

Gaston County Beekeeper's Association

Greg Farriss – Pest problems

Next Meeting Feb. 23rd

7 pm Citizens Resource
Center Dallas, NC



Help needed with the Mentoring Committee for GCBA. Now take a minute and think back to that first year you experienced the bee fever. Do you remember that happy little feeling inside you at the thought of cracking open a hive for a peek? Help renew that feeling in yourself and share some of your experiences with others. The whole idea is to help build that little bit of confidence with the newbees and have a little more one on one conversation of our favorite subject, bees. I have had a good response of interested Beekeepers from the association to help, but if you have not volunteered and would like to help let me know, for it is never too late.

Let me introduce you to the Mentoring Committee: Chairman Michael Reese, Tamela Bell, Eddie Rudisill, Chris Boyd, Jada Runkle, Jill Tipton, Dan Turner, and Allen Thompson.

The concept for this year is to have committee members from around the county available to help the newbees. Some times that contact may be no more than a sounding board for all of the new bee world questions. At times it may be the "Oh No, HELP!" call. But there is the added benefit for the beekeeper to have a second set of hands that are buzzing for that extra experience, to help in their own apiary.

Best wishes,
Michael

mareese85@yahoo.com
704-689-1930

Time to pay your annual dues to our association.

NOTE: Our dues are now **\$15** for membership for GCBA and the NCBA is also **\$15**.

Also GCBA membership cards will be sent to you for participation in activities. OR

You can send a check to the Treasurer with your return address and a membership card will be sent back to you.

Please address to Jill Tipton, Treasurer
320 Huffstetler Lake Rd.
Dallas, NC 28034

Some things to consider: taken from Michael Bush

<http://www.bushfarms.com/bees.htm>

Top Entrances

I've gone to only top entrances. No bottom entrance. I know there are all kinds of people who either hate top entrances or think they cure cancer, or double your honey crop. I don't think either. But I like them and here's why:

1. I never have to worry about the bees not having access to the hive because the grass grew too tall. I also don't have to cut the grass in front of the hives. Less work for me.
2. I never have to worry about the bees not having access because of the snow being too deep (unless it gets over the tops of the hives). So I don't have to shovel snow after a snowstorm to open the entrances up.
3. I never have to worry about putting mouse guards on or mice getting into the hive.
4. I never have to worry about skunks or opossums eating the bees.
5. Combined with a SBB I have very good ventilation in the summer.
6. I can save money buying (or making) simple migratory style covers. Most of mine are just a piece of plywood with shingle shims for spacers. But some are wider notches in inner covers that I already had.
7. In the winter I don't have to worry about dead bees clogging the bottom entrance.
8. I can put the hive eight inches lower (because I don't have to worry about mice and skunks) and that makes it easier to put that top super on and get it off when it's full.
9. Lower hives blow over less in the wind.
10. This works nicely for long top bar hives when I put supers on because the bees have to go in the super to get in.
11. With some Styrofoam on the top, there's not much condensation with a top entrance in the winter.

Just remember, if you have no bottom entrance and you use an excluder (which I don't) you will need some kind of drone escape on the bottom for them to get out. A 3/8" hole will do.

Uniform frame size.

"Whatever style (hive) may be adopted, let it by all means be one with movable frames, and have but one sized frame in the apiary."--A.B. Mason, *Mysteries of Bee-keeping* explained

The frame is the basic element of a modern bee hive. Even if you have various sized boxes (as far as the number of frames they hold) if the frames are all the same depth you can put them in any of your boxes.

Having a uniform frame size has simplified my life. If all your frames are the same size you have a lot of advantages.

You can put anything currently in the hive anywhere else it's needed.

For instance:

1. You can put brood up a box to "bait" the bees up. This is useful without an excluder (I don't use excluders) but it's especially useful if you really want to use an excluder. A couple of frames of brood above the excluder (leaving the queen and the rest of the brood below) really motivates the bees to cross the excluder and start working the next box above it.
2. You can put honey combs in for food wherever you need it. I like this for making sure nucs don't starve without the robbing that feeding often starts, or bulking up the stores of a light hive in the fall.
3. You can unclog a brood nest by moving pollen or honey up a box or even a few frames of brood up a box to make room in the brood nest to prevent swarming. If you don't have all the same size, where will you put these frames?
4. You can run an unlimited brood nest with no excluder and if there is brood anywhere you can move it anywhere else. You're not stuck with a bunch of brood in a medium that you can't move down to your deep brood chamber. The advantage of the unlimited brood nest is the queen isn't limited to one or two brood boxes, but can be laying in three or four. Probably not four deeps, but probably in four mediums.

Lighter boxes

"Friends don't let friends lift deeps" Jim Fischer of Fischer's BeeQuick

The hardest thing for me about beekeeping is lifting. Boxes full of honey are heavy. Deep boxes full of honey are VERY heavy. There may be some disagreement as to the exact weights of a full box of honey, and there are other factors involved but in my experience this is a pretty good synopsis of sizes of boxes and typical uses for them:

Standard 10 Frame boxes

Name(s) Depth Weight full of honey Uses

- Jumbo, Dadant Deep 11 5/8" 100 - 110 pounds Brood
- Deep, Langstroth Deep 9 5/8" 80 - 90 pounds Brood & Ext
- Western Bee Supply 7 5/8" 70 - 80 pounds Brood & Ext
- Medium, Illinois, 3/4 6 5/8" 60 - 70 pounds Brood & Ext & Cmb
- Shallow 5 3/4" or 5 11/16" 50 - 60 pounds Cmb
- Extra Shallow, 1/2 4 3/4" or 4 11/16" 40 - 50 pounds Cmb

8 frame boxes:

- Jumbo, Dadant Deep 11 5/8" 80-88 lbs
- Deep 9 5/8" 64-72 lbs
- Western Bee Supply 7 5/8" 56-64 lbs
- Medium, Illinois 6 5/8" 48-56 lbs
- Shallow 5 3/4" or 5 11/16" 40-48 lbs
- Extra Shallow 4 3/4" or 4 11/16" 32-40 lbs

Leave honey for winter food

Instead of feeding, just leave them enough. You don't have to harvest it. You don't have to extract it. You don't have to make syrup. You don't have to feed them for winter.

Plus there may be other advantages:

"It is well known that improper diet makes one susceptible to disease. Now is it not reasonable to believe that extensive feeding of sugar to bees makes them more susceptible to American Foul Brood and other bee disease? It is known that American Foul Brood is more prevalent in the north than in the south. Why? Is it not because more sugar is fed to bees in the north while here in the south the bees can gather nectar most of the year which makes feeding sugar syrup unnecessary?"--Better Queens, Jay Smith

NCSBA 2016 Spring Conference - February 25th, 26th & 27th

[New Bern Convention Center, New Bern, NC](#)

Hosted by the [Craven-Pamlico Beekeepers!](#)

Schedule

Registration Opens: 10:00 AM Thursday

Vendor Area Opens: 12:00 (Noon) Thursday

Meeting Begins: 12:45 PM Thursday

Meeting Adjourn: 4:30 PM Saturday

Certified, Journeyman, and Master Certification testing will be available on Thursday from 9-12, Friday from 12-3, and Saturday from 10-12.

<http://www.ncbeekeepers.org/education/statewide-conferences/2016-spring-conference>

<http://www.ncbeekeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Spring-2016-Pre-Conference-Booklet.pdf>

Gaston County Beekeepers Association

Website: www.gastonbee.org

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/gastoncountybees>

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