

# **Gaston County Beekeeper's Association**

**Next Meeting July 28<sup>th</sup>**

**Gary Whitley – Fall  
Management &  
Overwintering**

**7 pm Citizens Resource  
Center Dallas, NC**



## **Upcoming Events:**

**August 25 GCBA Meeting – Shannon Baxter Beeswax**

**Sept. 1 – Home Grown Gaston 5-8 pm Gastonia Farmer's  
Market**

**Sept. 29 GCBA Meeting – Honey Tasting Contest & Elections**

**Oct. 9, 10, 11 Cotton Ginning Days – Gaston Park**

**Oct. 14 4-6pm Volunteer Groups Advertisement/Networking –  
Extension Center**

There is more to the Gaston County Bee Association than the monthly meeting, though the fun and fellowship are nice. Part of what has been growing is being developed into action committees.

*Do you have an interest to do a little more like write a newsletter article, help with the club hives, teach a part of bee school, help find speakers or topics for the monthly meetings, or even mentor to a "newbee"? Then ask an officer to help direct you to that committee person.*

Currently Michael Reese is looking for help with the future mentoring committee. He is looking for a few people to help organize the committee, but more people throughout the county to share their knowledge and experiences. Some of that knowledge and experience may be giving the first look under the hive cover to the newbee or to answer those questions that some are too nervous to ask the group. You do not have to be a master bee keeper but someone willing to talk a little "buzzzzz". Why not step up you might make a new friend and who knows even learn something along the way!

From Jim Burke:

I checked the website for NC Pesticide Registration and spoke with the Pesticide Registration Manger about oxalic acid. Brushy Mountain submitted a registration application for oxalic acid dehydrate to be used in bee hives for the treatment of varroa mites.

Be aware that you **MUST** purchase oxalic acid that has the EPA Pesticide Registration Number displayed on the product label. If you go to a big box store or Amazon and purchase oxalic acid that is labeled as wood bleach and not labeled for the specific use of varroa mite treatment and does not show the EPA Pesticide Registration Number, then you can't legally use it in your hives. You can purchase it from another bee supply company out of state as long as it is labeled with the EPA Pesticide Registration Number.

This is a corrosive solid and can cause chemical burns through all routes of exposure – skin contact, absorption through the skin, inhalation and ingestion. We need to stress to association members that they need to familiarize themselves with the hazards of this chemical and how to safely handle it.

Product Brand Name: OXALIC ACID DIHYDRATEEPA  
Registration Number: 91266-1-73291  
Company Name (Registrant): BRUSHY MOUNTAIN BEE FARM  
Expiration Date: 12/31/2015  
Registration Status: APPROVED - NEW  
Company Name on Label: BRUSHY MOUNTAIN BEE FARM  
Company EPA ID Number: 73291NC  
Product ID Number: 20150780  
Restricted Use (RUP)? N  
Special Local Need (SLN)? N  
Section 25(b) Product? N  
Fertilizer Combination? N  
Endangered/Threatened Species Information? N  
Worker Protection Standard (WPS) Requirements? N  
Groundwater/Surface Water Contamination Concerns? N  
Method of Application? Other (view all possible options)  
Restricted Entry Interval (REI)? None (view all possible options)  
Formulation: Emulsifiable Concentrate  
Pesticide Type: Miticide, Acaricide

# CATCH THE BUZZ – ATTRACT POLLINATORS TO GARDENS IN 3 EASY STEPS

By Nathan Gregory MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY Ag  
Communications

STARKVILLE, Miss. — Backyard hobbyists and commercial producers of fruit and vegetable crops share a common need: pollinators.

Without them, flowering plants would be unable to produce fruit and seed. Bees are most commonly associated with pollination, but butterflies, hummingbirds and flies also are common pollinators.



**A bee feeds on clover in the pollinator project garden at the Mississippi State University R.R. Foil Plant Science Research Center in Starkville June 16, 2015.(Photo by Kevin Hudson/MSU Ag Communications)**



**A new pollinator project garden at the Mississippi State University R.R. Foil Plant Science Research Center in Starkville is funded in part by Syngenta's Operation Pollinator Habitat program.**

**(Photo by Kevin Hudson/MSU Ag Communications)**

Enticing more animals to assist in transferring pollen often results in more fruits and vegetables from small, potted plants and large fields alike. Establishing pollinator-friendly habitat can be simple and doesn't have to be expensive. Gardeners and producers can follow three general rules to get started.

1. *Provide diverse stands of plants*

Jay McCurdy, turfgrass specialist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, oversees a 5,000-square-foot pollinator project garden at the R.R. Foil Plant Science Research Center in Starkville. Currently, the garden contains 15 perennial, biennial and annual plant varieties, including coneflowers, sunflowers, sage, aster and black-eyed Susans.

McCurdy said the pollinator garden, which is in its first year of operation, is designed to attract numerous types of insect pollinators. He suggested gardeners consider a range of vegetation, particularly plants with strong root systems.

“Diversity in all things is key to pollinator success within human-disturbed areas,” McCurdy said. “We call this ‘reconciliation ecology.’ We’re trying to modify human habitats in order to make them better for wild species. That means planting multiple colors with both long and short durations of bloom, and varieties that bloom at different times of the year.”

Gary Bachman, Extension horticulturist at the MSU Coastal Research and Extension Center in Biloxi, said one of the more popular pollinator forages is milkweed.

“There are many milkweed species in Mississippi, including *Asclepias tuberosa* and swamp milkweed, *A. incarnate*,” Bachman said. “A nice milkweed that blooms all summer long is the tropical milkweed, *Asclepias curassavica*. Many garden centers carry this plant. While not winter hardy in Mississippi, tropical milkweed produces lots of foliage for caterpillars to forage upon. Any of the members of the milkweed family are good choices.”

Gardeners can select specific plant species, such as milkweed, that are beneficial to pollinators, but they can also set aside areas where natural vegetation can grow. Leslie Burger, Extension instructor in the MSU Forest and Wildlife Research Center, said providing field borders of native vegetation is helpful to producers and pollinators.

“Field borders and buffer strips reduce erosion and nutrient runoff, improve water quality, and take poor land out of production,” Burger said. “Field borders with native plants can also promote visits by pollinating insects and help increase yields. Reducing pesticide use will also help protect pollinating insects.”

## 2. *Build nests*

Providing nesting habitats is a good way to entice return visits from bees, McCurdy said.

“Most evidence suggests that flowering plant material is only part of the solution,” he said. “There are around 4,000 species of bees in the U.S. Some nest in fallen timber while others nest in the ground. Others burrow into our houses and structures.”

Extension experts suggest that the best way to keep bees from making their own homes in houses is to build nesting areas for them. Dead trees or wooden blocks with drilled holes can serve as nesting sites for many native bees. For ground-nesting bees, avoid mowing some areas of a lawn or garden, or leave portions of a field untilled to provide grassy areas with undisturbed soil.

## 3. *Start small, but experiment*

McCurdy said seeds for many pollinator-attracting plants are easily available. Most seeds need warm soil and full sunlight to successfully establish. An abundance of forage never hurts, but even small amounts increase the chance of attracting pollinators.

“If you want to start small, use existing plant material that you can gather right now. Milkweed is releasing seed now, and the wildflowers will soon set seed. These seeds usually need a tilled site in order to become established,” McCurdy said. “Using a nonselective herbicide prior to planting is a good idea in order to decrease competition. The ‘grass-only’ herbicides, like sethoxydim or fluazifop, are also safe on broadleaf plants and help decrease bermudagrass and crabgrass encroachment.”

To read Extension publications on pollinator habitats for bees and wildflower selection, visit <http://bit.ly/1Mg81Yi> and <http://bit.ly/1IMwxkE>. Access more

information from the Natural Resource Conservation Service  
at <http://1.usa.gov/1Sa1BeY>.

**Website:** [www.gastonbee.org](http://www.gastonbee.org)

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

*President* - Allen Thompson 704.616.5850

*Vice President* – Burton Beasley 704.860.1147

*Treasurer* – Dan Turner 704.648.5511

*Secretary/Newsletter* – Debi Wheeler 704.867.0927

*Program Coordinator* – Tamela Bell 980.329.6705

*Webmaster* – Jim Burke 704.922.2119