



Kelley Bee News

ISSUE 17—NOVEMBER 2011

Modern Beekeeping



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“For so work the honeybees,
creatures that by a rule in
nature teach the act of order
to a peopled kingdom.

~ William Shakespeare



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The Buzz

November has a holiday set aside for giving thanks, but we're thankful every single day that we get to work with bees.

We love helping you work with bees also, and we're making that even more economical the week before Thanksgiving. See that article on how you can save, inside this issue.

Also in this issue are different articles on final preparations to help your little honeys through the winter, an overview of apitherapy, and a sprinkling of reflection and fun among other things.

As always, we need your photographs, comments, recipes and ideas for how to make this publication more useful and how to better serve you.

And, as always, we're very thankful for your business.

Jane Burgess
CEO/Partner
The Walter T. Kelley Company

An advertisement for queens from Gulf Coast Bee Co. The background is yellow with a faint floral pattern. At the top right, it says "August, 1917". The main text reads "QUEENS 35c Each". Below that, it lists prices: "3 Queens . . \$1.00" and "12 Queens . . 3.75". A small paragraph of text states: "Our queens are light three-banded Italians, guaranteed to be purely mated and to be as good as can be produced." There is a circular portrait of a man in a suit and bow tie. To the right of the portrait, a box contains the text: "WE PRODUCE 150 QUEENS DAILY." At the bottom left, it says "Walter T. Kelley, Prop., Gulf Coast Bee Company." At the bottom, it reads "Gulf Coast Bee Co., Houma, La."

August, 1917

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3 Queens . . \$1.00
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WE PRODUCE
150 QUEENS
DAILY.

Walter T. Kelley, Prop., Gulf Coast
Bee Company.

Gulf Coast Bee Co., Houma, La.

Healthy Bees

Winter's Coming! (Whether You Like It or Not)

By Sean Burgess, Kelley Employee & Beekeeper

Winter's coming, and depending on where you live this can be hard on your bees. This is the time when you want to be sure your hives are stuffed with young bees and honey for the potentially hard months ahead. In Kentucky and most points north you will want to have two deep boxes to the point where you can barely tilt them because of the weight of their stored honey. This food is vital for their winter survival, and the positioning of it can also be critical. I try to follow a mental checklist for my colonies as I inspect this time of the year.

Do I have a queen that is young, prolific and vigorous?

This is important because the bees she is producing now will need to survive the winter months ahead and I want them to be young. She will also continue to lay eggs to a small extent throughout the winter and she has to be able to survive.

Have I got a handle on my mites?

Hopefully you have been doing mite tests throughout the year and the threshold levels are within reason. And, if using chemical treatments they have already been applied following temperature and brood cycle guidelines.

Are my double brood boxes full of honey and have I removed any surplus boxes above them?

I do not like to leave any supers above my brood nests as I feel the bees will not use them if you have adequate stores in the nest area. In my opinion this is just extra space that the bees cannot defend and probably won't use until spring anyway. If I am not going to harvest the honey in my supers at this point I will scratch the cappings and set them out some distance from the hives and allow them to be robbed out.

After they are clean and dry they will be stored for the winter. I want all honey and pollen stored around the middle of the brood nest, where I figure the bees will cluster (this is above and to the sides of the bees) in individual colonies. If you are grouping hives together tightly and wrapping them they may cluster as a single unit even though there are walls dividing them. In this case adjust the positioning of your stores.



When it comes to winter mouse guards, metal or wire is much more secure than wood.

If your hives are light you should begin feeding 2:1 sugar syrup by weight immediately. Actually you should have been doing this all along—depending on where you are located and the forage base available. Remember once the daytime temperatures fall to 45 degrees and below it will be rare for them to take any liquid feed.

Nosema Disease

If your management plan is to use Fumagilin-B for the prevention of Nosema you should be getting this to your bees in late fall before the daytime temperatures fall below 45 degrees. Recommended fall feeding is two gallons of medicated syrup for each overwintered colony. Remember Fumagilin-B will lose its effectiveness if exposed to sunlight. You should feed this internally to prevent this and verify that your colony is receiving the correct dosage.

Mouse Guards

There are several mouse guards that we offer and all are effective at keeping the furry little critters out of the hives. I would not solely rely on a wooden entrance reducer as a guard. Mice can and will in some cases chew through or pull out a wooden reducer. Metal or wire is much more secure. If you have experienced mouse damage in a hive then you know what cheap insurance this is.

Emergency Winter Rations and Moisture Control

I have discussed the Mountain Camp method of winter feeding and moisture control in past newsletters and I feel it is worth going over once more.



Our Mountain Camp rim allows for easy implementation of this popular method.

1. Add a solid spacer rim to the top of your stack, about 2" in height.
2. Cut two sheets of black & white newspaper to fit exactly inside the walls of your hive body (these will be laid directly on your top bars leaving about 1/3 of ten frames exposed).
3. Using a spray bottle full of tap water wet the newspaper so it is fairly saturated but not dripping.
4. Fill a 2 lb plastic coffee can with dry granulated cane sugar.
5. Dump 1/3 of the sugar on the newspaper and mist it with the spray bottle so it just begins to clump.
6. Repeat the process until the sugar is gone.

Why mist the sugar? Because if you don't the bees may carry it from the hive as foreign material.

When will the bees use this? It has been my observation that they will be up in this sugar in the very early spring.

Are there any side benefits of this? Yes, I believe that this helps absorb the moisture that will be produced by the bees' respiration and heat that is generated and rises as condensation. My bees can take some re-

ally cold weather but they cannot survive being wet and cold. And, should they not need this sugar in the spring, you can use it in a 1:1 spring feed.

Screened Bottom Boards

There is always a lot of debate among people who use screened bottom boards as to whether or not to re-install the white debris boards back into the colonies before winter. I can only suggest that you take some time to research this and determine your own comfort level with this practice. I leave mine out year-round unless I am installing a new queen or doing a mite drop test. I personally have second-guessed myself during the cold months, especially when the temperature falls into the teens. In fact I have been out the door to install them and then left them out anyway. My bees have survived, especially if I have followed the guidelines above.

Windbreaks

Windbreaks are an effective way to protect your hives from winter blows. There are many ways this can be accomplished from straw bales to stakes and landscape fabric. Just place your windbreaks so as to protect your colonies from the wind direction in the winter, generally the north side.

Look Up

If your hives are located below trees look for any broken or weak branches that may topple a hive during an arctic blow and remove them.

If you follow these guidelines I am confident that this will help your colonies survive through the cold months ahead.

Happy beekeeping! 🍯

Final Hive Check Factors

By Kent, Master Beekeeper

It is nearly November. If your bees are not prepared for winter by now, it is getting close to panic time. August is the time to begin prepping for not only winter, but also for the following spring.

When making fall inspections, the questions to be answered include:

How was the fall honeyflow? Did the bees store enough honey from the fall flow to get through winter and early spring?

If there are sufficient bees to store the syrup, heavy (2 parts sugar to 1 part water) syrup may be fed. If the colony is fed liquid, but refuses to store the syrup, the next option is solid feed, such as a candy board or patties.



If you need to feed and the weather is cooperating, the White Hive Top Feeder is a customer favorite.

If patties are fed, the patty should be very large—the size of the inner cover and 1/4" thick. Either type of solid food must be monitored and kept in contact with the cluster.

Is the queen still producing brood? What is the ratio of adult bees to brood?

In October, if there is a shortage of bees or brood in a hive, the choices for dealing with the problem are:

- Taking brood and bees from other colonies and adding this to the marginal hive;
- removing the marginal queen and joining the now-queenless hive with a larger colony; or
- trying to nurse the marginal hive through the winter / early spring seasons.

It becomes a matter of personal opinion or management philosophy. My opinion is that it is like throwing good money after bad to remove brood and bees from a prosperous October hive in the hope of saving a colony that is probably a lost cause to begin with. I prefer to join the poor colony with the prosperous hive, then split the colony the following spring to make up for losses.

That said, every year there are beekeepers who succeed in over-wintering marginal colonies; I am just not usually one of these beekeepers. Some races of honeybees will have a small cluster by this time of year. It is not cause for panic if your Russians or Carniolans have a small cluster, as long as the colony has plenty of food stored and is healthy.

Is the colony healthy?

If the colony is to be treated for mites, this is the last good chance to treat. When choosing a product for Varroa treatment, keep in mind the effective temperature range for some of the products. Treating for Nosema may also be accomplished, but be aware that Fumigillin must be consumed to be effective. If stored as food, the Fumigillin is almost certain to lose its medicinal value.

So, in summary, the colony most likely to survive into next spring will, in October:

- have plenty of food stored (1.5 to 2 frames of honey for each frame covered with bees);
- have a reasonable—for the particular race—population of young bees with a mated queen;
- be healthy in all respects;
- have the food stores located directly above the cluster;
- be housed in a hive that has both bottom and top ventilation;
- have a cluster that is positioned in the center of the bottom hive-body;
- have no empty supers above the cluster;
- have mouse guards installed; and
- probably a dozen different nuances of management that I have overlooked.

Plus, it doesn't hurt to own a rabbit's foot or catch a leprechaun or something! Good luck! 🍷



The Quad requires a deep to surround it, and the feeder is placed over the hole in the inner cover.

Apitherapy Overview

By Camilla Bee, editor

The articles we publish in the Healthy Bees section of this newsletter have, until now, been about how you can support the health of your bees. But, as has been known for thousands of years, honeybees can also support our health. Looking back at historical references, the Bible and the Koran both encourage consumption of bee products for health; Egyptian papyri dated from 1900 to 1250 B.C. also record the use of honey medicinally.¹

A rapidly growing area interest is apitherapy, such that over two dozen speakers discussed topics at Apimondia 2011, ranging from “Clinical Experience with Propolis in Infections Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus of Community Origin”² to a more general “Mission of Apitherapy.”³

The former, like many of the sessions, was too technical for this non-scientific, non-medical attendee. But the latter session, like many of them, provided excellent information on this growing arena. Here are some of the fundamentals.

What is Apitherapy?

A definition provided for apitherapy by Ahmed Hegazi of Egypt is: “The complementary and alternative medicine promoting the use of bee products,” with bee products including:

- Honey
- Pollen
- Bee bread
- Royal jelly
- Propolis
- Apitoxin or bee venom
- Hive air
- Comb beeswax
- Drone larvae
- Whole bees



Pollen-laden bees.

A definition provided for apitherapy by Ahmed Hegazi of Egypt: “The complementary and alternative medicine promoting the use of bee products.”

1 Ahmed Hegazi, ‘Bee Products and Their Medical Health’, Apimondia 2011

2 Walter Fierro Morales

3 Theodore Cherbuliez

How is Apitherapy Used?

Extensive investigation is occurring throughout the world, researching maladies and conditions that the use of bee products may address (e.g. “Let’s see how royal jelly impacts infertility, acne or liver disease.”) as well as targeting a specific issue, like the slow-healing wounds of diabetics, and investigating the use of a specific bee product—in the diabetic case, propolis dressings.

Because there are so many different bee products, the possible bee product treatments are myriad, especially when you consider combinations. The goals of apitherapy are equally broad-reaching, ranging from use in improving nutrition and general health to specific disease prevention and/or treatment, to cosmetics. How the medicinal properties of bee products may be delivered to a person may also vary, from injections to pills, salves, inhalation, and integration in the diet, among others.

Apitherapy’s potential for addressing health issues is great news, especially when you consider another exciting advantage: its relative simplicity compared to conventional pharmaceuticals. Bee products are generally widely available in the poorest of countries, have a low production cost, and are easily obtained. Another promising advantage—most bee products have little or no side effects, and the side effects that may result are relatively short-lasting.

The Challenges

There are several challenges in proving any medical treatment. A primary one for apitherapy is the inconsistency of the bee product. Taking the example of just one bee product, bee venom, it has 78 distinct components. However, not every component is consistently present in every bee’s venom, varying by the bee’s environment, genetics, age, etc.

Of those 78 components found in bee venom, at least 18 of them are pharmacologically active, showing promise for treating conditions ranging from neurological (such as multiple sclerosis) to rheumatological (such as osteoarthritis), to dermatological (such as eczema), to cardiovascular/respiratory (high blood pressure, asthma) to psychiatric issues, viral, bacterial and parasitic diseases. Isolating which components, or combinations of components, may be effective against which conditions is an astonishing challenge.

Another challenge is repeatability. Western medicine researchers strive to identify the specific active ingredient or ingredients which impact a condition. Apitherapy’s active principle is instead a synergy of those ingredients. In western medicine, reproducibility of content is a necessity—for both research and treatment. With apitherapy, reproducibility is impossible.

Explained one researcher, “The ‘ingredients’ of bees from the same hive vary by the bee’s age, forage, and other factors. In identifying what a bee’s unique products bring, you destroy the bee. Its sister bees, while close, are not the same. To research bee products, you must accept that there are many uncontrolled variables; an approach contrary to that of western medicine.”

There are many challenges to the medicinal use of bee products, but those challenges are embraced worldwide. According to Hegazi, bee venom is already widely accepted as having medical application and used in China, Japan, Russia, Korea, Hungary and Bulgaria, among other countries. A recent international apitherapy conference was attended by over a thousand researchers from 22 countries.

Apitherapy’s potential for addressing health issues is great news, especially when you consider another exciting advantage: its relative simplicity compared to conventional pharmaceuticals.

We all love honeybees. Apitherapy, and its potential for addressing many health challenges, is yet another good reason to take care of our winged friends. 🍯

New Beekeepers, Sage Advice

By Gary Reuter

One hundred thirty-seven new beekeepers spent the weekend in the class with Dr. Marla Spivak and Gary Reuter at the University of Minnesota. Before you start counting it looks like a few people did not make it outside for the picture.

The Horizontal 2 Queen system was described and the tasks for the first two years were covered. Included was hiving a package, management of the package, dividing the colony in year two and extracting honey. Also covered was the use of the Gizmo for testing your colony for the presence of Varroa mites.

The most relevant topic for this time of year was wintering the colony. Most of these students did not have bees yet. However, some of you reading this may have bees so let me point out the most important points.

- First you need to test for Varroa mites before your final brood cycle and treat for them if populations are high.
- If your colony has a good population of bees (at least 30,000), enough honey stores (100# in Minnesota), a young queen, an upper entrance and a wind break they will make it through winter. In the north we need to add a winter cover and a moisture board.

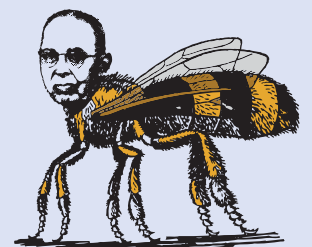
Everyone was excited and ready to start beekeeping in the spring. I hope you all remember your first year and the excitement continues. I know it does for me. 🟡



The latest class of new beekeepers in Minnesota. Photo by Michael T. Wybierala

Any advice for these new beekeepers?

Share your words of wisdom and vital lessons learned by sending them to KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com. We thank you, and so do the new beekeepers!



Bee-Havior

Swarms of All Sizes

By Camilla Bee, Editor



Honeybees swarm for a variety of reasons. It is theorized that overcrowding and congestion in the nest are factors which predispose colonies to swarm, and that the presence of an old queen and a mild winter also contribute to the development of the swarming impulse.⁴

Typically, swarms occur when a colony is rapidly increasing their population—late spring or early summer. The colossal swarm pictured occurred in spring in one of W. T. Kelley’s main bee yards, home to about 350 colonies. The swarm continued to attract bees daily, growing and buzzing and becoming somewhat menacing to those who don’t know that swarming bees are generally fairly docile. Through-

out the week that it literally hung around, five pound clumps would fall off it daily. At some point, it dissipated.

Contrast that monster swarm with one I found, in response to a call from “Ben” who found me on a swarm list in late August. Ben said I was about the 20th beekeeper called; the other beekeepers were either on vacation or couldn’t be bothered, sharing that a swarm that time of year had little hope of survival.

I’m a believer in no bee left behind, so I’ll go on a swarm call be it June or October. When Ben shared this swarm was about six feet off the ground over a busy sidewalk in front of an elementary school, it sounded more ideal—no ladder required, and a chance to be a hero.



When I got there, I looked for the swarm to no avail. I double-checked the address and kicked myself for not getting there in time. They must’ve taken off.

Ben showed up just then, and pointed out the swarm. In the photo, the swarm is the small dark cluster on the upper right. The large brown thing is the Kelley’s swarm catcher with a lure. As if capturing a cute little miniature swarm six feet off the ground wasn’t fun and easy enough, watching them amazingly turn as one and march into the swarm catcher (catalog # 89, the lure is catalog # 89-L) was worth the hour drive. 🟡

4 Marion Ellis, Extension Apiculture Specialist, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

November 19th Beekeeping 101



Sean and Jane Burgess.

On November 19th 2011 Sean Burgess of the Walter T Kelley Co. will lead a one-day class on Beekeeping 101 at the Clarkson, KY location.

The class will begin at 9:00 am CST and end at approximately 3:00 pm.

There will be a morning break and a one-hour lunch break.

This class will cover equipment choices, hive locations, installing package bees and nucleus colonies, when to feed, how to care for your bees, medications, when to add additional boxes, how to determine colony strengths and weaknesses, combining colonies, harvesting overview, requeening, identifying most common diseases and how to deal with them, winter preparations and first spring inspections.

The fee for this class is \$30.00 per person; class size is limited to 50 people. There will also be classes taught in November, December, January, February and March. If weather permits we will do a live inspection of an active hive. 🍯

Beek Hint

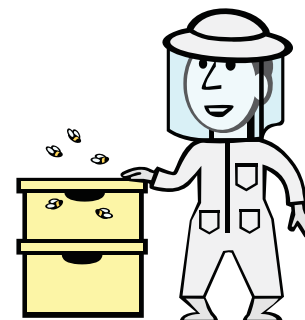
During the summertime, excessive moisture can lead to certain fungal diseases to which bees are susceptible. But, excessive moisture in the hive is also a winter problem, when it can cause condensation on the inner or top cover. This then drips down onto the bees and chills the cluster.

There are a variety of ways to address this problem, like the Mountain Camp Method, Homasote boards (see October's issue), drilling a 3/8" hole in the upper deep as an additional doorway and for airflow, or forcing a slight gap under the outer hive cover via popsicle sticks, which promotes more air flow through the hive, which reduces excessive hive moisture.

If the latter is the method you want to use:

1. Eat four popsicles for each hive, as each hive requires four sticks. (Enjoy!)
2. Glue the sticks on the underside of the top cover, across the corners. Or, you can glue the sticks on the inner cover, across the corners.

Thanks to Bob Brandenburg for helping us remind readers about this venting method.



Bee-Yond & Bee-Hind the Hives

The World of Bees

By Louise I. Lynch

Come explore The World of Bees, an interactive children's exhibit about bee diversity and conservation. The exhibit is being hosted by the Hudson Highlands Nature Museum in Cornwall on Hudson, New York. It opened September 24, 2011 and will remain open for one year. Though the target audience is three to eight year olds, it is fun and informative for adults, too! The World of Bees was curated by Louise I. Lynch as part of her MS degree in Entomology with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, to raise awareness about the conservation of these extraordinary organisms.

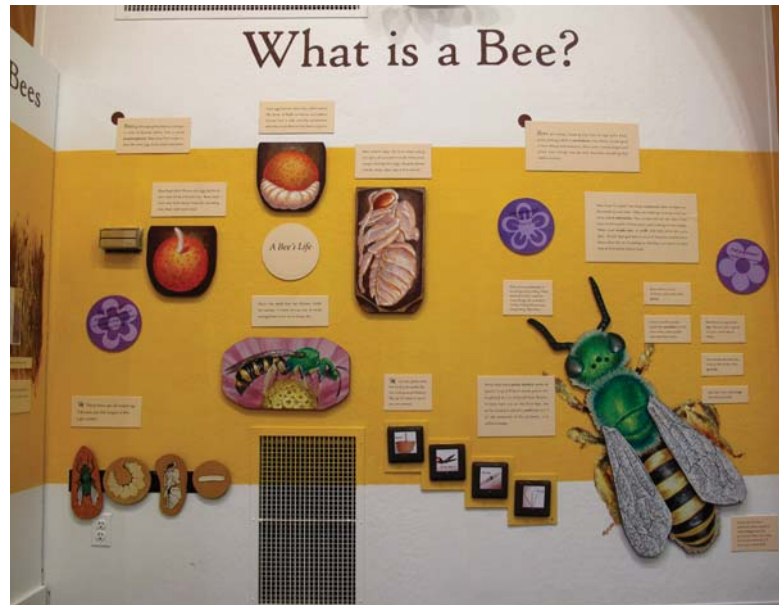
A tiny bee can conjure up a range of emotions, from admiration to, unfortunately, fear. These small, winged pollinators generously provide us with fruits, nuts, vegetables, seeds, and wild flowers, along with wax and honey.

For these reasons, bees have long been a fascination to humankind; they are symbols of leadership and selfless hard work, a source of sustenance and light, and simply, natural curiosities.

The European honey bee is our most valuable commercial pollinator. It often garners the most attention, yet it is only one of an estimated 20,000 bee species found in the world. Bees are an eclectic group of beings! They are agriculturalists, artists, architects, miners, and carpenters. Bees come in many colors (metallic green to furry black and yellow), have a variety of lifestyles (solitary and social) and come in all sizes.

Unfortunately, honeybee and some native bee populations in the United States have been declining at alarming rates over the past six years, as evidenced by several national and local surveys. Without the pollination provided by honeybees and other bee species, many foods we enjoy could become more expensive or more difficult to obtain. Thus it is important to understand the biology and needs of these organisms on which so much of our bounty is dependent.

Visitors will be able to see a huge Agapostemon bee, visit a live observation hive, see a live mason bee nest, feel a child-sized bumblebee, feed and care for a child-sized bee pupa and larva, try on beekeeping gear,



study real bee specimens, find out simple and fun things one can do to help bees, and more!

The World of Bees has a few take home messages:

- Bees are familiar representatives of insects, the dominant group of animals on Earth. With 20,000 species, bees are diverse!
- Bees are an ancient group of creatures with various life histories, behaviors, ecological roles, shapes, colors and sizes. They have been around for millions of years!
- Bees are arguably our most valuable insects, responsible for pollinating many of our crops and making products we rely on and use every day.
- Honeybees and native bees are facing population declines due to known and unknown environmental factors, including habitat loss, pesticide use and disease.
- Bees are easy to keep on your own property or attract to your own garden and you can easily contribute to their preservation.



For more information, please visit the Hudson Highlands Nature Museum at www.hhnaturemuseum.org. 

Show Schedule

Mississippi State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Oct 28, 2011
- Located at Coast Community College, in Gautier, MS

Tennessee State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Oct 28, 2011
- Located at Hyder-Burke Ag Pavilion, in Cookeville, TN

Wisconsin Honey Producers Fall Convention

- Thursday Nov 3, 2011
- Located at Hotel Mead, in Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Iowa State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Nov 4, 2011
- Located at the Best Western in Marshalltown, IA

Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Nov 11, 2011
- Located at the Best Western in Lewisburg, PA

Louisiana State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Dec 2, 2011
- Located at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Baton Rouge, LA

**For the latest events,
please visit
kelleybees.com/Events/**

Michigan State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Dec 2, 2011
- Located at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing, MI

Short Course in Beekeeping - Atlanta Botanical Gardens

- Saturday Jan 21, 2012
- A short course in Beekeeping presented by <http://www.beekeepingshortcourse.com> and sponsored by the Metro Atlanta Beekeepers Association. 🍯



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Free Shipping November 21-23



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Give Thanks for FREE SHIPPING

We are thankful for our customers! Therefore it's time once again for Kelley to offer FREE SHIPPING! On November 21-23, we will ship free or with savings as described below. This offer is limited to in-stock items and does NOT include bulk plastic or glass jars (through UPS or US Mail) or corn syrup.

To determine which zone you're in, check your Kelley's catalog, page 115, or go to <http://postcalc.usps.gov/Zonecharts/>.

- If you're in Zone 1 – 4: FREE SHIPPING, including truck shipping!
- Zone 5: Free truck shipping only, but order must be a minimum of 200 pounds. Other shipping – 10% off shipping charges.
- Beyond Zone 5: 10% off shipping charges.

It's our way of saying THANKS to all our customers. And, your bees will thank you, as you'll be giving them industry-leading quality products. Use the promo code: **Let's Talk Turkey**. And, we hope your Thanksgiving is a blessed time with family, friends, and fresh honey.

Bees Overseas

Apimondia 2011: A Sampling of Exhibits

By Camilla Bee, Editor

I attended Apimondia 2011, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in mid-September. There were over 500 educational sessions to attend—seemingly all the ones I really wanted to attend occurred at the same time!

There was also a vast exhibit hall, with booths promoting everything bee-related, from venom extraction, to beekeeping in Slavic nations (see picture to the right, they take “migratory beekeeping” to a whole new level), to plastic hives (don’t know if they call hive bodies “plastic ware” instead of “wooden ware”) to purchasing, and buying, honey, pollen, and propolis, to extraction equipment to chemicals. Here’s a smattering of what I saw.

Cool Suits

I tried to ask the supplier of these suits if the wearers noticed a higher amount of attempted stings, but the language barrier prevented that discussion. The guy standing beside though perhaps answered the question. “They’re selling them to countries with Africanized bees,” he muttered. “Everything upsets those bees.”



The suits are beautiful, but they didn’t have them in adult sizes. If the colors and patterns do aggravate bees, I’m not sure those are the best things to dress future beekeepers in!



There’s a reason why practically every suit is of a light-colored, pattern-free material right? Vivid colors and patterns allegedly upset honeybees?



And “cooling” suits: The inserts are made of foam, providing that necessary gap between a bee on one side of the screen and the skin on the other side. I asked a South American beekeeper next to me if he used them in his extensive apiaries. He doesn’t—noting that excessive heat inside the suit is just one of the joys of beekeeping.

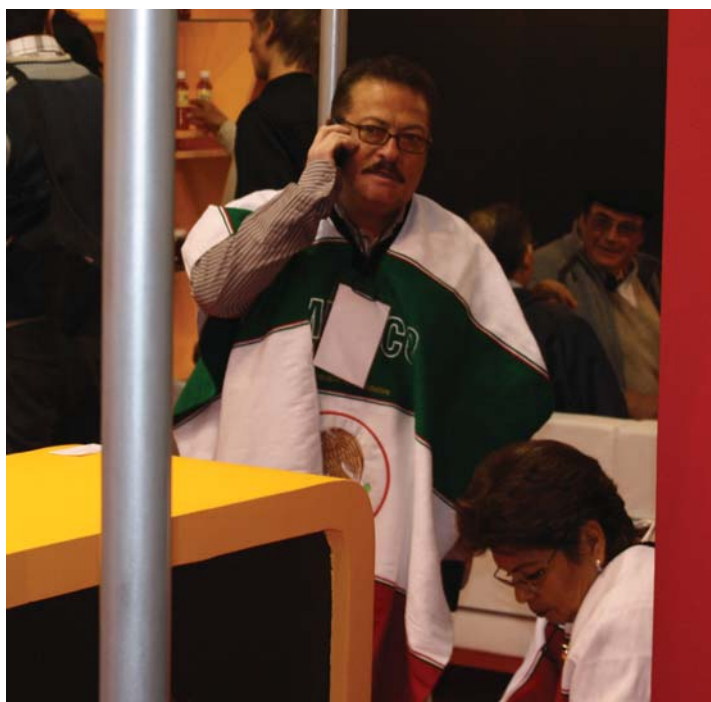


And then, there are always these “bee suits.”



I understand heat. Sometimes, after working bees in late summer, my suit also turns me into a monster.

Sights like these made me realize I wasn't in Kentucky anymore.



Mexico is a major producer and exporter of honey.



Bee Venom Collection: No, I'm not sure what you do with it, but if you want to collect it ...



India is also an upcoming producer and exporter of honey. I was told this gentleman owns tens of thousands of hives.



The Chinese booths featured excellent music.



At the end of the day, we all had to wait in line for taxis and busses.



Do you think they painted the taxis to look like honeybees just for Apimondia?

BeeCause

Alabama Beekeeper Meeting

Contributed by Bonnie Funderburg

The Alabama State Beekeepers Association annual meeting, the second weekend of October, attracted approximately 300 people from Alabama and beyond, including Walter T. Kelley's Earl King (left). Earl was representing Kelley's and dropping off a Deluxe Beginner's Kit, half of which was donated by Kelley's as a door prize.



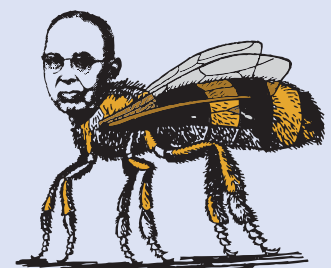
Like most other association / state meetings, the purpose of Alabama's meeting was to conduct business as well as feature speakers and workshops to educate members on beekeeping and uses of hive products. Programs were available for beginning through more experienced beekeepers, as well as programs for non-beekeeping spouses and children, allowing the entire family to be involved. Key-note speakers this year were Dr. Jim Tew, Dr. Clarence Collison and Kim Flottum. The very enthusiastic members were busy as bees learning, catching up, keeping events running, and preparing all the meals for the two days. From the continental breakfast on Friday morning, through lunches of grilled hamburgers and hotdogs, to Friday night's banquet of ribeye steaks, baked potatoes, salad and dessert, followed the next morning with a pancake breakfast, it sounds like a meeting to attend for the food alone!

Friday night's banquet featured entertainment (this year, Shane Atkins) and the announcement of beekeeper of the year, an award given to anyone from the Association who has worked hard to promote beekeeping or to promote the Alabama Beekeepers Association. This year's winner is Hugh Feagle (left), pictured with one of the event instructors, David Ellis. 🍯



In beekeeping, there are plenty of funny things, and plenty of times when you just have to laugh at yourself.

We're collecting funnies—bee jokes, bee puns, and the bee-related things you've done (and possibly wished you hadn't!) to share in future issues. Please drop me an email if you have some we can share. Thanks! KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com



FAQs

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Q: I am hoping to start my first 2 hives next spring. I see many options for frame types in your Deluxe Hive Kits. Do you summarize the differences between them anywhere or in a prior newsletter? As a beginner, I am not sure what is important to consider between the various frame types.

Also, will you have a fall free shipping sale again this year like I saw in the Nov. 2010 newsletter?

Thanks! Michael O.

A: No Michael, we haven't had a discussion of frame types pros and cons in this newsletter, yet. What a great idea! Folks, look for it here next month!

As for that free shipping - also a great idea, although we'd already thought of that. See the announcement in the newsletter.

Q: Why do some hives (that seemingly need stores) take 2:1 easily, and other hives, some of right next door, totally ignore what's in the feeder? Any insights?
Taylor, Michigan

A: Kelley's beekeeper Sean Burgess fielded this question for us, noting "This may depend on how they are being fed. An internal feeder will have to be found by every individual bee. They have a hard time communicating short distances. It could be they have a preferred nectar source they are using. I suppose they could be force fed by spraying the combs with 2:1 or dribbling it into the cells."

Q: When is a good time to order bees here in FL?
Norm, Florida

A: You could, and should, place your order for package bees as soon as possible, starting December 7th, 2011. That ensures you get your bees when you want them, as we fill orders on a first-come, first-served basis.

When you order, you can specify when you want them delivered. For Florida and other southern regions, we suggest the first or second week of April. But it doesn't matter when the bees arrive where you live (assuming you have sufficient forage for them)—it matters when the package was prepared. You want to be sure that wherever it is coming from, the weather has been sufficiently warm for the queens to mate with plenty of drones. Drone congregations typically are strong by April in southern Georgia, where most of Kelley's packages come from. More drones mean a better-mated queen.

Remember, it's all about the queen. Whether you get honey or not depends on factors like nectar flow, but typically a first year package isn't going to produce surplus honey anyway; they're too busy drawing comb. If ever your brood pattern is insufficient or spotty you may want to consider requeening. A well-bred queen is vital to future hive success.

Q: How does Kelley's keep their bees non-Africanized? I swear I got one from you a few years ago; I ended up blow-torching the entire hive.

A: Kelley's bees are checked and tested yearly by the state apiarist. You may have received a mean non-Africanized queen, and the entire hive can take on that personality. Bees are just like people—some are much crankier than others. It may also be something bothering that particular hive that makes it “hot,” like skunks, raccoons, possum, and such.

We're beekeepers, and we've had what we consider hot queens and hives. In our experience, the second year they usually calm down and become more gentle or they supersede and the local genes are mixed with the new queen and it may become gentler, or hotter! It's all about the personality of that queen.

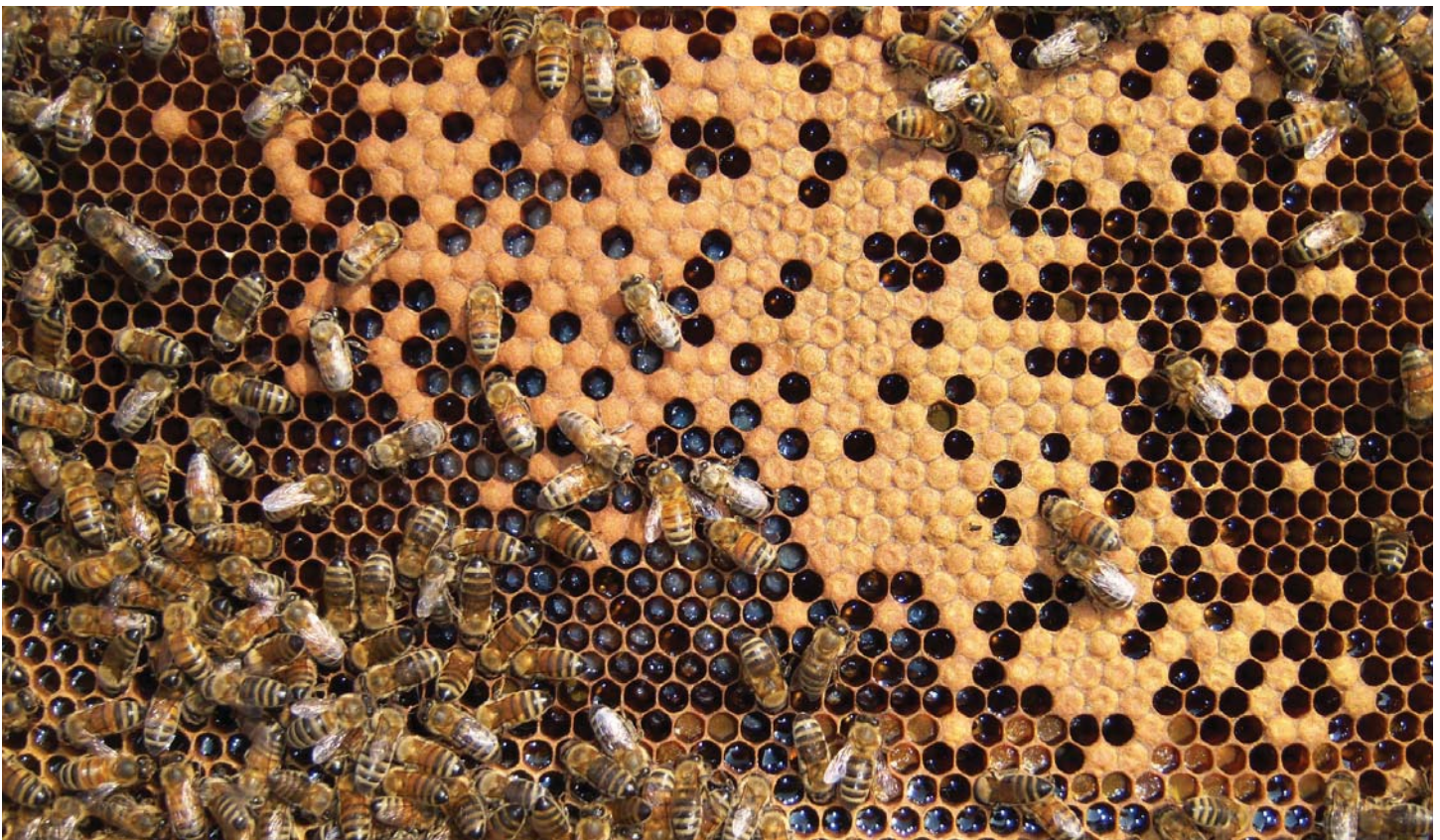
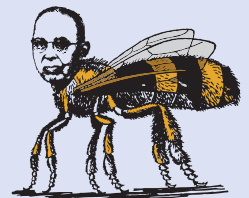
Keep in mind that bees are usually bred from survivor stock and for hygienic behavior. The tougher the queen and hive, the more likely they keep pests away, leading to a healthy hive that produces lots and lots of honey.

In your situation, we recommend replacing the queen. But, if you want to blow torch equipment, there's this great manufacturer of quality bee supplies ready to sell you more, the Walter T Kelley Company! 🍯

Your fellow beekeepers LOVE the photos we share via this newsletter. And, your photo could appear in our 2012 catalog!

Mark Adams shared this one, noting “If you look close you can see all stages of brood, eggs, rice size, larva, capped brood and you can even see a new bee emerging near the center at the 3 o'clock position. She's just breaking the cap open.”

Please send anything interesting, helpful, fun or just awesome, 300dpi or higher, to KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com.



Sweet as Honey

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I just finished reading your October 2011 issue: outstanding as usual. But I have a question: In Charlotte Hubbard's article "Things that sting," she expresses exactly my sentiments from when I started beekeeping, in Connecticut, back in the 1970s: I hated getting stung, was anxious every time I worked my 2 to 4 hives, and I got stung a lot, despite a full suit, gloves, boots, veil, etc!

In the 80s and 90s, family circumstances and several cross-country moves made beekeeping impractical for me. Since restarting in 2007 (again with Kelley equipment, and Italian bees) in southwest Virginia, I almost never get stung. Having lost my anxiety about getting stung, I wear shorts, a tee shirt, and a veil to work my hives (see picture on right)—which is much more comfortable than getting suited up in hot weather.

This year, building up to 8 hives (including a rescue from a bee tree that blew down in a storm), brushing bees off of one shallow frame at a time to harvest 150 lbs of honey) I've only been stung three times. Finally, my question: do you have any idea why I seldom get stung anymore?

Thanks, D. Knight, VA



Editor: We perhaps should have put the above letter in the FAQ section, but what Mr. Knight is experiencing is one of the sweet as honey parts of beekeeping: the more you work bees, typically the less you get stung.

Most of the theories (theories—because we really don't know what those insects are collectively thinking!) suggest that as the beekeeper gets more comfortable with bees, and the bees understand that comfort, and as they recognize you and your intentions, the less defensive they are.

That's probably happening now that you have more experience. It may also be that you reflexively can detect the first signs of their alarm, be it a sound change, an increase in numbers flying about you, etc., and you may back down and give them several seconds before your next move without even realizing you're doing it.

Jane Burgess, Kelley's CEO, offers that "the more you relax the more they relax, but every year I always have a hot hive at different times during the season. I try to spend some time just walking around or letting them know (yes sometimes talking to them) that I want to help. I usually wear a veil and gloves if I am opening a hive, and yes I have been stung—usually in the thigh when in shorts and a sleeveless shirt or the back of the arm, and usually because of a moment when I didn't realize they were checking me out and curious about what I am doing.

When working in a commercial yard though I always fully dress because it only takes one of them upset to start another million being nervous which is much more difficult to control. The farther you space your hives the easier it is to work and watch, without the pheromone alarm sounding.”

Your answer to the question of what bees defend must be somewhat off. I've misjudged the temper of bees and been stung many times, but never by a swarm in any stage before making comb. I even catch queens in the air and let bees settle on my hand to capture the swarm, similar to a bee beard. So far so good.
From Mugwumps, via the Internet

Editor: Our simple answer was “bees will defend what they have worked for” (see FAQs section, September issue for more information.) But, there are very few absolutes in beekeeping. Thanks Mugwumps for your insight!

What would possess seemingly intelligent adults to drag themselves up on a beautiful Saturday morning, some of them driving a couple of hours, to show up at Kelley's for the day? I am sure each of us had our own agenda but also some common threads that brought us together for what turned out to be a most pleasant learning experience. The theme of the day was how to begin keeping honeybees.

It is true, I have been in the Kelley workplace for many years. And have played at keeping bees a couple of different times. I can discuss the fundamentals of getting started and steer customers in the right direction to begin their honeybee experience. So why should I bother attending the class?

I must say, I was not disappointed. I found Sean to be well prepared and totally at ease. He showed genuine interest and enthusiasm as he introduced the art of beekeeping to his audience. He held the student's attention throughout the day, had slides to reinforce his main points and took the time to answer questions from his listeners. He covered several topics before lunch and when we reconvened afterwards, he spoke for another full hour before leading us all out to the yard for a look at some of the actual workings inside a beehive. The old adage “A picture is worth a thousand words” certainly held true. The terminology and situations discussed earlier came to life before our eyes. Lighting a smoker successfully, entering the hive slowly and methodically, handling the frames, examining live bees, honeycomb and the queen, gave the classroom hours true meaning and served to reinforce our new knowledge. Sean handled the entire situation smoothly and flawlessly.

Mary K., Kelley employee and recent Beekeeping 101 Attendee

Here in central Mississippi, I had a good late summer honey pull. My five hives yielded 21 gallons.
P. Allen

Editor: We delight in any bee successes, great or small, and thank P. Allen for dropping us a note. I can't promise we'll use them all, but beekeeping can be a rollercoaster, so we'd appreciate knowing about your ride—up or down! Please email me at kelleybeeseditor@gmail.com, thanks.

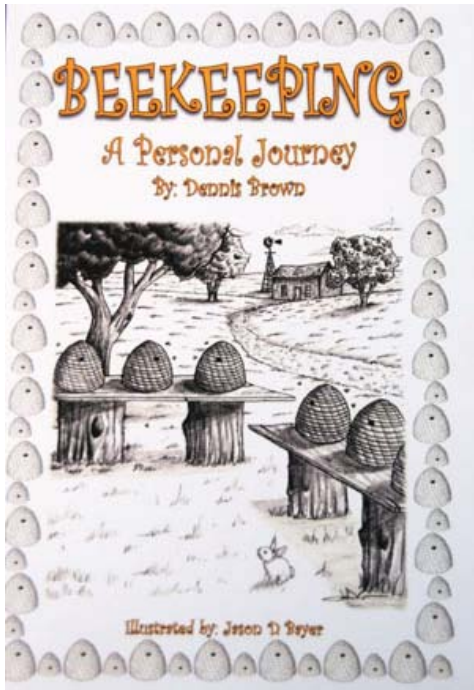
Speaking of successes, we recently caught up with the McGrath family of Bowling Green, KY. You may recall the huge grin on young Samuel McGrath's face when he picked up his bees at Kelley's last spring (see our May issue.)

As is typical in beekeeping, their inaugural bee season didn't go as planned, but they still thoroughly enjoyed it. Watch for their fun update next month. 🍯

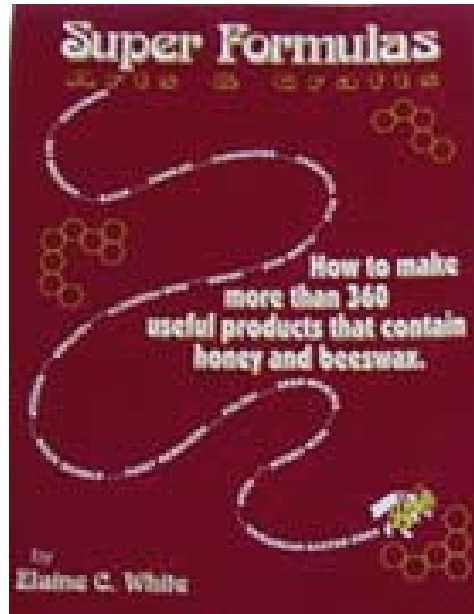


Featured Products

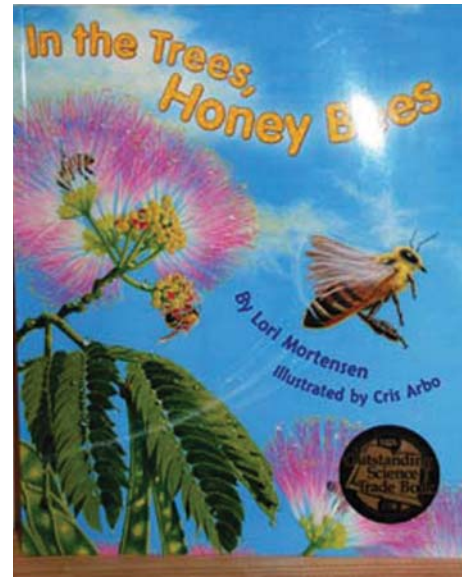
This month we're featuring some of the products you may need to help prepare for the upcoming colder months, whether you're a bee or a beekeeper!



If you're looking for a great read while curled up on the couch, we recommend seasoned beekeeper Dennis Brown's work.



Activities in your apiary are likely waning, but there's still plenty you can still do with bees. We recommend this book for lots of ideas about using hive products, catalog # 554.



Christmas shopping done yet? Any future beekeepers will enjoy one of our many children's books, such as this one, an award winning publication, catalog # 695.



For the beekeepers in your life, we have lots of wonderful tools.



bees on earth

Bee-themed cards, especially for the holidays, are rare. We offer these designed by a beekeeper in honor of her late father; all profits go to charity. There are three different holiday cards.



It is never too early to get kids involved in the wonderful world of bees. Plenty of suit styles and sizes ensure they're protected. Catalog #s 25PCH-YS, 25PCYL, 141-D and 70-YM3.



Want to create more beekeepers? Why not order a kit for someone you know who has an interest in bees? Catalog #2 365 & 365E.



A Kelley's gift certificate is always useful!

If you're a beekeeper, what would you like from Kelley's vast offerings? We'd like to publish some of the items on your "want" list in our December issue. Who knows, maybe Santa will get the hint and bring it to you!



Recipes

Cabbage Apple Salad

4 cups cabbage, shredded
1/4 cup apple, chopped fine
1/4 cup raisins
1/4 cup green pepper,
chopped fine
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1 teaspoon mustard
1 tablespoons cider vinegar
2 tablespoons honey

Blend vegetables and fruits in a large bowl.
In a smaller bowl, mix the remaining ingredients and
pour over the vegetable mixture.
Toss, chill and serve.

Jean Rectenwald

Pretzels

1 Tablespoon yeast
1/2 cup warm water
1 teaspoon honey
1 1/3 cup flour
1 teaspoon salt

Preheat the oven to 325°.
Put the yeast in a small bowl with the water and honey. Stir a little, then
let the mixture sit for 5 minutes.
Meanwhile, mix the flour and salt together in a medium-size bowl. After
the 5 minutes is up, check on the yeast mixture. It should be bigger than
before and a little bubbly. Add this mixture to the flour and salt mixture.
Stir everything together. Use a spoon to start, finish with your hands. The
dough is ready when it's still a little crumbly and flaky. Put the dough on
the cutting board and knead it into one big ball.
Break off a piece of dough that's about the size of a walnut. Use your
hands to roll it into a skinny strip. Twist the strip into a medium-size
pretzel shape, and put it on the cookie sheet. Do this with all the dough,
making 12 pretzels. Bake for 10 minutes and allow to cool slightly before
biting in.

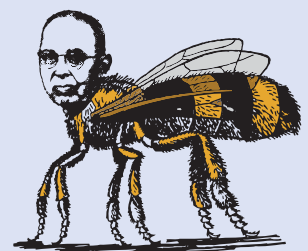
Russ Dean

As the season draws to a close:

This excerpt appeared in the October 1952 edition of Modern Beekeeping. The entire article was written by Ralph Ziegler, a contributing writer to Modern Beekeeping.

BEGINNERS DEPARTMENT

As the honey gathering season draws reluctantly to a close, we are inclined to wonder how many of those who started with bees last spring are still beginners and how many are real beekeepers. All have no doubt made mistakes. Those who have blamed themselves for their errors, taking steps to correct them and prevent their happening again are real beekeepers, while those who blame the bees, the weather, the package bee shipper, the equipment manufacturers and everything else in sight are still just beginners.



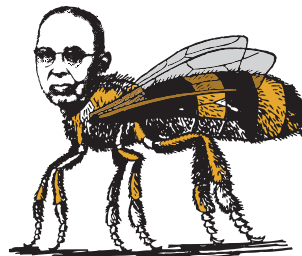
Foraging for Fun

All I Need to Know About Life I Learned from a Honeybee

Grooming is important.
Home is where your family is.
A good buzz is, at times, helpful.
There's no such thing as a weed.
Don't flap your wings unnecessarily.
Drones are important, so is NOT droning.
God gave you lots of eyes; use all of them.
Cleansing flights: good for the body and the soul.
Take care of the one in charge, but have a back-up cell.
Stop and smell the roses. And the daisies, and the marigolds, and...
When you figure out your role, do it to the best of your ability.
Working together yields awesome results.
Horizontal stripes can make you look fat.
Only sting if absolutely necessary.
Make a beeline to your work.
A plant-based diet is smart.
Bee all you can bee.
Dance.

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You don't have to work bees long until you realize there's a lot of collective brain power in that group of insects. Some of our customers, waxing philosophically, have shared that they can't believe how much they learn from honeybees.

We started collecting their thoughts, and thinking about what honeybees can teach us, and came up with this handy magnet. It's yours, free, for orders over \$100. And, if you'd just like to buy one or a dozen to share with your beekeeping friends, they're a mere \$2 each.

There's plenty more honeybees have taught us; we're surely missing many things on this list. When you think of them, please drop us an email so we can further share the wit and wisdom inspired by honeybees, KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com. Thanks! 🍯

Dronings from a Queen Bee

Halloween

By Charlotte Hubbard

I think everyone should keep bees. There is a swarm of reasons why it is wonderful, and solving-the-Halloween-costume-dilemma is one of them. Thanks to beekeeping, I now have so many options.

Every once in a while, Halloween in Michigan is warm. When that happens, I'll wear the somewhat risqué Queen Bee costume my late husband purchased for me. Yes, it is a bit skimpy. The same could be said for the candy bars I hand out.

I feel the skimpy Queen Bee outfit is okay, as it provides an important message for kids—that bees are kind, giving-of-sweets creatures.

But, when wearing it, I've also received a few suggestive comments and looks from kids' fathers. I think it provides an important message for guys also: look if you want, but I have a stinger!

Few Michigan Halloweens are warm and balmy though. Thanks to beekeeping, I'm ready for the chilly ones as well. My protective bee suit's ample cut lets me wear plenty of sweaters underneath, and its vivid whiteness makes me highly visible.

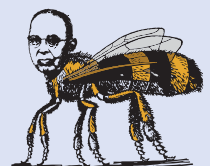
Some of you may be wondering why this grown-up has had to wonder what to be for Halloween. After all, isn't Halloween for tiny princesses and pint-sized pirates?

In my neighborhood, no. A decade ago, when it first happened, I found it disconcerting for a car to pull up, then the kids pile out to trick-or-treat—along with the driver. I recently heard that as many as a third of adults now trick-or-treat. I wonder if that's related to the economy—people counting on candy for their next few meals? They definitely aren't swarming to my house for the limit-of-two fun-sized candy bars I hand out.



From L to R, Michelle the witch, the late Tom, Charlotte, and our son Caesar, aka Ben.

There's lots of information out there on bees and beekeeping. We don't want to add to the general buzz; we want to give you what you want. Please send ideas for topics and stories to KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com. Thank you!



Adults who feel the need to trick-or-treat are one of the reasons I feel the need to wear a costume. I'm fairly brave, but when six towering 20-somethings demand candy, I tend to give it to them.

But only two pieces. You kid, er, 30-year-old who got in my face and said two fun-sized chocolate bars just aren't that much fun? I totally agree. But when I've zipped the hood on my protective bee suit, I'm ready to face 50,000 stinging insects. A 30-year-old dressed as a thug (who may actually just be a thug?) demanding more candy? Sorry, my porch, my rules dude. If you want more than two pieces, you have to dress like an adorable honeybee. For that I'll dump the entire bag in your bucket.

Beekeeping can, when things go wrong, provide a third type of costume for Halloween. Two years ago I took two stings to the left of my nose two days before Halloween. Thanks to an extreme, localized reaction, by the time Halloween rolled around my left eye was swollen completely shut, my right eye a mere slit, and my jaw line drooped nearly to my waistline. A couple people, not realizing that it was all natural, commented that it was an unbelievable make-up job.

Being stung in the face gave me such a realistic ghoulish appearance that I considered taking a couple intentional stings to the face every year for Halloween. By the time the Benadryl stupor had worn off though, I had come to my senses.

After all, there are other ways of getting a really swollen face, like eating massive amount of fun-sized candy bars, which I've been doing since I purchased Halloween candy mid-October.

Stay safe! 🍯

About Obtaining This Newsletter

Thanks to technology, about the last of each month, an electronic issue of this newsletter is sent to all of you on our email list. Unfortunately, it isn't always hiccup-free. Here are some common issues and options:

How do I subscribe? Go to www.kelleybees.com and create an account with the "Sign me up for the Walter T. Kelley Newsletter!" box checked.

How do I unsubscribe? There is a link to unsubscribe in every newsletter email.

Can you send me back issues? No, but they are available on our website (select Education > Newsletter.)

Why do you send links to two newsletter copies with the email? We've learned that some readers have a slow internet connection. For these folks, we save each issue with minimized picture quality and a few other things. The appearance is somewhat compromised, but it is a smaller file to download. This small PDF is always saved to be compatible with Adobe Reader 4 and greater.

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My internet connection is too slow to download the 40MB Adobe Reader. Golly. You may want to upgrade your connection! Or, contact Adobe about obtaining a copy of Adobe Reader on CD. Thanks for reading!