



WAKE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

www.wakecountybeekeepers.org

April Meeting: Tuesday, April 10th, 2012 at 7:30 pm

Location: Pullen Park Community Building – 408 Ashe Avenue Raleigh, NC 27606 (919)-831-6052

Featured Program
Speakers: Glenn Hackney from the NCDA Beneficial Insect Lab

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Happy Easter!



March Meeting Summary

- Upcoming meeting dates:
April 10th, Tuesday, 7:30 pm
May 8th, Tuesday, 7:30 pm
June 12th, Tuesday, 7:30 pm
- The NC Secretary of Agriculture has approved setting a honey standard for honey sold at the Farmer's Markets in the State of NC. If you adhere to the standards you can use a label stating your honey is certified ad NC Honey.
- A discussion was held on the Cary Town bee ordinance that has been tabled. A committee has been formed to provide a better ordinance for Cary to consider.
- Each county chapter will need to keep track of the Master Beekeeper Program. We need **a person to volunteer** to be the recording secretary to manage this responsibility for our club.
- Rick Coor will be having a queen rearing workshop in May. Details will be forthcoming. The cost will be \$10.00 and the proceeds will go to Dr. David Tarpy at NCSU.
- Will Hicks spoke on spring management of the bee hive.

The queen will be getting into high gear and it is not too early to think about splits. You can add brood boxes or take some brood out. 1. Swarm prevention is very important. 2. We are not yet through the winter so make sure they have enough to feed them. 3. It is critical that you control mites. Mite population grows with the growth of the brood. The spring flow usually starts around April 15th. Do not treat for mites when honey supers are on the hive. Do not put mite away on in the summer months. It is best to do it in early spring or late fall. If the colony is small be careful with the dosage.

- Make sure you feed the bees when installing a package.
- The club is looking to establish a bee yard at the Carya Drive location. We need to have equipment donated for 4 beehives. We have 3 hives but need a 4th hive donated. The first 4 swarms will be used to fill these hives.



Title: Bee on Yellow Flower

2012 WCBA Officers:**President:**

Andy Currin

Vice President:

Steve Brown

Secretary:

Gordon Goeking

Treasurer:

Neil Woodcock

Program Chairman:

Raymond Goodman

Board of Directors:

Vivian Joyner

To serve 2 years

Danny Jaynes

To serve 1 year

Larry Williams

To serve 3 years

Education Materials:

Ben Crawley

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:

Knightsdale 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)

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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.

Check out these videos:

- A Tennessee man was heading out for breakfast when he discovered thousands of honey bees nesting in his car. Look at the clip below:

http://www.cnn.com/video/?hpt=hp_t3#/video/us/2012/03/21/dnt-bees-swarm-car.wmc

- **The Eastern honey bee bakes attacking hornets to death.** A lot of animals have pretty awesome collective defenses against predators. For example, sea lions will pile up in large groups to keep killer whales at bay. But the **Eastern (or Japanese) honey bee** has the best collective defense against its natural predator, the **Asian giant hornet**, ever: **body heat!**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dp72gXkYJlw>

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.



Our April 2012 Meeting

Glenn Hackney from the NCDa Beneficial Insect Lab will talk about microscopy in pest identification.

Guarding the hive



Checking for Varroa mites is important.

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.



April in the Bee Yard



Now this is some hive!
Send in pictures of your unique hives.



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>

Save the Date:

Thursday June 14th:
Webinar on bees and beekeeping hosted by NC State Apiculture Program and David R. Tarpy



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

Member Volunteer Opportunities

▪ **Volunteer at the Bee Exhibit at the North Carolina Zoo.** There are 2 training sessions this Spring:

- April 21 1:00-4:30pm
- May 12

Interested beekeepers should contact NCSBA Honey Bee Exhibit Co- coordinators for additional information and to register:

Judy Pick
JimJudy9@aol.com

Janno Lewis
jannolewis@gmail.com

▪ **Bee Day at North Hills:** On May 19th 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.