eric Tournet spent FIFTEEN YEARS traveling the world to capture the breathtaking diversity of bees and beekeeping traditions on six continents.

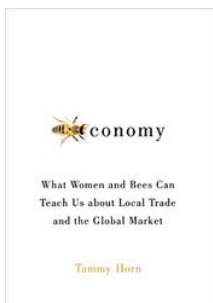
Price: \$50



Backyard Beekeeper's Honey Handbook

More than just a cookbook, it introduces the literal cornucopia of honey varieties available

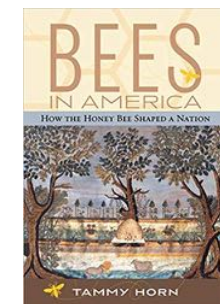
Price: \$20



Beeconomy: What Women & Bees Can Teach Us about Local Trade & the Global Market

Examines the fascinating evolution of the relationship between women & bees around the world

Price: \$20



Bees in America: How the Honeybee Shaped a Nation

Cultural history of bees and beekeeping in the United States, from the colonial period, when colonists first introduced bees to the present

Price: \$20



Better Beekeeping

Takes beekeepers past the beginning stages and offers solutions and rewards for keeping bees a better way.

Price: \$20

All Books are only available to members at our monthly meetings



Beekeeping Memories

“Early Honeybee Hives”

by

**Karl Schoenknecht
Club Historian**

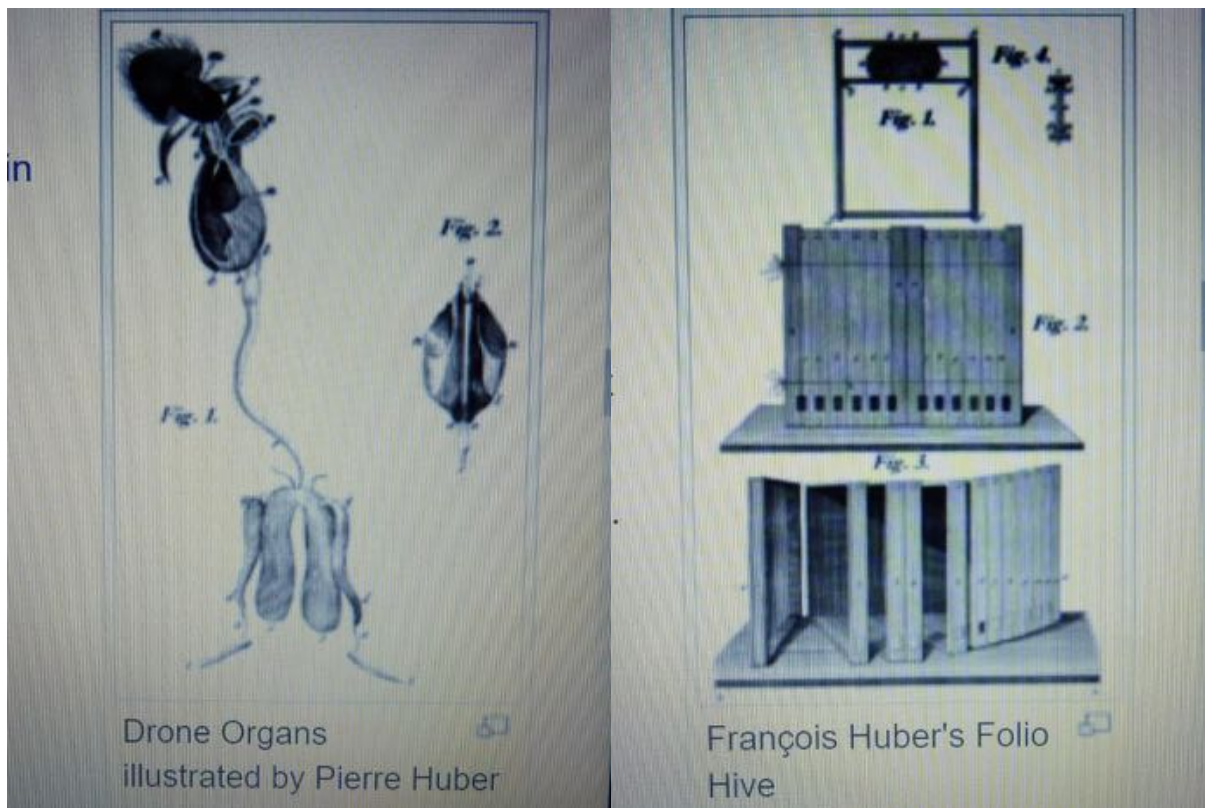
Many thousands of years ago man discovered the sweet treat found in the wax comb of feral colony honeybees that lived in cliffs or trees. We later found uses for the wax and other products that honeybees used in their hives. As the need for these products increased man tried to learn ways to make harvesting easier and more productive. Unfortunately, hunter-gatherers destroyed the hives when they removed the comb to get the honey. By careful observation of honeybees in the field, man determined that the bees gathered nectar from blossoms to make honey and later stored it in wax combs. Little else was known and studying bees in a closed dark hive was not possible. Even before recorded history our ancestors may have tried to save a hive by leaving the brood and some honey in the gathering basket and turning it upside down to protect it. No clear evidence remains that the skep was invented this way but the skep is still used today in a similar manner by hunter-gatherer tribes in some poor areas of the world.

Skeps, hollow clay-tube hives and log gum hives were early types of bee hives that enabled man to keep hives nearer to his home but still did not allow us to study the honeybee in great detail. After the discovery that an alcoholic beverage could be made from honey, the demand for honey increased and yet we could do little to increase production. Years passed with little progress toward understanding the honeybee until Swammerdam (about 1660) was able to use a microscope and prove the king bee was a queen but little else was learned. About 100 years after Swammerdam, Thomas Wildman realized that wood bars could be placed on top of a skep and a top cover could be added.

He later realized that another skep could be added under the original and found that the bees would only put honey in the top skep after the brood hatched. Early honey was mixed with crushed larva because there was no easy way to harvest just the honeycomb. Letting the bee larva hatch first was a great bit of knowledge because beekeepers could now remove only honey comb without destroying the hive and let the queen continue working in the lower skep. Beekeepers from many countries started communicating to learn more.

R.A.F. de Reaumur was the first to use glass sides for an observation hive but thanks to the Swiss born Francois Huber the science of beekeeping moved forward quickly. Huber was from a wealthy family and was able to move to a nature preserve in 1860 France after he became blind before the age of twenty. He employed Francois Burnens as secretary and together they built and documented improved glass-wall observation hives and sectional hives (called folio hives) that opened like pages in a book. Huber learned that bees produced wax from slits in their body, the queen was oviparous and the queen laid eggs that stood upright on the bottom of the brood cells.

Huber later taught his son Pierre and dedicated his remaining years to scientific research. He determined that the queen was inseminated outside of the hive due to extensive trial and error testing both inside and outside of the hive. After many hours dissecting bees under a microscope he determined that the large opening under the queen bee was necessary to receive the large organ of a drone and probably required in-flight insemination to allow the belly to belly mating process. Many early beekeepers including Swammerdam thought queens to be self-fertile. As these early discoveries developed so did beekeeping in the United States.



Photos from Wikipedia

Moses Quinby was one of the few that helped the beekeeping industry grow in the 19th century. He became the president of the North American Beekeepers Association in 1871 and was called the father of commercial beekeeping in the United States.

Moses Quinby was born in New Castle, NY in 1810 and later in 1828 moved to Coxsackie in Greene County. He built a wood working business when he managed the Pazzi Lampman sawmill and started making beehives to help bolster his beekeeping. He invented the bellows smoker and built the Quinby fixed frame hive that looked like thick frames held together with his special Quinby clamps. He studied a lot about beekeeping and later taught others about good beekeeping practices. With over 1200 hives he created a good business but due to his Quaker heritage he never patented his inventions or his writings because he felt that God meant for him to share what he learned. One of his noted books is "Langstroth on the hive and the Honeybee-a beekeepers manual".



Our Facebook Group has **over 1845 fans** from all over the world! It's a great place to connect to other beekeepers, so bee sure check out all the great bee pics, bee stories, and bee info.

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

Next Month

Pulling Honey Supers & Honey Extraction



The First Rule of Bee Club: Tell Everyone about Bee Club!