



Kelley Beekeeping

SERVING THE BEEKEEPER SINCE 1924

NEWSLETTER

~ *Monthly Beekeeping Information, News & Support* ~



Photo: Ana Alvarez

IN THIS ISSUE

- Bee Science:**
Which bees are more sensitive to insecticides? 1
- From the Queen's Court** 2
- Q&A** 5
- Bee Health:**
Nutrition Competition Winners 7
- Bee Thinking About:**
Outside the Proverbial Box 8
- Bee Arts:**
Honor Thy Beekeeper 11
- Diversified Pollinators:**
ESA Position Statement 12
- Workshops & Events** 13
- Upcoming Events** 15

Bee Science

Which bees are more sensitive to insecticides?

by Liz Walsh

In conversations with other beekeepers and apicultural scientists, I am hearing a pattern of, "They just don't understand," and, "They are so out of touch," when it comes to communication between apicultural scientists and beekeepers, (and vice versa-though I'll leave it to you to decide if "they" refers to beekeepers or scientists). As such, it seems like a good idea to do everything possible to bridge this communication gap.

Therefore, I want to share some scientific literature with you. Scientific literature results from research studies. Scientists communicate their findings largely through publishing study results in peer-reviewed journals that are aimed for other scientists in a highly specific field. That said, there are some journals that are "open access." This means that anyone with an internet connection can view articles in the journal at any time. The article I chose to share with you this month is an open access one with link included.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

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From the Queen's Court

by Melanie Kirby



Roses are red,
violets are blue,
I love bees, how
about you?

Many of us fall
madly, deeply,
head over heels
fascination with
our bees. So much
so, that we begin

to think about them all the time. We study them. We dream of them. Some of us even choose to devote our time on a career path working with bees so that we can be involved with them all day long.

And while it is indeed nice to know that bees are loved, we should also ask, "who loves the beekeepers?" Of course their family and friends do. And those who receive honey from them. I will even venture to say that the farmers and gardeners appreciate them. And the consumers who eat the crops that the beekeepers' bees help to pollinate.

Love is a crazy kinda thing. It can manifest as an emotion of sincere compassion, such as between mother and child. It can manifest as an obsessive fascination, such as between science and art. It can nurture and inspire. And it can be unsettling and disruptive. But most importantly, it reminds us that it when it is concentrated, it can be uplifting and soothing.

I have found throughout the past 2 decades of keeping bees professionally (though I may feel overwhelmed at times trying to decipher what is going on with my beehives) that at the end of each and every day, I am so very glad that the bees found me. And in them, I found a career that I love and a species that I wouldn't know what to do without.

It does seem that the longer one keeps bees, the more reverence for the bees' efforts deepens. Each autumn I look forward to tucking the hives away for winter. And then within two weeks, I'm already counting the days down to spring when I can work alongside my bees. Funny how absence makes the heart grow fonder...

Last month I mentioned that I would be revisiting the theme of weather and how it affects beekeeping management. I will share this spring's forecast in next month's issue as it seems too early to really tell how winter will end and spring will begin. And while some states have experienced sincere winter weather, other regions have experienced unexpected warmer winter weather. It is indeed becoming more challenging to decipher weather patterns.



The almond bloom is underway in California. The Rockies are desperate for more snow (my home state of NM is at only 10% of normal snowfall—yikes!!!). The central and east coast states have had plenty of cold and moisture. It is a mixed bag of weather reports, and one that keeps us guessing, yet ever hopeful.



Love is a crazy kinda thing. It can manifest as an emotion of sincere compassion, such as between mother and child.

May your late winter bring spring blooms a plenty.... when love will officially be in the air in the perfumes and pollens of nature's greatest bouquet buffets! Don't forget to get your bees and equipment orders in. And your smokers and hive tools at the ready. The bees and Mother Nature won't wait!

Yours in Beekeeping
- Melanie Kirby

Melanie is in her 21st year of beekeeping and her 5th year of serving as the editor for this newsletter. When she isn't moving her bees between the Rocky Mountains and the west coast following the bloom, rearing queens and conducting research, she is pursuing a graduate degree at the Washington State University Bee Lab. She can be reached at survivorqueenbees@gmail.com.

Cover Photo:
Ana Alvarez of www.beemaniacs.com

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Q&A

Questions & Answers

by Dennis Brown

Good morning Dennis, I've looked at your website Lone Star Farms and note that you practice "natural beekeeping" or chemical free beekeeping; may I ask how do you deal with the varroa mite problem in your hives?

I thought that I was doing "natural beekeeping" for a couple of years; this fall I discovered many of my bees were dying and found varroa mite infestation in my hives. Since then, I employed the use of oxalic acid vaporization treatment in my hives (now EPA approved) and did have a significant reduction in mites with many less dead bees since. My question is: how do you deal with the varroa mite issue in your chemical free beekeeping?

Thank you for your service and attention to my inquiry. Best regards, Anthony

Hello Anthony,
The answer to your question is longer than is practical in an email. However, the number one thing is to start with hygienic queens. If a queen breeder treats their hives (with anything) and you decide not to

treat, you will in all probability lose your bees. The reason the breeder treated in the first place is because their bees were not hygienic enough to take care of themselves. My book "Beekeeping: A Personal Journey" explains chemical free beekeeping in full detail.

A few years back, I received an email from someone who stated that "Chemical free bees were dead bees." If this person knew how ridiculous that comment sounded to me, he would run away and hide somewhere. Apparently, I've been raising dead bees my entire career with fantastic results. Who knew that dead bees were so profitable?

**Enjoy your bees!
- Dennis**



Dennis Brown is the author of "Beekeeping: A Personal Journey" and "Beekeeping: Questions and Answers." Contact Dennis at: www.lonestarfarms.net.

? If you have a question you would like to share, email it to us at: Editor@KelleyBees.com

CALL FOR PHOTOS!

Want to see your bee-related photo on the cover of the Kelley Beekeeping newsletter?

Send high res photos to: editor@kelleybees.com





Bee Science (Continued)

One open access journal is PLOS One. It is only published online, but is free. I'm going to share a summary with you on an article that was published by PLOS One entitled, "Genetics, Synergists, and age Affect Insecticide Sensitivity in the Honey Bee, *Apis mellifera*." This study is by Rinkevich, Margotta, Pittman, Danga, Tarver, Ottea, and Healy and it was published in October of 2015. In this study, Rinkevich et al. compared how bees of different races (Carniolan, Italian, and Russian stocks) and ages responded to different pesticides. The pesticides the authors were interested in were insecticides that are found in agricultural fields, as well as some miticides used in beekeeping.

Rinkevich et al. took emerging brood from different bee stocks and caged these young workers (to ensure that all the bees were the same age when they were assessed for pesticide sensitivity and that they were all from the same colony and of the same genetic background). These cages of bees were subjected to nine different pesticides, predominately those bees would encounter on foraging trips and then potentially bring back to the colony. However, the authors used amitraz (ApiVar) and coumaphos (Checkmite+) (both which are miticides bees are exposed to by beekeepers treating for varroa mites) as synergists. This means the authors wanted to expose the bees to a real life scenario—instead of bees only encountering one pesticide, the bees encountered the field pesticide in addition to a miticide which could commonly be found

in bee colonies. The authors then monitored the cages of bees to discover the LD50, or the time and pesticide concentrations where 50% or more of the caged bees die. This is a standard measurement that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as well as many other institutions use to determine how potent or dangerous a pesticide or chemical might be.

The authors found that the genetic background of bees did play a role in their sensitivity to pesticides, particularly when bees were also exposed to amitraz (although this is not necessarily true of the bees that were exposed to coumaphos). Italians were less sensitive to pesticides of interest than Carniolan bees and much less sensitive than Russian bees. The authors also found that young bees (3 days after emergence) were much more sensitive to pesticides of interest than older bees.

The study results may be read in their entirety here: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0139841>.

Note from Editor: Thanks to Liz for squeezing in some food for thought while she focuses on pursuing her doctoral degree. I must admit, that one of the main reasons I have returned to school is to help build the bridge between academia and the field. At the end of the day, both beekeepers and scientists do what they do because they are passionate about bees. -MK

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Bee Health

Honey Bee Health Coalition Congratulates Winners of Nutrition Competition

by Mike Saccone

The Honey Bee Health Coalition announced today that it has awarded \$40,000 to four innovative projects aimed at improving honey bee nutrition and supporting honey bee and pollinator health. The awards, announced today at the 2018 American Bee Research Conference, are part of the Coalition's inaugural Bee Nutrition Challenge.

The Bee Nutrition Challenge winners and awards are:

- \$15,000 for Miguel Corona, Steven Cook, and Jay Evans, USDA, Agricultural Research Service, Bee Research Lab, Development and Testing of Optimal Seasonal Nutritional Supplements For Honey Bees
- \$10,000 for Waled Suliman and Brandon Hopkins, Washington State University, A Novel Feed Additive for Protecting Bees and Confronting Colony Collapse Disorder
- \$7,500 for Paul Stamets, Fungi Perfecti LLC, Fungal Extracts for Honey Bee Health
- \$7,500 for Jaclyn Nichols, Patrick Heritier-Robbins, Ruchi Banerjee, and Ollie Peterson, Georgia Institute of Technology, Bee Ultra Sound

"Supporting honey bee nutrition is essential to achieving and sustaining a healthy population of honey bees. These projects are exactly the types of innovative ideas and initiatives the Coalition was established to support," said Julie Shapiro, the facilitator of the Honey Bee Health Coalition and a senior policy director at the Keystone Policy Center.

"The Coalition is thrilled to support these outstanding projects and looks forward to seeing how they support honey bees."

"Supporting honey bee nutrition is essential to achieving and sustaining a healthy population of honey bees."

The Coalition launched the Bee Nutrition Challenge in August 2017 to find new, innovative ways to improve honey bee forage and nutrition — one of the primary drivers of the challenges honey bees and managed pollinators face throughout North America. The finalists, announced in November, presented their ideas to a panel of honey bee health experts earlier this week.

Visit <https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org>



**HONEY BEE
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COALITION**



Bee Thinking About Thinking Outside the Proverbial Box

by Bella Donna

I have people all the time—ALL THE TIME, texting, emailing, telling me at meetings and during presentations, “I want to have bees.” “I always wanted to be a beekeeper.” “Will you put some of your bees on my property?”

Long story is... I don't find myself going on and on as much anymore as I used to. I have said the same story so many times I can speak it without even thinking about it.

“Do you have experience or have you had lessons in beekeeping?”

“Do you have a mentor to work with?”

“Beekeeping and the equipment is costly in time and money. Are you aware of that?”

“Beekeeping is a lot of work and you'll need to check on the bees regularly.”

And on and on and on I used to go...

The short story is, now I just roll my eyes and nod my head. I have found that most people, when they find out what's involved in beekeeping, will quickly decide, “NO, maybe I don't want to do that.”

Recently, I've meet a persistent fella. He has been texting, calling and leaving me messages for two years now. He recently sent me pictures and said, “I bought my own equipment. Will you come look at it and help

I have found that most people, when they find out what's involved in beekeeping, will quickly decide, “NO, maybe I don't want to do that.”

me get started beekeeping?” He said he is now working on an organic farm and would

love to have his own bees, and mine if I have any that need a place to stay.

I think I only went to see his boxes because I was going to be in the area. But boy, was I glad I did. I can't remember a time meeting anyone so excited to start beekeeping. He had done his homework, watched YouTube videos and asked me about the beekeeping classes I teach. He said he was on the local beekeepers' group list but hadn't attended any meetings yet. And he was just one heck of a nice guy.

When I saw his hive boxes stacked, I immediately thought, “OH NO. This won't work.” And that even came out of my mouth. I explained that his boxes weren't built ‘to code.’ Then changed that to, “They are not standard, and here's why it would be difficult to work with them.”

Then I went on and on and on...

As I was speaking I was also listening to myself, and asking myself, “Well, who programmed you so well?”

I have since been rethinking this whole episode which brought me to exploring different ways and configurations of beekeeping. I watched a YouTube video of a beekeeper in Japan who raised bees in frameless boxes, and gently and oh-so-caringly cut out each piece of comb with honey to lovingly preserve. Then another video I watched had a man covering his nearly naked body with nothing more than smoke, smoke and more smoke, and going into a small cave to hand-harvest a bucket of seasonal honey for his village. Other people are beekeeping in mini-hives, and in natural or hand-carved logs. Some people work like machines in their mass production of harvesting honey. Others patiently work with



Bee Thinking About (Continued)

a couple of backyard hives.

A recent Facebook post of a cabinet holding a hive, with a side door opening was really intriguing. I thought this would be a perfect way for me to keep bees and harvest just what I needed for specific purposes and times for myself and my clients. There are so many ways to keep bees. Not just in a Langstroth hive, not just in a top bar hive, and not just in Warre hives. There are many options beyond our imagination.

I started asking myself when and why I was so programmed to believe that we need to keep bees in a certain type of box, in a certain size, and a certain formation, aimed in a certain direction, at a certain height and a specific color? I'm hoping that next time I hear myself regurgitating that beekeeping can only be done in one exact standard way that I catch myself thinking before my big mouth opens and discourages beekeeping in any form.

Lessons learned: 1) There are many ways to keep bees. And 2) Always be kind and encouraging to future beekeepers. We need them.



Photo courtesy of Trevor Rogers, member of Facebook's Treatment Free Beekeepers community.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS!



We are always looking for original artwork to feature in our next catalog. Send a high-resolution image of your work of art to editor@kelleybees.com and you may see it on our next catalog cover!

Featured Image Above: Limited edition Backyard Beekeeping print, available for sale at kelleybees.com: Item #HIVEPRINT

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Bee Arts

Honor Thy Beekeeper

The Jersey Postage Stamp bee project was first commissioned in 2016 by an intermediary company; Interbang based in London UK. The idea was to celebrate 100 years of the Jersey Beekeepers Association, which was founded on the 3rd of October, 1917.

Award winning artist and wildlife illustrator Chris Shields graduated from Northwich College of Art and Design United Kingdom in 1973. In 1983 after a short career in the commercial art world, he followed his passion for Nature and became a self-employed wildlife artist.

Chris is now regarded as one of the worlds leading natural history illustrators has produced to date in excess of thirty thousand wildlife illustrations in over 500 books, and other publications. Including Collins Fungi Guide By Harper Collins, Insects of Ireland by the Collins Press and numerous guides for the Field Studies Council in the UK including Guide to Bees of Britain. More recently he has created six stamp designs featuring bees for Jersey Post UK and completed commissions

for Morro Bay National Nature Preserve and Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park both in California, USA.

He has exhibited his paintings widely in the UK and China and has paintings in public and private collections all over the world.

A keen entomologist, Chris always includes a moth or butterfly in all his paintings, although they are sometimes hard to find!

"Any painting or illustration I create starts off life as a rough pencil sketch from which I produce a more detailed line drawing. From there this drawing is burnished down onto smooth watercolor paper and the final painting is done with a combination of watercolor and gouache paint, the background being painted with the watercolor and the detailed foreground with the gouache. This gives the painting more depth, an almost 3D effect."

The stamps can be purchased from Jersey Post: <https://www.jerseystamps.com/en/Shop/Product?c=1715200&ProductCode=CISFD2C>





Diversified Pollinators

New Position Statement: In Defense of Insect Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the single most valuable resource on Earth

Annapolis, MD; October 24, 2017—More than half of all species on Earth are insects and related arthropods, and they play vital roles in nearly every ecosystem: as pollinators, decomposers, predators, natural enemies against invasive species and pests, sources for new genetic and medical breakthroughs, and food for other organisms.

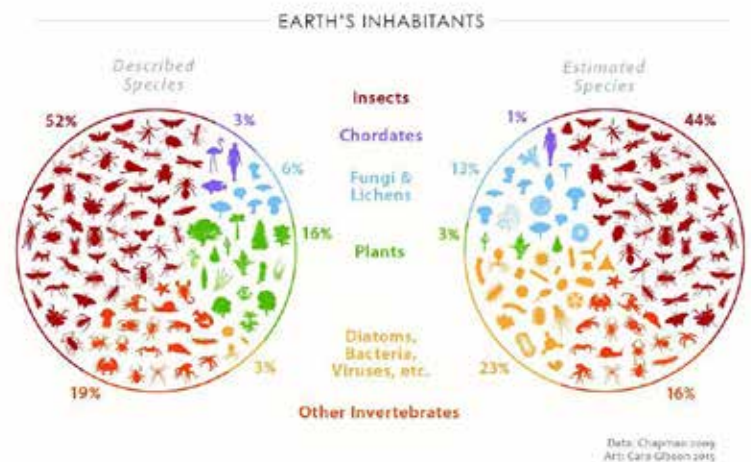
However, significant challenges to preserving planetary biodiversity are presented by human activity, ranging from habitat loss to climate change to the spread of invasive species. The Entomological Society of America advocates for the protection and exploration of Earth's largest and most diverse lineage of living organisms in its new position statement on arthropod biodiversity.

Biodiversity is the single most valuable resource available to Earth's human inhabitants. Insect species and populations are often valuable indicators of ecosystem health and stability, and monitoring key insect groups can assist with early detection of potential ecological shifts that might adversely affect human welfare.

ESA urges the American public and policymakers to support the protection and exploration of Earth's biodiversity, particularly with regard to insects and other related arthropods, and for the appropriate funding and policies to do so, specifically in the following areas:

- **Continued study** of insects and their relatives, together with all aspects of their biology and potential values to humanity.

- **Habitat protection**, with an emphasis on native species.
- **Increased discovery** and exploration of biodiversity within our country and our world.
- **Enhanced domestic and international collaboration** between entomologists, other scientists, lawyers, policymakers, and citizens to prevent the loss of native species.
- **Improved management techniques and best practices**, utilizing effective science-based management of specific highly injurious pest and vector species.



ESA is the largest organization in the world serving the professional and scientific needs of entomologists and people in related disciplines. Founded in 1889, ESA today has more than 6,000 members affiliated with educational institutions, health agencies, private industry, and government. Headquartered in Annapolis, Maryland, the Society stands ready as a non-partisan scientific and educational resource for all insect-related topics. For more information, visit www.entsoc.org.



Tri-County Beekeepers
Association Inc.

Tri-County Beekeepers Association Inc. 40th Annual Spring Beekeeping Workshop March 2-3, 2018 - Wooster, Ohio

"The Key Three-Varroa, Nutrition and Queen Quality"

Dear Beekeeper,

We are planning for the 40th *Annual Spring Beekeeping Workshop* in Wooster, Ohio on Friday and Saturday, March 2-3, 2018. As in the past, it will be held at Fisher Auditorium and Shisler Conference Center on Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) campus, located at 1680 Madison Ave. (at State Route 302 east and State Route 83) just south of Wooster. Last year, the workshop participants were not only from Ohio but a number of neighboring states.

Once again there will be a block of rooms set aside at the *Hilton Garden Inn, 959 Dover Road, Wooster, which is within sight of OSU's Fisher Auditorium*. The room rate is \$99.00 per night plus tax for 1 king or 2 queen beds. When making reservations give them: TRI as the code name. For reservations call 330-202-7701. For more information their web page is: www.wooster.stayhgi.com

Also this year there will be a block of rooms at the **Best Western**, 243 East Liberty Street, Wooster, which is not far from Fisher Auditorium. The room rate will be \$95.99 per night plus tax for 1 king or 2 double beds. Deluxe hot breakfast which is included in the room rate will be served at 6am. Please call to reserve a room as they will go quickly. **330-264-7750 or 800-528-1234 toll free.**

On Friday evening, March 2nd, the OSU Pollinarium and Museum will be open from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. for tours. The Pollinarium and Museum are located nearby on the OSU/OARDC campus and there will be signs showing the way. At Fisher Auditorium from 7:00 to 8:00pm, you may choose to attend "*The Times They Are A Changin*" by Dr. Randy Oliver or attend "*Introduction to Beekeeping*" presented by Stark County Beekeepers Association.

On Saturday, March 3rd the workshop will begin with opening comments by Mr. Randall Westfall, Workshop Committee Chairman of TCBA in the Auditorium. Our keynote speaker will be Dr. Jamie Ellis. His talk is titled, "*The Key Three*". Then three workshop sessions will follow. Each session will have three to six different breakout topics from which to choose. One of the breakout topics in each session will include a beginner beekeeping session.

There will be no Kids' Class this year.

Other activities during the day include the Honey Recipe Contest, a guessing contest and door prizes will be given throughout the day. There will be a "Hands On/Learning to Do" room which will include practical activities such as assembling hive parts, extracting honey, honeybee diseases (up close) and more.

Workshop registration takes place on Friday from 5:00 to 8:00 pm and on Saturday, 8:00 to 9:00 am.



Workshop

In Her Majesty's Chambers: Intro to Queen Breeding & Rearing



March 11, 2018- Los Altos Hills, CA

- Want to learn why and how queens are the heart of their hives?
- Interested in learning how to find, select and propagate quality genetics in and out of the apiary?
- Jazzed to mingle with beekeepers who are all interested in sharing quality honeybee stock?

Instructors:

Melanie Kirby of the Zia Queenbees Farm & Field Institute has been keeping bees professionally for 21 years. She is committed to sharing the enlightening intricacies of quality queen rearing to better support local to global food and biodiversity security.

Aiden Wing of Wings of Nature Bees has been keeping bees for close to a decade. He is a recipient of a Sustainable Agriculture Research Education Farmer grant for his breeding program system.

Classroom Theory & Field Session covers stock selection, grafting, cell-builders, & queen handling. <http://www.smilebox.com/playBlog/4e4459784d7a59774f44493d0d0a&blogview=true>

When: March 11, 2018 Where: Wings of Nature Bees - Los Altos Hills, CA

Cost: \$150/person includes manual, grafting tool, cell cups, instruction

For more information, contact Aiden Wing at Tel: (605) 862-8322

Email: wingsofnaturebees@gmail.com



UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2018

Midwestern Beekeepers 23rd Annual Beginning Beekeeping Workshop

Missouri: February 24, 2018

For more, visit: www.midwesternbeekeepers.org

Big Bee Buzz

Oklahoma: February 23-24, 2018

For more information, visit: NEOBA.org

Nevada State Beekeepers Conference

Nevada: February 23-25, 2018

For more, visit: www.nevadastatebeekeepers.org

MARCH 2018

MO State Beekeepers Spring Conference

Missouri: March 2-3, 2018

For more, visit: www.mostatebeekeepers.org

40th Annual TCBA

Ohio: March 2-3, 2018

For more, visit: www.tricountybeekeepers.org

OK State Beekeepers Spring Convention

Oklahoma: March 3, 2018

For more information, visit: www.okbees.org

So. Adirondak Bee 2018 Seminar

New York: March 10, 2018

For more information, visit: adirondackbees.org

WY Bee College & University

Wyoming: March 16-18, 2018

For more, visit: www.wyomingbeecollege.org

UC Davis Beekeeping Course

California: March 24-25, 2018

For more information, visit:

<http://elninobeelab.ucdavis.edu/courses.html>

We'd love to share news of your upcoming events. Please send the event name, date, website and/or contact information by the 10th of each month for inclusion in the following month's issue.

Email information to: Editor@KelleyBees.com

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**Phone lines are open every Saturday. Except for the months of October, November and December when we will only be open the first Saturday of each month.*