

Gaston County Beekeeper's Association

Next Meeting Nov. 24th

Mead making

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



Upcoming Events:

Dec. 8th Annual Holiday Get Together

GCBA is selling tickets for our annual winter banquet to be held on December 8th. The ticket price is \$15.00 per individual and children 12 and under eat free. The banquet will be held at the Citizens Resource Center where we normally hold our monthly meetings and food will be catered in by the Sports Page of Charlotte. It will be buffet style with a vegetarian option for those whom want it. Our main course options include country style steak and gravy and smothering chicken breast with side dishes of green beans, macaroni & cheese, and mashed potatoes. The meal also includes side salad, bread, and a dessert. If you wish to bring an additional dessert for the group you may do so. Tickets are available for purchase in advance so that we can give the caterer the most accurate head count, all tickets must be purchased by Nov. 18th and will NOT be sold at the door. At the time of purchase we need to know how many youths if any you will be bringing and if you need any vegetarian meals for your group. See the Treasurer Jill Tipton & Registrar Jada Runkle for meal tickets.

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 newbie 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! Please contact Michael at mareese85@yahoo.com

Fun Facts

- ***The honey bee is the only insect that produces food eaten by man.***
- ***A honey bee can fly for up to six miles, and as fast as 15 miles per hour, hence it would have to fly around 90,000 miles -three times around the globe - to make one pound of honey.***
- ***It takes one ounce of honey to fuel a bee's flight around the world.***
- ***Honey is 80% sugars and 20% water.***
- ***Honey bees produce beeswax from eight paired glands on the underside of their abdomen.***
- ***Honey bees must consume about 17-20 pounds of honey to be able to biochemically produce each pound of beeswax.***
- ***Bees maintain a temperature of 92-93 degrees fahrenheit in their central brood nest regardless of whether the outside temperature is 110 or -40 degrees.***
- ***A populous colony may contain 40,000 to 60,000 bees during the late spring or early summer.***
- ***The queen bee lives for about 2-3 years. She is the busiest in the summer months, when the hive needs to be at its maximum strength, and lays up to 2500 eggs a day.***
- ***The queen may mate with up to 17 drones over a 1-2 day period of mating.***

- *The queen may lay 600-800 or even 1,500 eggs each day during her 3 or 4 year lifetime. This daily egg production may equal her own weight. She is constantly fed and groomed by attendant worker bees*
- *Worker honey bees live for about 4 weeks in the spring or summer but up to 6 weeks during the winter.*
- *The average honey bee will actually make only one twelfth of a teaspoon of honey in its lifetime.*
- *Honey bees fly at up to 15 miles per hour*
- *The honey bee's wings stroke 11,400 times per minute, thus making their distinctive buzz.*
- *A honey bee visits 50 to 100 flowers during a collection trip.*
- *Honey bees, scientifically also known as Apis Mellifera, are environmentally friendly and are vital as pollinators*
- *Fermented honey, known as Mead, is the most ancient fermented beverage. The term "honey moon" originated with the Norse practice of consuming large quantities of Mead during the first month of a marriage.*

Frequently Asked Questions

- *When do I order package bees?*
It is best to order package bees for spring delivery. The bees should be delivered after the date of the last hard freeze for your region. The package honey bee suppliers will be able to help you determine the best delivery date.
- *When should I hive my new package of honey bees?*
The best time to hive the honey bees is late afternoon or early evening. Spray the honey bees with sugar water while still in the shipping container. This will make it easier to put the honey bees in the hive.
- *What do I feed the honey bees in the spring?*
It is best to feed a mixture of sugar and water in a one to one ratio by volume in the spring. Half fill your container with sugar and add water to completely fill the container. You can mix the syrup by stirring the one to one sugar/water mixture for the spring feeding. The bees will use the sugar syrup mixture until natural sources are available. You can also stimulate the honey bees to raise brood in the spring by feeding them Dadant's Brood Builder.
- *What do I feed the honey bees in the fall?*
Use a two part sugar to one part water sugar syrup mixture if the bees do not have adequate winter stores. Fill your container to the half way mark with water. Pour the water into a pan to place on stove to warm up or boil. Completely fill your container with sugar. Add sugar to hot water and stir.

Hot or boiling water will help to dissolve the sugar better. Allow mixture to cool before feeding your bees.

- *Where do I place my hive?*

If you are in the city, you should put the entrance of the hive facing a high fence. This will force the bees to fly in a high flight pattern, avoiding neighbors. It is good to give the hives a wind break to protect them.

You can also place the entrance facing the sun to allow the bees an early start in the morning.

The hive can also be placed on concrete blocks or a wooden pallet to keep it off of the ground.

- *Do I paint the inside of the beehive?*

No, paint the outside of the beehive only. Allow the paint to dry thoroughly before installing the bees.

- *How often should I check my new hive?*

You can open the hive after a few days to see if the queen has been released. Look in the Queen Cage to see if the Queen has been released. If the Queen has been released you should check for eggs and larvae to be sure she is active. If the Queen has not been released, enlarge the hole in the candy in the Queen Cage. Three weeks after you have hived the package you can examine the colony again. Be sure to keep feeding the colony sugar syrup

during this time to stimulate comb building. You should see sealed brood in the colony at this time.

- *Can I keep bees in a straw skep?*

No, honey bees are required to be kept in a beehive with removable frames. This is to allow inspection for diseases. It is the law in all states.

- *When should I add a second hive body or super?*

You should add the second hive body or super when the majority of the frames in the first hive body are fully drawn out, (8 or 9 frames). A second super should be added after the first super is about one half full.

- *How much honey should I leave on the hive to over winter?*

As a general rule you should have a full super or second hive body and 20 to 30 pounds of honey in the brood nest. This will amount to a total of 60 to 70 pounds of honey for winter and early spring consumption.

- **What should I look for in spring in the colony?**
You should check for evidence that the Queen is laying eggs. You should also check the honey stores and pollen supply. If the honey stores are low you may start feeding sugar syrup in a two to one ratio of sugar and water. The bees may consume about 10 pounds of sugar syrup in a one-week period.

In summary, there are many variables in beekeeping. You can talk to 10 beekeepers about a question and receive 10 different answers. It is advisable for the beginner to find a local beekeeping club to join. The group will be able to help the beginner with many of his/her questions. The state bee inspector is also a good source of advice. Beekeeping is a fun and challenging hobby. Many of the answers have been taken out of the First Lessons, Classroom, and Beginning with Bees. The American Bee Journal is also an excellent informative source. These books are published by Dadant & Sons, Inc.

Gaston County Beekeepers Association

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