



WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

Current events from the Ashtabula County Beekeepers Association and bee news in general

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HB 392 and Best Management Practices

Peggy Garnes, OSBA vice-president, gave an informative talk about House Bill 392 and Best Management Practices.

House Bill 392 is an immunity liability law that would limit the liability beekeepers have if someone is injured by bees. A similar law has already been passed in both Virginia and West Virginia. HB 392 has not yet been passed in Ohio. Three hearings have been held on the topic, and the bill is still in process.

House Bill 392 generated some controversy because beekeepers would need to follow best management practices to have immunity from liability.

Best management practices as recommended by OSBA in a pamphlet distributed by Peggy Garnes at the meeting include some practices that are not followed by many hobby beekeepers and are not related to beekeeping safety or bee health, such as replacing queens every two years, marking queens, and providing a water source within 50 feet of the hive.

ACBA Events at a glance

Next ACBA meeting:

Saturday

April 21st

12pm

At the OSU extension office

You do not need to be a member to attend. Bring a dish to share. Election & annual auction!



Image credit: balconygardenweb.com



Image credit: piedmontbeekeepers.com



The Beginning Beekeeping Class is a big success!

The March 10th Beginning Beekeeping Class was a great success! It was held at a new location this year due to increased interest. The class was held at the Jefferson United Methodist Church. There were over 100 people in attendance! Sharon and William Riccio talked about beekeeping equipment and beekeeping practices, Bill and Verity Bruening talked about extracting honey, and Lind Dole talked about drone trapping. Anne Hathy, James Baker, Dennis Krause and Linda Dole helped with the class.





TIPS FOR NEWBEEES: Finding the Queen

Finding the queen during a hive inspection has been discussed before, in this newsletter and in ACBA meetings. Finding the queen is very often a difficult and frustrating task for new beekeepers. It is a skill that requires a lot of practice to get right. First decide before you open the hive whether it is necessary to find the queen. During a normal inspection of a healthy hive, you may not need to locate the queen. Trying to find her can cause undue disturbance of the hive. You may accidentally injure or kill her, and you can tell if the queen is alive and well by studying the eggs, larvae, and brood. If you see eggs, larvae, and brood in a nice-looking pattern, you know you have a healthy queen. The exception is if you see multiple eggs in one cell, and the eggs are laid on the sides of the cell, or if you see all drone brood and no worker brood. In this case, you may have a laying worker or a drone-layer queen who was poorly mated.

However, finding the queen can be a valuable tool that all beekeepers should learn and practice. As beekeepers grow in their experience and begin raising their own queens or managing multi-year hives, they may need to find the queen to retire her, to remove her in a split, or to replace her. The necessity to find the queen becomes more important in these circumstances.

[Here is a good article](#) that offers tips on ways to more easily and quickly find the queen.

Did your hives die over the winter? Do you know why?



A dead hive can be more than just a sad event; it can be a learning experience. Queen Right Colonies does necropsies on dead hives. They also film them and put them online. These videos are a great resource to learn how to perform your own hive necropsies and gain valuable information on why the hive perished and what you can do in the future to prevent another hive death from the same issue. There is also a lot of other valuable hive-management information packed into a lot of these videos, making them worth the time to watch even if you haven't had significant hive losses.

You can watch one of Queen Right Colonies' hive necropsies at [this link](#)



Reading Frames

You can tell a lot about the health of your colony by learning to recognize the clues the bees leave you on the frames. We can't speak to our bees and ask them if they are feeling okay, and bee behavior isn't always a reliable indicator of health, either. A colony may appear healthy and busy when in reality they are barely clinging to survival.

But even though we can't speak to the bees, the bees do speak to us. Or, more accurately, the bees write to us about their health on the frames within the hive. We just need to know how to read the frames to understand how the bees are feeling and if they're healthy.

Landi Simone is an EAS master beekeeper from New Jersey. She gave an informative presentation, with lots of pictures, about how to read frames at a Northern Virginia Beekeepers Association meeting in late 2016, and the talk was put on YouTube. It's a long presentation, around 45 minutes, but I recommend watching it. I recommend you watch it more than once until you've absorbed a good amount of the information and can remember it when you're in your own bee yard looking at your own frames. I also recommend you watch some of Landi Simone's other videos, because she shares a lot of good, practical knowledge.

You can find her presentation on reading frames at [this link](#)



Growing Degree Days: The Ohio State Phenology Calendar

Phenology is the study of seasonal or cyclical natural events such as blooming of specific plants or the emergence or prevalence of beneficial or detrimental insects. The Ohio State Phenology Calendar is a useful but overlooked tool to help beekeepers predict phenological events in their area. This is useful because it can help beekeepers to make a good guess as to when a dearth or honey flow might be on, which can help the beekeeper best time out their beekeeping practices such as when to feed the bees, when to treat for mites, when to give the bees empty frames to build comb on, etc.

The phenology calendar uses Growing Degree Days, a measure of accumulated heat. The GDD is then compared to known GDD values of blooming plants to understand when that plant is likely to bloom in the current season.

The calendar is more clearly described at [this link](#)

The calendar can be found at [this link](#)



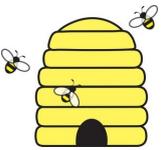
ODA launches new Sensitive Crop Registry

Much discussion has been made about the Sensitive Crop Registry, a database that is intended to be used by pesticide applicators to identify and contact beekeepers and growers of sensitive crops before applying pesticides. Recently, the Ohio Department of Agriculture announced that it has released a completely new version of the Sensitive Crop Registry, operated by Fieldwatch, that is supposed to have better mapping capability.

This is an entirely new system, so anyone who was previously signed up for the registry will need to access the new registry and sign up again. Mapped locations will also automatically expire every year and will need to be renewed as long as you continue to keep bees in that location.

With improved technology, let's hope the registry will be better utilized by pesticide applicators to give sufficient warning to beekeepers and growers before they spray.

You can find more information about the Sensitive Crop Registry and how to sign up at [this link](#)



Ashtabula County Beekeeper's Association news and events

Next meeting: Saturday, April 21st @ 12pm. Pot luck lunch @ 12, meeting at 1pm. Topic will be the officers election & the annual auction. No cost to attend, you do not need to be a member. Please bring a dish or dessert to share. Please bring items to donate to the auction if you can.

Ag Day will be May 11th, RoseMary Burns will give the presentation about the role bees play.

The **Field Day** will be June 2 @ Jacob's farm, the same location as last year.

The Ashtabula County Beekeeper's Association can be contacted through Facebook by clicking [this link](#) or by searching Ashtabula County Beekeepers Association.