



nnjbees.org



September 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, September 20th 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: **Preparing Bees for Winter**





Message from the President:

Dear Northeast NJ Beekeepers,

This year's Honey Cup was another wonderful success! We had over 350 attendees, all of whom enjoyed tasting the honey entries and enjoying the day! Our annual honey tasting event is one of the best ways our club promotes the benefits of backyard beekeeping to the general public. Every year I hear people saying they had no idea how important honeybees are, and how great local honey tastes! That's always music to my ears, because the more people that like having local beekeepers around, the better it is for *every* beekeeper!

I would like to thank every member that attended the Honey Cup. Even if you don't enter your honey, it's always a great day and a wonderful way to celebrate what we love to do, talk about our bees. Next year, I would encourage more members to stop by and experience what you've been missing!

I would like to give a shout out and a big thank you to all the volunteers at the honey cup! The event is only as good as those who help make it happen. So to everyone who volunteered their time, a big, big thank you!!!! You are what makes our club so special!

On November 9th, our club will be hosting the Fall State Meeting. This is an exciting event, and it will be the first time the Northeast Branch has hosted a state meeting. For those that have never attended a state meeting, now is your chance! It's a full day of speakers, and a great way to meet other beekeepers from around the state. Dr. Christina Grozinger from Penn State is our keynote speaker, and she will be talking about Understanding the Impacts of Landscape on Bee Health. The day will also include a continental breakfast, and a delicious hot lunch. Keep an eye out for meeting sign-up emails from the state, so we can show the other branches why the Northeast is the best branch in the state!

We will need volunteers to help with the state meeting, so please step up and do your part to make our first state meeting the best it can be. Last, please know that the meeting will NOT be at Ramapo, but at Pascack Hills High School in Montvale. We are lucky to have Pascack Valley Regional High School District as our partner, as they are interested in promoting the benefits of honeybees. In the spring, Pascack Valley High School will install hives on campus, and offer beekeeping to the students. Their initiative is an exciting one, and it will certainly help shine the spotlight on beekeeping in our state.

Thanks again to everyone and see you on Friday!

Bee Well,

Frank Mortimer
President, Northeast NJ Beekeepers

Beekeeping in September

by John A. Gaut

EAS Master Beekeeper

September has been very pleasant so far. The bees are able to collect a little nectar depending on their location and recently have been packing in the pollen. The colonies have collected some golden rod honey, I can tell by the odor when I inspect the colonies. Fortunately, I have been successful in managing the mites in all the colonies so they are raising plenty of healthy bees for the winter survival.



Nice frame of pollen and honey.

I have fed all my colonies a little ProSweet. I really like the stuff! It only takes about a gallon to add 10 pounds of weight to the hive. The bees store the ProSweet away almost like they are being feed honey. Less processing is needed to convert the ProSweet sugars (22% Fructose, 27% Glucose, 50% Sucrose) into honey; real honey is mostly Fructose and Glucose sugars. I'm careful not to overfeed right now too. The colony needs space to raise winter bees and also space to store pollen. If they are fed too much, there will not be enough space for brood and pollen.

How do you know how much to feed? You have to look in the hive, both top and bottom! One colony may need more feed than the colony right beside it! You cannot assume every colony needs to be fed the same amount!



Frame of honey being prepared for winter stores in the top deep hive box. The uncapped area was brood and is now being “backfilled” with nectar/syrup and being processed into honey for the winter. In the Spring, the cluster will consume this honey and use the area for brood rearing again.

What is the biggest cause of colony loss in the winter? It’s not starvation. Its mites! More specifically the colony collapses due to the viruses transmitted by the mites. The threshold for acceptable mite levels continues to decrease. If your colony has more than 3% mites now, they only have a 50% chance of surviving the winter.

Recently I helped two beekeepers that thought they had queen issues. When I inspected the colonies, I found the queens was really trying (laying a good pattern of eggs) but the brood was dying due to mite parasitism. The resulting brood pattern was spotty. Larva were dying in the cells. This could be mistaken for European Foul Brood. Larva dying from mites usually just slump down in the cells; larva with EFB turn yellow while they are still curled in the cells. The colonies still had a good population of bees but were in decline. Deformed wing virus had infected many of the bees. Mite defecation could be seen in the brood cells. Pupa were also dying in the cells. Alcohol washes resulted in very high mite counts, confirming the observations. I recommended treating with the “full” dosage of Formic Pro (two pads) on all the colonies in the yard. I made sure the beekeeper knew that the colony may lose a lot of bees and maybe the queen since the bees were suffering with viruses. (A full treatment of Formic Pro is not an issue with a healthy hive.) The reality is these colonies would likely collapse later in the fall or not survive the winter. By treating the colonies, the beekeeper is reducing the spread of mites to their other colonies and surrounding colonies.

I have been requeening many of my colonies. I have found that a colony with a young vigorous queen will raise more winter bees, enabling the colony to winter much better and build up quicker in the Spring.

By the end of September, I plan to remove the robbing screens and install entrance reducers with mouse guards. Mice are already looking for their winter nesting places.

I will also be applying ApiVar in all the colonies. In my area, there are always a few colonies collapsing due to mites. These colonies could be feral colonies or backyard colonies that were poorly managed. There is a lot to “drift” by bees in general and bees from collapsing colonies can drift for 2 to 3 miles. These drifting bees carry mites with them. Also, bees from strong colonies rob out collapsing colonies, bringing mites back with them. Mite immigration from other colonies is a major problem. ApiVar is a long-lasting treatment and will help control mite infestation due to mite immigration during October and November.

I have had good results with ApiVar; other beekeepers have had issues. A strong colony can rob out a weak colony in a day, bringing back all the mites in a day. If ApiVar is properly applied (1 strip for every 5 frames of bees), it will kill most of the mites. If a beekeeper chooses to skimp on the ApiVar, it may not be effective enough. For example, a beekeeper that rationalizes that only two strips are needed instead of 4 may not see good control. Some beekeepers only leave the strips in for 42 days, the minimum time. There is no reason to only treat for the minimum time. **Treat with ApiVar for the full 56 days!** Once the ApiVar strips are removed, any mites immigrating into the colony will survive.

Most beekeepers in this area try to have at least 60 pounds of honey in the hive for the winter. The total hive weight will be about 150 pounds or more. (A completely empty 10 frame hive with 2 deeps of comb weighs about 50 pounds. There should be about 10 pounds of bees and brood in the hive. There also should be about 4 or more frames of pollen which will be about 40 pounds. That is about 100 pounds without honey. Another 50 to 60 pounds of honey adds up to at least 150 pounds.)

For the rest of September and October, I’ll be inspecting the colonies to verify the brood is healthy, there is plenty of pollen and honey and the queens are performing. I’ll replace underperforming queens and feed as needed to get to at least 150 pounds per hive.

There is a Mite-A-Thon again this year! The Bee Informed Partnership is surveying mite counts from across the country. Please take mite counts from your colonies and submit the results. <https://bip2.beeinformed.org/mitecheck>



2019 Honey Cup Winners



Light Honey

<u>Bottle Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>
13	Warren Stroedecke	1 st
10	Ramapo Beekeeping Club	2 nd
11	Don Tabatneck	3 rd

Dark Honey

<u>Bottle Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>
75	Jaimie Winters	1 st
73	Herb Hazen	2 nd
67	John Matarese	3 rd

Best Label

<u>Label Letter</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>
I	Stuart & Kimberly Smith and David Putnum	1 st
B	Kelly Palazzi	2 nd
F	John Matarese	3 rd

UPDATE: BetterBee's New BetterComb
by
Rich Stellingwerf

The BetterComb appears to be working, but it does have its limitations. In all the hives that I installed the BetterComb, the bees are using it. The good news is that in the hives where the BetterComb is in the brood box, the queen is laying in it.

However, in the hives where the BetterComb is being used for honey storage, I have seen a problem. The BetterComb is not able to hold the weight of the honey, and it folds/bends out of shape. It is still holding the honey, but it's clear that the BetterComb is not as strong as natural beeswax comb. Part of the problem might be that BetterBee gives you toothpicks to hold the comb in place, and it might require a stronger support system. I may try wiring some of the BetterComb, or see if they recommend using something other than the toothpicks.

I will keep everyone posted on how this product holds up during the winter months.

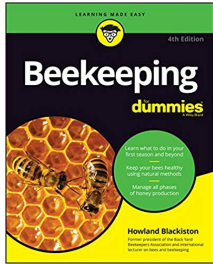


**New Jersey Beekeepers Association
 Fall State Meeting
 Saturday, November 9, 2019 - 8:00 am to 3:30 pm
 Pascack Hills High School
 225 W Grand Ave, Montvale, NJ 07645**

Agenda:

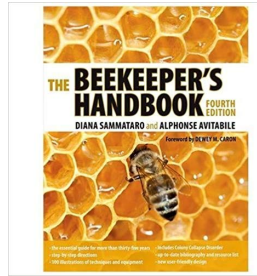
<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic & Speaker</u>
8:00 to 9:15	Registration with coffee and light refreshments
9:15 to 9:30	Welcome – Frank Mortimer NJBA Report – Jeff Burd
9:30 to 10:15	Dr. Eric Wiener, Ramapo College The Establishment and Importance of Native Wildflower Meadows for Apis mellifera and Native Pollinators
10:15 to 10:45	Ramapo College Student Beekeeping Club Projects and Outreach
10:45 to 11:00	Break
11:00 to 12:00	Christina Grozinger, Ph.D. Director, Center for Pollinator Research, Penn State Bee Health: From Genes to Landscapes -- Understanding the Impacts of Landscape on Bee Health
12:00 to 12:15	Q&A with Dr. Grozinger
12:15 to 1:30	Lunch & Visit with Vendors
1:30 to 1:45	Honey Queen Update
1:45 to 2:30	David Gilley, Department of Biology, William Paterson The Future of Honeybee Problems/Pests/Pathogens: Roundtable discussion with Christina Grozinger, David Gilley Tim Schuler, & Grant Stiles
2:30 to 3:15	Member Q&A
3:15 to 3:30	Meeting Send-Off

Northeast NJ Beekeepers Bee Books for Sale



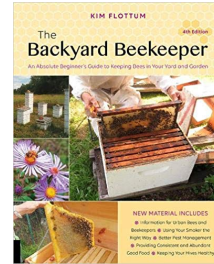
Beekeeping for Dummies
An excellent basic intro guide to beekeeping

Price: \$20



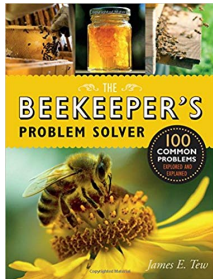
Beekeeper's Handbook, 4th
If you're only going to buy one book, this is the best guide to the hobby & profession of beekeeping

Price: \$25



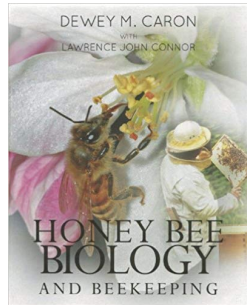
Backyard Beekeeper 4th
The premiere introduction to backyard beekeeping

Price: \$20



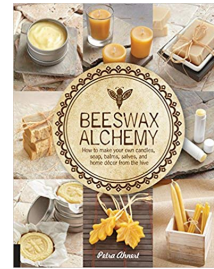
Beekeeper's Problem Solver
100 Common Beekeeping Problems Explored and Explained

Price: \$20



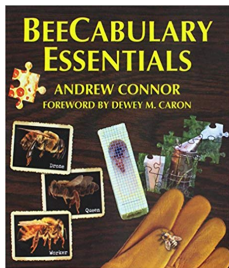
Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping
The only beekeeping textbook teaching college students & beekeepers the science & practice of bees & beekeeping

Price: \$45



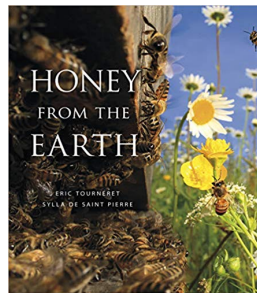
Beeswax Alchemy
Over 40 DIY projects that's the perfect combo of recipe, craft book, & beekeepers' guide

Price: \$20



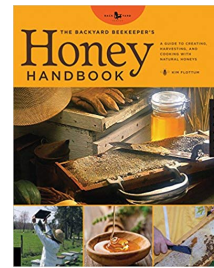
BeeCabulary Essentials
All the special terminology about bees and beekeeping

Price: \$30



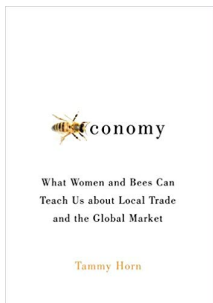
Honey From the Earth
Internationally acclaimed honeybee photographer Eric Tournet spent FIFTEEN YEARS traveling the world to capture the breathtaking diversity of bees and beekeeping traditions on six continents.

Price: \$50



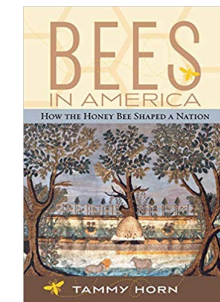
Backyard Beekeeper's Honey Handbook
More than just a cookbook, it introduces the literal cornucopia of honey varieties available

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

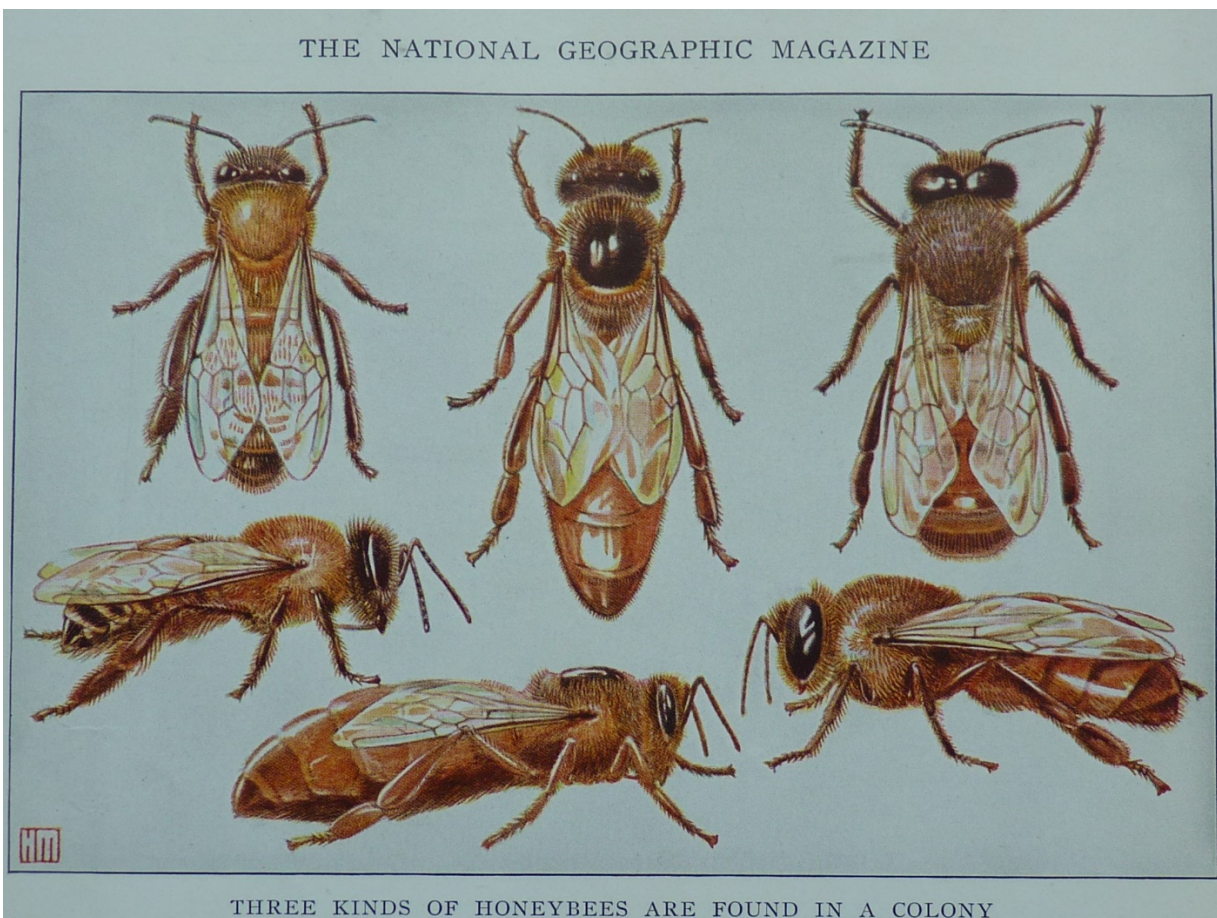
Beekeeping Memories

“Inside the Hive”

By

Karl Schoenknecht

Now that we have decided to use a Langstroth hive we must decide on what should be in the hive. We want healthy bees that are easy to identify in this old 1935 photo from National Geographic Magazine.



Can you identify the workers, the queen and drones in an active hive like the one shown below from an outdoor meeting at the Hopper Goetchius house in 2011 with State Apiarist Tim Schuler?



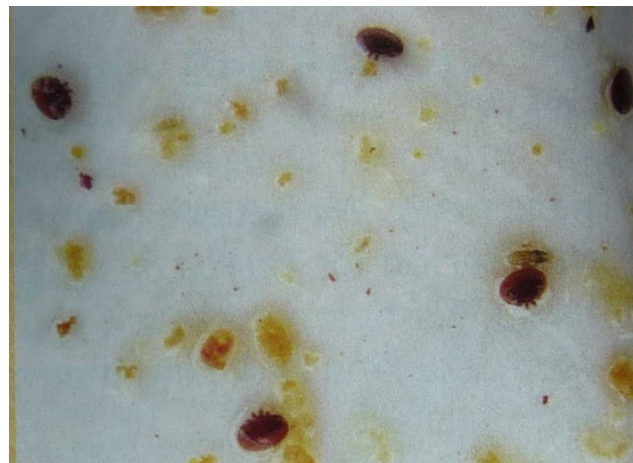
Working in a hive can be done without a veil if you know how to work the hive without alarming the bees. The best time to try working your hive without a veil is the spring when the bees have plenty of forage and are less protective of their honey stores.

What we don't want in the hive are varmints that do damage like the mice I found in a feeder box early one April morning.



Even worse than mice are Varroa mites which can weaken and destroy your hive. Nothing is worse than watching your strong hive lose population as the winter season approaches. Feeding your hive and keeping it warm will provide little help once the mite count gets to 5 mites on your bottom-board over night as winter approaches.

A bottom board with this many mites cannot survive. The photo is enlarged. The mites are about the same size as a pinhead.



What we want is a good brood pattern, 70 or more pounds of honey, at least 30,000 bees and a zero mite count in early December to give your bees a good chance of surviving the winter.



Our Facebook Group has **over 1855 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

Winter Bees



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