



WAKE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

www.wakecountybeekeepers.org

April Meeting: Monday, April 11th, 2010 at 7:30 pm

Location: Wake County Office Park – 4011 Cary Dr. Raleigh, NC 27610

Featured Program

Speakers: Dave MacFawn, co-author of *Bees Know More than Beekeepers: Getting The Best from Your Bees*

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Happy Easter!



March Meeting Summary

- Upcoming meeting dates:



April 11th, Monday, 7:30 pm
 May 10th, Tuesday, 7:30 pm
 June 14th, Tuesday, 7:30 pm

- Hats and shirts are still for sale; contact Ricky Barbour to purchase them.
- If you purchased nucs from the association Wade Lucas will email you when a date has been set for delivery. When picking up the nucs they will come in prepackaged cardboard boxes.
- The association is working toward setting up 4 hives at the Wake County Office Park for our use. The WCBA will form a committee to maintain the hives. The hives will be in a secured fenced in area. A contact will be passed around at the April meeting for membership approval. Having a bee yard for the association will be a great benefit for educational use.
- Volunteers are always needed at the Asheboro Zoo honey bee exhibit.

Volunteers are allowed to sell honey while they are working the exhibit. Training will be provided for volunteers so beekeepers of all experience and knowledge levels are encouraged. For more information on volunteering please contact Judy Pick JimJudy9@aol.com or Janno Lewis ipdaniel@embarqmail.com.

- Danny Jaynes shared a few highlights from the spring meeting: Varroa mites are still the leading cause of colony loss. The NCSBA strongly encourages all beekeepers to use due diligence and continue to check varroa mite population in your hives. A new medication has now been approved in NC. This treatment is Mite Away II in a strip application that can be used during the honey flow. Nozema has also been reported as another common problem in hives. It is common to treat over winterized colonies. Nozema is easily identified when seeing dysentery (black spots) near the hive entrance.
- Ben Crawley and Ricky Barbour presented on hive equipment and catching swarms. See page 3 for a recap on their presentation.

2011 WCBA Officers:**President:**

Ricky Barbour

Vice President:

Andy Currin

Secretary:

Sarah Pleasants

Treasurer:

Dan Brubaker

Program Chairman:

Kate Hanser

Board of Directors:

Vivian Joyner

To serve 3 years

Marvin Pate

To serve 1 year

Danny Jaynes

To serve 2 years

Education Materials:

Bill Cole

WCBA officer contact information can be found on the WCBA website:

www.wakecountybeekeepers.org

Location of Club**Extractors & Equipment:**

The club owns equipment that is available for members to borrow. Please contact the following people for equipment:

Steve Hildebrand:

Knightdale 919-266-

9464; Vivian Joyner: New

Hill 919-387-0164;

James Knox: Raleigh

919-847-5098; Larry Hall:

Central Wake 919-612-

4499. See complete list

on the WCBA website.

Upcoming NCSBA Events



- Check the NCSBA website for detailed information on these events:
<http://www.ncbeekeepers.org/news.htm>
- Scheduled NCSBA Summer Meetings:
 - **July 7-9, 2011 NCSBA Summer Meeting** in Elon, NC

Want to learn more the Master Beekeeper Program in NC?

The **MBP** program was established in the fall of 1982 for the purpose of providing an infrastructure whereby beekeepers can improve their beekeeping skills and knowledge on a continuous basis.

To learn about the requirements for the certified, journeyman, master, and master craftsman levels visit:

<http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/entomology/apiculture/mbp.html>
and
<http://www.ncbeekeepers.org/master.html>.

Thwarting the Swarm By: Marc Larin

Tuesday March 22, 2011

John Latson is the general contractor in my BNI networking group. While installing windows in the back of my house, he noticed that the bees were particularly excited around one hive. In fact, here was a tornado of bees! I was disappointed when I realized that they were swarming. Swarming is the process of colony reproduction. When a hive gets too large, and cramped in its nest or hive box it will split into two colonies. A new queen is produced, and the old queen will leave the hive and take with her half the colony. A close look at the front entrance showed bees marching out of the hive at high speed. They were literally pouring out of the hive! In 5 minutes, the hive was calm again. The second step in swarming results in a thick ball of bees on a

low hanging branch. The bees are laden with honey and very docile. A bee keeper can easily cut the branch and carry the bee-ball to a new hive and drop it in. I was not so lucky. My queen chose a branch 30 feet up. As usual, when in an apicultural quandary, I called Charles Heatherley. He is a long time member of the Wake County Bee Keepers Association, and I consider him a friend. He sold me my first beekeeper's suit and his advice has been very beneficial. Charles suggested that I reach as high as possible and tie a rope to the tree, then shake the queen loose. He also reminded me that my life was worth much more than a bee colony, so to keep the risk at a minimum. John helped me set up a 24-ft ladder at the base of the tree. I donned my beekeeper's suit. Once the rope was fastened, I gave one tug and the blasted knot let go. The second vigorous shake had no effect on the bee ball. So, I returned to the ladder with pole pruning

Thwarting the Swarm (Continued)

Thwarting the Swarm...Continued from Page 2

So, I returned to the ladder with pole pruning shears. You can imagine my language as I tried to push the severed branch through the surrounding trees to the ground. After letting things settle, I found the branch completely bare. The swarm had returned to the hive, covering the front face an inch thick.

On my second call, Charles suggested I find the queen in the mass on the box. However, the mesh of face-shield proved too opaque to allow a clear view. They were calm so I chose to remove the bee suit. The greatest chance of getting stung is to the knees or hands, from the bees crawling in the grass. This is resolved with a foam kneeling pad. After several 10-minute scans over the throng, I abandoned the search. With time, the mass diminished. Charles explained on my third call, that the queen had probably been lost, so the swarms returned home.

The next day I assembled parts of a honey-super to add to the box. There are already honey-supers on both my hives, added last fall, to give additional room for brood and honey to last until spring. After being fed sugar syrup all winter, my two colonies are strong and abundant. The colony in question had become too abundant. I put time and energy into maintaining my two colonies this winter. Last winter, I lost both my colonies to starvation.

My son Jacques has become skilled at stoking and lighting the smoker. Boy love to practice with fire! When I pried the top-feeder off the box, I broke comb that snaked between the frames and the feeder bottom, splitting it down the center. This exposed larva and pouring honey. The bees made this comb because there was no room left in the frames.

I hope adding the new honey-super will convince the colony to stay for the summer, ensuring a honey harvest. The two colonies from a split are small. They each need a full year to grow a population able to produce enough honey for both the winter store and the beekeeper's share.

I learned much from this experience, and must now learn the craft of honey extraction and canning . . . More to follow.

My daughter Sophie thought of an alternate title: The Trumpet of The Swarm. She is frequently inspired by the musings of C. S. Louis.

Best regards! ~ Marc Larin, Fellow Beekeeper



Approximate Swarm Location.



The Swarm, Seen from atop the Ladder.



A close up of the swarm.



All returning home!

Equipment for 1st year of beekeeping:

- BEES: start with a nuc, package, or swarm.
- Ratchet strap for moving hives around.
- Screened or solid bottom board.
- Hive Body / Deep
- Frames: can have wax foundation, or plastic. Be sure to wire foundation onto frame, need a jig, roll of wire, spur embedder.
- Medium / Shallow Super.
- Inner cover.
- Telescoping Lid – prop for ventilation. Or migratory lid.
- Paint hives any color to protect from the weather.
- Smoker.
- Hive Tool.
- Vail/ bee suite or jacket.
- Pocket knife is always handy.



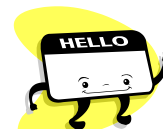
- It's also a great idea to have a mentor or beekeeping buddy to refer to.
- Beekeeping magazines and books are also great reference tools.

ATTENTION MEMBERS:

Remember to bring and wear your name tag to each meeting so we can easily identify one another.

Check off your name on the attendance sheet so we can track membership attendance.

We would also like Visitor's to check in and fill out a name badge.



ATTENTION MEMBERS:

The April meeting will be on Monday, April 11th this month.

Meeting starts at 7:30 pm but come at 7:00 pm if you can because our VP- Andy Currin will be doing a 30 minute: How to check for Varroa – Sugar Shake method demo.



Checking for Varroa is important and we can all benefit from this demo.

Equipment needing for capturing Swarms:

- Cardboard nuc box with frames.
- Nuc boxes hold about 5 frames.
- Frames with drawn comb are best.
- Small bee brush and a dust pan for sweeping up bees.
- Long pole with a 5 gallon bucket attached to bump bees from a tall tree.
- Hardware cloth or screen and duck tape for sealing off the box once you've captured the bees.
- Bush and tree clippers for cutting limbs.
- Sugar syrup in a spray bottle.
- Queen Excluder to put in the hive for a few weeks to keep the swarm in their new home.
- Patience!
- Having a swarm kit prepared in your car makes it a lot easier to catch a swarm in time.
- Always remember swarms are never going to be ready when you are so being prepared at all times is the best way to go.



Honey Tasting in November:

Last year's honey tasting went so well that we're going to do it again!

Save your favorite bottle of honey and bring it to our honey tasting in November. Kate Hanser, program chairman, will be accepting honey jars for the tasting starting in June.

If you travel over the summer pick up a bottle from the city you visited and share that with the group too!

Any and all honey entries are encouraged for the tasting.

This is a great way to interact with members and try each other's wonderful honey!

April in the Bee Yard



April is an exciting time for beekeepers in the Piedmont. The tulip poplar trees will start blooming around the middle of the month and then the blackberries will start blooming about a week later.

In April you should have all your equipment built and ready for the coming honey flow (could be as

early as April 15th for Tulip Popular). Having your honey supers ready to be placed on the hive during the honey flow will increase your ability to have a nice honey crop.

In the early part of the month, check each colony as follows: 1) Evaluate the food stores, 2) remove any chemical applications or strips that have been added, 3) check and equalize the brood, 4) The extracting supers are placed on top of the brood chamber and

5) remove the entrance reducer if you have not done so already.



Information derived in part from the Alamance County Beekeepers Association: <http://alamancebeekeepers.com/apr06.aspx>

Member Volunteer Opportunities

▪ **The Umstead Coalition** (a group that advocates for Umstead State Park) is holding a Run/Walk Fundraiser near the park from 8:00AM until noon on April 16th. Each year we invite area nature-related groups to participate by providing demonstrations, static displays, etc. Please contact Michael if you like to participate in the event:
Michael McKinney
(H) 919-469-0196
(C) 919-805-0398
mjmnc@nc.rr.com

▪ **Bee Day at North Hills:** On May 14th Sarah & Al Pleasants are hosting a Bee Day at the Midtown Farmer's Market in the heart of North Hills. They need volunteers to bring observation hives with bees and help educate the public on bees and promote the WCBA. Time is from 8 am – 12 pm. Contact Sarah if interested in helping: 919-880-8208 or sarahpleasants@piedmontlitho.com.

▪ **We need a volunteer or 2 each month to help with the raffle ticket sales at the beginning of each meeting.** If interested please contact Kate Hanser at: kahanser@ncsu.edu



Check the **WCBA WEBSITE** for up to date information:
www.wakecountybeekeepers.org

