



Kelley Bee News

ISSUE 26—AUGUST 2012

Modern Beekeeping



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Dy.

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The Buzz

Summer is waning. Drought, baking relentless heat, floods—it has been a tough one, hasn't it?

We hope that you and your bees are still hanging in there. We at Kelley's are still here, and looking forward to serving you. This newsletter's sharing of information is one of the ways we try to demonstrate how much we appreciate our customers!

There are lots of relevant beekeeping topics this time of year. Unfortunately, we can't cover them all. As a reminder, all back issues of this newsletter are available at www.kelleybees.com. It is a great collection of knowledge that may be able to help whatever apiary challenge you're facing. And if not, please email your questions to us at KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com.

We feel this is another great issue of information, fun, phenomenal photographs and wonderful recipes. Thanks as always for your contributions, and your continued loyalty to Kelley's.

Sincerely,

Jane Burgess
CEO/Partner
The Walter T.
Kelley Company



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It could you had a penny post card to ask for my 1941 catalog while my catalogues are well over 100 each delivered. Will you accept my challenge? I will send you a copy free for the asking.

I have a really new catalog this year, listing several new items you will want at prices you can afford to pay. Items that you will find in no other low supply catalog.

When You Want
QUALITY at LOW COST
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The Walter T. Kelley Co.
Paducah, Kentucky

Bee Thinking About

For August, 2012

Many of you who responded to our survey said you appreciated the monthly reminder of things to be thinking about or doing in your apiary. Great idea, thank you! We'll be doing a new monthly section of things you should be thinking about, along with covering some of those topics in articles.

It's a challenge—our readers we now know are from Europe to South America to Canada, so we'll speak in geographical generalities. As always, your feedback is welcome. (Send it to KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com.)

If it is late summer for you ... (sorry south of the equator readers!)

- Brood pattern: check that it is good. You need a strong-laying queen going into the fall.

- If there isn't a good brood pattern, do you have at least 20 pounds of honey in the hive? That's what it takes for the queen to keep laying, so that could be the cause of a weak brood pattern.

- If less than 20 pounds, consider supplemental feeding.

- If so—consider requeening, or combining the hive.

- Don't be too alarmed if your hives smell like a locker room when you open them; goldenrod stores will do that.
- Mite population out of control? Do you see deformed wings on your bees? If not, have you done a check with a debris board and some Vaseline or vegetable oil? Counting mites on the board may require a magnifying glass.

If you are in the moderate to critical stage you can do one of two things:

1. Requeen with a hygienic queen and check again in 5-6 weeks or
2. Treat, carefully following package directions.

- Hive beetle population out of control? Resist medically treating a colony when only a few beetles are present—keep strong hives to keep the beetles in control. Also consider:



A fabulous brood pattern, with practically every cell filled, and (while you can't see them) eggs / larvae in the open cells, pollen and honey available for energy around the edges.

Natural Drop / 24 hour Infestation Levels	
0-8	Low
8-15	Moderate
15-30	High
30+	Critical

- Treating the ground under and around the hive with a mineral salt; 50 lbs costs generally less than \$7, this will just prevent the larvae from successfully leaving the hive to go into its pupae stage and starting the cycle again.
- Assure your hives are in a sunny dry (ground) location to assure that the environment is not great for the beetle. Use beetle traps in the hive but be careful with the oil used to trap, as honeybees do not fare well with oil either. Fill traps no higher than about 1/3 of the way to prevent spillage.
- Freezing frames with beetle larvae will also kill the beetle population.
- Consider feeding away from the hive to not attract beetles.
- See suggestions from Clemson University, in 'Healthy Bees' section in this issue.

If you're in the south: because of the drought and the nectar flow being long over, things are definitely winding down. Start reducing the hive to ensure there are plenty of bees to patrol it, keeping beetles and other critters in check. It may be time to pull supers.

If you're in the north: you probably have another respectable month of honey flow, depending upon local conditions. Don't be too aggressive about providing supers. This time of year other pests' populations are high; don't give the bees any unnecessary space.

Questions or comments about this article?

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 

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Healthy Bees

Bee Predators: Mites, Beetles and ...Woodpeckers?

By Camilla Bee, Editor

I've had many low days in beekeeping—like my annual March discovery of how many hives didn't overwinter, spotting a swarm (probably “my” bees) near my apiary but impossible to retrieve, and finding wax moth damage in a hive that before my vacation was seemingly going strong. That mess of worms and webs was almost more than I could stomach.

When I saw these pictures, they made me pause and reflect on my apiary issues. Thank goodness this wasn't one of my hives.

Thanks to Jim Dunn for this reminder that no matter what disasters we find in our bee yards, it most likely can always be worse.

For this unlucky beekeeper, perhaps the silver lining was that he had less of a mess to deal with thanks to these opportunistic woodpeckers.

What happened?

Jim's beekeeping buddy Tony had hives in an outyard on a farm. Tony got a call from the farmer, who had spotted two redheaded woodpeckers tearing up a hive.

After investigating, Jim and Tony speculate that the birds were after wax worms; the bees had already gone. There were four hives originally in the outyard. Two were lost to a downed tree and the other two had absconded for unknown reasons.

Questions or comments
about this article?

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. ☰



Photos courtesy of Jim Dunn.

The Drought & Honeybees

By Sean Burgess, Kentucky State Apiarist

With the high temperatures and lack of rainfall we can physically see the effects on the flora and fauna around us. Leaves are drying up and falling, crops are withering and the ground cracks. I recently returned from being out of town for a week to find our garden shriveled, our lawn brown and crunchy, and my new Bradford Pear trees bare of leaves. My attention shifted immediately to my colonies of honeybees to observe the effects of the drought upon them.

Obviously we have entered a dearth and the bees are having a hard time making a living. With a very limited nectar supply the bees' attention will shift to whatever is available around them. One of the things we will see in their opportunistic feeding is our hummingbird feeders covered with honeybees and also wasps. Yes, the wasps are suffering too.

Recently I received a call from a concerned person who reported a local gas station owner who was spraying the honeybees visiting the trash cans near his gas islands. The bees were there to retrieve what's on the bottom of pop cans and anything else sweet they can find. He stated the bees were stinging his customers.

I find that hard to fathom as foraging bees are generally only interested in just that, foraging, and not defending. Foraging honeybees will usually only sting while collecting if they are pinched. However their close proximity usually alarms non-beekeepers. I looked at my apple trees and most of the fruit has been opened up and the yellow jackets were having a field day with them.

Another thing we may observe is robbing behavior among our own colonies and feral bees as well. Honeybees are notorious robbers and will rob neighboring colonies to the point of starvation. In addition certain species of wasps may be seen attacking bee colonies and eating bees as well as invading hives for their stored supplies.

What can be done for non-beekeepers?

If bees and wasps become a problem around your home, you may want to take down your hummingbird feeders for a couple of days. The insects may forget about them and seek other sources. Tie up all garbage bags and remove food items from outside that may be attractive. Be careful when drinking a can of soda outside so you don't accidentally get a bee or wasp in your mouth. Additionally you could help the bees out by mixing some sugar water up at a ratio of 1-1 by weight, and placing it in a shallow pan and setting it up some distance away from human activity to give them a hand. Remember they need something to land on so they don't drown and are able to preen. Gravel works well for this. 1-1 can be easily mixed by taking a 1-gallon milk jug and adding 5# of sugar and topping off with hot tap water and shaking vigorously.

What can beekeepers do?

If your hives are close to your neighbors you should consider setting up an open feeding station to help keep your bees close



Photo courtesy of N. Schwartz. See this month's FAQ section on page 21 for more information on how to keep stingers away from your hummingbird feeders.

to home. Again, this can be done with shallow pans, gravel, and 1-1 syrup or a variety of other methods. You should not set these up too close to your hives but at a distance of at least 100 feet. This will help lessen the chance of a robbing frenzy.

Entrances to your hives should be reduced so the bees can more easily defend them. In addition, bees are using a lot of water right now to cool their hives and if you don't have a water source nearby you need to provide one. Adding a teaspoon of salt to a gallon of water that you're providing to them may help to keep them out of your neighbor's swimming pools as well. If your neighbors complain about bees visiting their pools you may want to offer the suggestion that if they hang a towel from the edge this will give the bees a place to land and should help to concentrate them in one area. A bottle of honey for them (the homeowner) may also help to keep the peace.

Hopefully the drought will ease and we will see an increase in forage and things will return to normal soon.

Happy Beekeeping!

[Questions or comments about this article?](#)

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 

DO's & Don'ts for Hive Beetle Issues

From the Clemson University Cooperative Extension

Do's

- maintain healthy, strong colonies to promote high bee-to-comb ratio
- monitor colonies for beetle infestation levels
- trap beetles using one or more of the trapping devices presently marketed
- physically kill or remove beetles when inspecting a colony, but do not leave equipment exposed for long periods of time which may lead to robbing
- remove weak colonies from an apiary when infested with beetle larvae and treat the soil
- extract honey from supers within 2 days of hive removal
- maintain good sanitary conditions inside and outside the honey house
- treat soil with Gard Star if beetle larvae are present in the hive
- use Check Mite + in the hive as a last resort

Don't's

- do not place colonies in shady, damp locations
- do not overmanipulate colonies when beetles are present
- do not leave colonies exposed during extended hive inspections
- do not oversuper colonies when beetles are present
- do not hesitate to move colonies to a new location away from an old apiary which has a history of beetle problems
- do not use pesticides that are not registered for SHB control

Editor's Note: We strive to bring you current, original material, but sometime other sources just say it best. Thanks Clemson!

[Questions or comments about this article?](#)

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 

Bee-Havior

Feral Bees and Bee Trees

By Kent Fenley

Editor's Note: Our January, 2012 issue has an article on Indiana beekeeper Kent's discovery decades ago of a feral colony in an old bee tree and how it inspired him to keep bees, starting last year with a colony from an about-to-be-demolished garage. When we asked for an update, Kent shared several observations and adventures. Sounds like he's about up to his knees in bees, which readers of this newsletter will likely agree is a good thing!

My brother decided to harvest the mature trees in the wooded lot where that old bee tree was. The tree was spared the chopping block, probably due to the metal fence embedded in it.

The wooded lot now looks like a tornado went through it.

Death of the Garage Hive

The bees moved in July of 2011 from an old garage unfortunately did not survive the winter. In late February I'd opened the hive and observed:

- Staining of large black spots of waste matter on the inside and outside of the hive
- Dead bees on top of the inside cover
- Dead bees in clusters, three different clusters with dead bees in the drawn comb of each cluster
- Ten out of twenty frames with drawn comb, only four of those frames were fully drawn
- Dead bees on the bottom wire mesh floor and some dead bee larvae mixed in that group
- Patches of capped honey and what looked like honey and pollen mixed; some of that honey pollen mix was black in color
- Lots of empty drawn comb; I did not see any good-looking pollen stores
- What looked like cornmeal on the bottom board, but it was comb capping or wax fragments



Photo courtesy of Kent Fenley.

The temperature that day in late February was around 60° F. I decided to clean up the hive and mourn my losses, though ten frames of drawn comb helped me feel that it was not a total loss. After reading the Walter T. Kelley newsletters I feel these bees starved to death; they did not have enough time to collect adequate pollen stores to get them through the winter since they had some good-looking capped honey. I also suspect that some of the pollen / honey stores went bad due to the black color of the honey pollen cells. I also questioned my feeding sugar water so late in the fall, and wonder if that contributed to the blackness of some of the comb cells—remembering that a black fungus grew on sugar water that leaked out of the feeders onto the cement blocks the hive was sitting on.

Getting “Back On the Horse”

I didn't want to wait around to discover another wild hive, so that evening I ordered bees from the Walter T. Kelley Company. I want to compare the purchased cultivated bees with the wild bees so I don't fill my hives with an underperforming workforce. I want to see if the wild bees collect and store pollen and nectar as well as the purchased bees; I assume cultivated bees are selected for more desirable traits. I know that the size of the cavities in old tree can be small and the area for the bees limited so there is no need to collect large amounts of pollen and nectar for wild bee survival.

More Bees!

As good fortune and the grace of God would have it—and something of a shock to me—an old tree about a quarter of a mile from the old bee tree was starting to die from the top down. Strong winds knocked off the top and left a large limb in the road. When I discovered the limb I noticed bees swarming around one end. This was around the first of March; the weather was 60° F and windy. I didn't even realize those bees existed as they were twenty feet high in the tree.

This tree stood in the front yard of my great, great grandfather's home, torn down several years ago. Fortunately a week earlier I had cleaned up the hive of failed bees. It was late in the day when I discovered the bees. I grabbed a chainsaw and skid loader and slowly moved the dead branch and bees to their new home with ten frames of partially drawn comb. That evening, I removed as much comb and bees as I could and placed them in two empty medium supers with the frames and foundation removed.

That night the temperature dropped to the middle twenties and a few of the stray bees were frozen by the next morning. With the help of a chainsaw, the last of the bees that had clustered overnight and the honey comb were placed in



Photo courtesy of Kent Fenley.



Photos courtesy of Kent Fenley.

their new home. As I was moving bees I tried to find the queen. However, it proved to be too big of a mess. I took a photo of the limb and hive cavity to show how small the cavity was—a little larger than a basketball.

The bees seemed to be nice and hairy with a little more black coloration on their tail ends. I was able to scare a few out of the hive on a mild but windy day for a photo opportunity.

On April 19th I opened the hive to inspect them and clean out the old comb that was extracted from the tree cavity. I noticed most of that old comb was empty; however I did find some new brood in the old stacked comb. I then removed the old comb from the empty super boxes and shook off the bees into the frames below, trying to be gentle. I worked slowly to avoid injuring the queen but the queen was not found. I know she must have survived due to the new brood.

I placed the old comb around the base of the hive to let the bees recover what they could before the creatures of the night (coons, opossums and fox) could carry things away. I am happy to see these bees were surviving in spite of the late winter relocation.

Wild vs. Package Bees

May 5th I drove to Clarkson, Kentucky to pick up my new hive of bees at Walter T. Kelley. Everything went like clockwork, with the bees in their new home that evening. These new bees seemed to know what to do and when to do it as there was a small comb in their box with syrup stored in it. This gave me two hives of bees that I am feeding sugar water to; they do love their sugar water.

On June 22, 2012 I checked the two hives to see what progress they had made since I started feeding sugar water. I lost track of how many 4-pound bags of sugar I used.

The bees that came from the dead tree limb had filled the top box of their hive and I tried to remove the top box to check out the box on the bottom but it was too heavy to remove. I saw there were bees in the bottom box so I replaced the top box; they are doing better than expected. They had the advantage of several frames of drawn comb.

The bees purchased from Kelley's were started on new foundation. They had filled about half the frames in the top box. I decided to double their sugar water to help them catch up. As I was pulling frames looking for the queen the bees started coming at me in waves so I quit my inspection and was impressed by how intimidating that was for me to have waves of bees flying at me. There are clearly more bees there than when they started and they act like they have something to defend.

I talked with Jack Hawkins (a beekeeper with more experience than me) who decided I need more experience finding the queen so he volunteered to use one of his (nuc) hives for practice.

Editor's Note: We were inspired by Kent's story, as it offers several great things to keep in mind. Among them:

- It pays to have equipment ready, as you never know when you'll run in to a swarm or wild hive.
- Mentors are wonderful things.
- Drawn comb provides a substantial advantage.
- Quickly spotting queens takes practice.
- We all make mistakes and have losses; analyze and learn from them.
- The Walter T. Kelley Company is a great place for all things bee!

Questions or comments about [this article?](#)

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 

Bee-Yond & Bee-Hind the Hives

The Inspiration of Honeybees

By Gretchen Conti

Editor's Note: A few months ago we learned about some breathtaking bee photography by Jonathan Dy. Beekeepers love to watch bees, and he's successfully captured them so we can study and appreciate them even more. Thank you so much to his longtime friend and roommate Gretchen for sharing their story with us!

If you'd like to see and learn more about Jonathan's work, visit www.jonathandy.com or <http://jonathandy.tumblr.com/>.

In the early spring of 2010, urban beekeepers Corine Singfield and Devon Girard moved two honeybee hives into our backyard. My roommate, artist / photographer Jonathan Dy, and I lived in Strathcona, Vancouver. We had started our first vegetable garden the previous summer and we were excited by our successes. The honeybee move took place after sunset when the bees were all in their hive. It went smoothly until the following morning when the neighbor closest to the hives expressed concern over their proximity; she wanted them removed. We agreed to put up a barrier that would prevent them from entering her backyard, but after only a couple days she was satisfied with their passivity and the barrier was no longer needed.

With the garden still dormant from the winter the bees captured all of our attention and swayed our imaginations. We would spend hours outside with the hives—I would sit next to them reading a book or simply watching; Jonathan would take photos and document the experience <http://www.behance.net/gallery/Urban-Beekeeping-in-Vancouver/802861>.

The presence of the hives on a warm, sunny day was all-encompassing. The buzz that radiated, sweet wafts of honey, and the drama of nature: each bee carrying out its duty, deaf to any need that falls outside the collective. We learned about the practices of beekeeping and observed hive inspections, including opportunities to see the queen, taste the honey and learn the different tasks the worker bees took on. We were just beginning to appreciate the sweetness of a honey crop when we received an eviction notice. The landlord wanted to sell, and our adventures in hosting hives came to an abrupt end.



Photos courtesy of Jonathan Dy.

In the spring/summer of 2011 I joined the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (www.woof.ca) and traveled to two farms in British Columbia, both with bee hives. The first was on Mayne Island with the organic farmer and beekeeper Ron Pither. Ron is an extremely resourceful and hardworking farmer who tells the stories of a man who has lived several lives, one of them as a beekeeper. Having operated dozens of hives at a time and a beekeeper equipment store, Ron now only keeps three hives on Varalaya Farm. His approach is as non-invasive and intuitive as any I've seen. He wore no veil, no gloves, and preferred to learn the health and state of the bees through observing activity outside the hive. Working with Ron in June and July we kept a watchful eye over swarm cells and assessed the general health of the hives. He also taught me how to repair and maintain frames and boxes.

After my stay with Ron, I changed environments drastically and went to a young, energetic farming cooperative called Golden Ears Farm in Chase, B.C. It was there that I came across my first top bar hive and had the pleasure of trying to catch a swarm (an unsuccessful attempt in the end).

Though my time spent on both farms was rich with experiences and learning, I realized that to fully learn the ways of beekeeping I would have to find an environment where I was surrounded by bees.

Through friends in the Vancouver urban gardening community I got in contact with Jane's Honey Bees (<http://www.janeshoneybees.com/>), a 700-hive family operation working out of White Rock, B.C. Our agreement is simple: in exchange for my labor, J and Liz teach me the tasks of the day, working together at first and then progressing to semi-independent work. We spent my first day assessing the strength of the hives and trying to facilitate their growth via moving frames within the boxes and sometimes amongst the different hives. We looked for signs of productive queens and killed those that were laying drone brood, being sure to insert a pheromone stick in any hive that was left queenless. In the 32-hive yard I saw several queens, watched baby bees busting through their capped wombs and with mixed emotions squashed my first unproductive queen. In the weeks since, I've continued working with Jane's Honey Bees, learning to anticipate and troubleshoot the wild desires of honeybees.

I had planned to get my own hives for next summer, but a local beekeeper has decided to sell his hives at a good price. With the experience I've gained through the years and especially with all that I'm learning at Jane's Honey Bees I've decided to take on my own operation. I've purchased six hives and am looking for homes in the backyards of my neighbors and in community gardens that are nearby. I hope to be as resourceful as the honeybee and expand from simply harvesting honey to pollen, wax and perhaps royal jelly.

The first book that I ever read about beekeeping noted that honeybees are the only creatures on earth that don't need to harm any living being (plant or animal) in its natural life cycle. Its only line of defense leads to its own death. Honeybees not only live in harmony with nature but they produce an immense amount of energy that feeds populations, worldwide. Their survival is paramount, and their existence is inspirational.

Questions or comments about this article?
Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 



Photo courtesy of Jonathan Dy.

Buzzing in Your Pocket

By Camilla Bee, Editor

I love the cartoon where a beekeeper freaks out because there's a buzzing in the pocket of his bee suit...until he realizes that it is only his cell phone. Been there!

Thanks to a new app, you can now have bees harmlessly buzzing in your pocket. Called "Honeybees!", this beautiful app is available for iOS devices, including the Apple iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad. The app covers a broad spectrum of beekeeping information, from why you should keep bees, to their health (and yours), to commonly asked questions and fundamental information on beekeeping.

I especially appreciate the "Bee Biology" section. Like many beekeepers, I've experienced the phenomenon of being in a social situation when people learn I'm a beekeeper, and I'm then swarmed by folks with lots of questions. Pictures are worth a thousand words, and there are some excellent photos in this app, including this one of eggs at the bottom of cells, and this one of bee larvae.



Photos courtesy of Dan Sefton.

I've found this section particularly helpful when I review the life stages of the honeybee with others, along with the one on related insects so I can show kids the differences between the darlings that we love and the other often nasty stinging insects.

The app is optimized to take advantage of the iPad's large display and both retina versions of the iPhone and iPad. This includes full resolution pictures that display remarkably well on the large retina display of the new iPad and the iPhone. Honeybees is available in the app store worldwide at:

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/honeybees!/id365844999?mt=8>

Honeybees! was developed by Dan Sefton, a computer professional by day and a beekeeper / programmer on the side. Dan's developed a number of apps for the iPhone, including HoneyBees!, where he attempts to share his experiences through photos and descriptions of beekeeping.

Questions or comments about this article?

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The Travelling Beehive

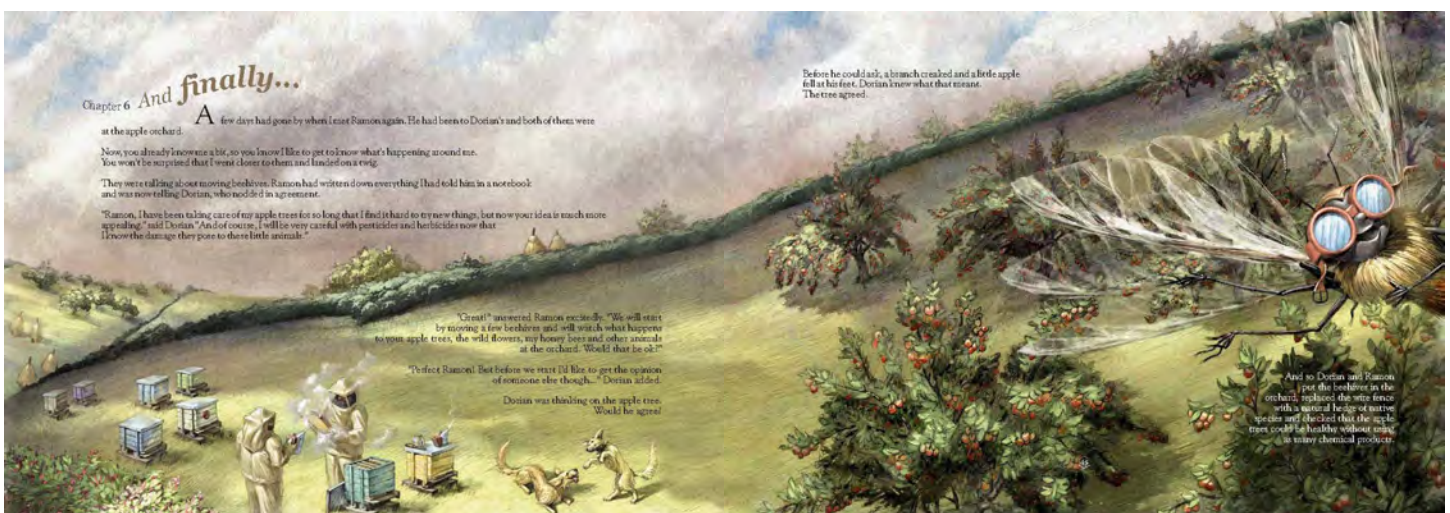
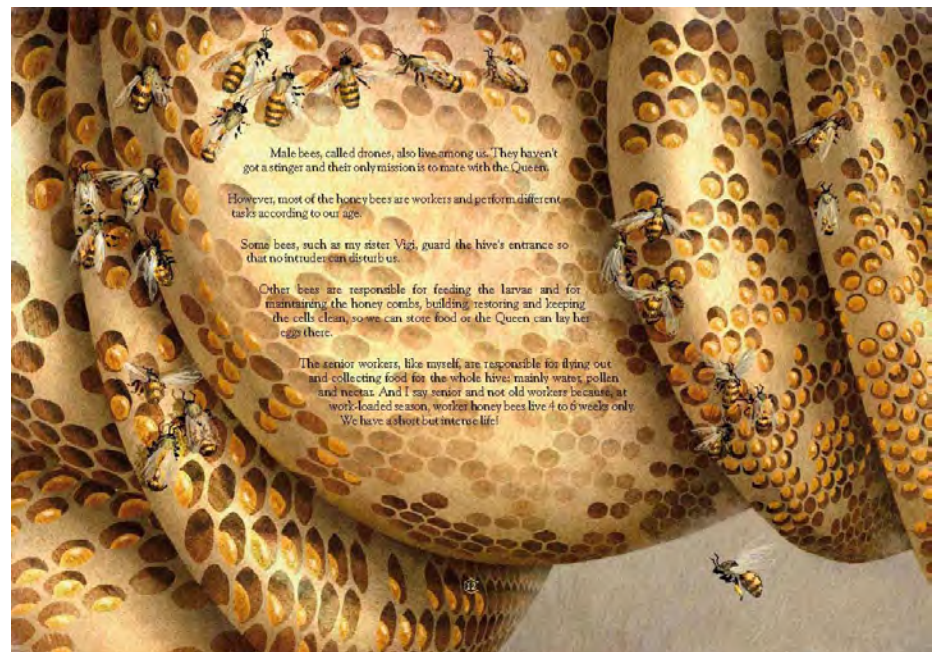
By Juan Hernaz, Illustrator of "The Travelling Beehive"



The Travelling Beehive is a new free illustrated book that examines in depth the importance of pollination for our current lifestyle.

Halfway between literature and popular science, deeply documented, this book offers a didactic view of the activity of the domestic bee and other pollinators, for children and for adults, beekeepers, biologists and entomologists.

A Teacher's Guide has also been developed to help non-experts to understand in depth the details represented in each of the sheets.





Its printed edition (spanish language) will be distributed next September in schools and libraries of the North of Spain as an educational resource. The authors and the institutions behind this publication believe that its presence is important and necessary beyond the Spanish school: the children of today are the men of tomorrow.

You can read and download The Travelling Beehive for free (in PDF and also epub file for iPad and other tablets) directly from the following links:

EPUB files (for iPad and tablets):

- <http://apolo.entomologica.es/cont/materiales/epub/ttb.epub>
- <http://apolo.entomologica.es/cont/materiales/epub/ttbtg.epub> (teacher's guide)

PDF files:

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View on-line book:

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In the bilingual web sites <http://www.juanhernaz.com> and <http://juanhernaz.blogspot.com> you will find, as well as direct downloads in different file formats, more information about this book, characteristics of the printed edition and other data of interest.

We think this book could be interesting for all the people: please, help us to spread it!

The Travelling Beehive has been published as a the main part of APOLO (National Observatory of Pollination Agents, <http://apolo.entomologica.es> - only spanish) that is being developed in Gijón (Asturias, Spain), edited by the Atlantic Botanic Garden of Gijón in collaboration with the Spanish National Association of Entomologists and the Iberoamerican Center for Biodiversity, and with the support of the Biodiversity Foundation of the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (among other entities). The spanish language printed version is being distributed for free in the educational centers and libraries of Asturias (Spain), and other entities of the State.

Questions or comments about this article?

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 

The Wonders of Bee Pollen

By Lady Spirit Moon

Bee pollen contains all known enzymes, at least 22 amino acids, 18 vitamins, 25 minerals, 59 trace elements, 14 fatty acids, 11 carbohydrates and is approximately 25% protein.

Bee pollen is a probiotic for honeybees; honey is their prebiotic. Bee pollen is extremely rich in carotenes, which are metabolic precursors of Vitamin A, is high in B Complex, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, and Lecithin.

Bee pollen contains over 50% more protein than beef, yet its fat content is very low. It is also an excellent vegetarian source of protein, typically possessing more of the essential amino acids, pound for pound, than animal proteins like meat, eggs, and dairy products.

It improves brain function, eyes, and the digestive tract; strengthens capillaries and protects the body against the negative effects of chemotherapy.

Just a few grains ingested can detect allergies.

Editor's Note: Lady Spirit Moon is an ambassador for the Center for Honeybee Research, www.chbr.org. We featured the Center a few issues ago, and are making it easier for our readers to help the Center help honeybees. Go to www.kelleybees.com, where you'll see a link to the Center for Honeybee Research's home page. The Walter T. Kelley Company will donate a dollar for every contribution our readers make. Thank you!

Questions or comments about this article?

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Beek Hint

Stressed Bees May Take it Out on You!

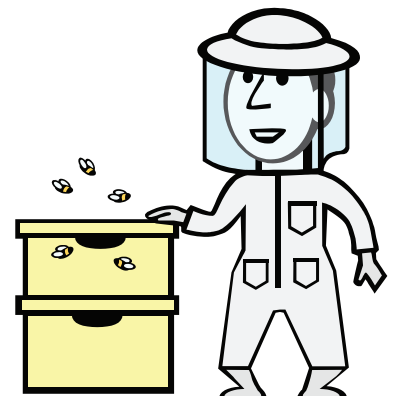
Tim Carter of Louisville shared that he learned a valuable lesson after getting home from visiting family:

"The day before we left, (wife) Donna and I inspected our hive. We were in regular street clothes, didn't smoke the bees and everything was fine.

"Two weeks later, during the 100-degree plus temperatures, we came home. The first thing we did was go to the back yard to inspect our hive. We did the same thing that we had done before we left. WOW, what a difference. We got through the first brood box and half way through the second one. Then Donna told me I needed to back away because the bees were starting to sound angry.

"I noticed the increased activity, but I wanted to get the hive back together. Donna started flicking bees off me and got stung once. By the time we got the hive back together I was stung four times.

"I will listen to my beekeeping mentor next time when he tells me high heat and low honey flow causes our babies to stress out. I will suit up for a while till the weather cools off. Still having a blast keeping bees."



Conferences/Seminars/Classes

Note: As a courtesy, we're delighted to share your association's major event announcements as space allows. These events are different from those listed in the Show Schedule, which are events Kelley's will be attending. The events listed here we are not (currently) planning on attending. We'd love to, but we can't be everywhere. If you'd like us to list your event, please send the information by the 10th of each month for publication in the next month to: KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com.

North Carolina

The Center for Honeybee Research in Asheville, North Carolina is sponsoring a one-day event entitled "What is Natural Beekeeping?" on August 11, 2012, at Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, NC.

Speakers include

- Michael Bush, widely recognized for his research on natural beekeeping and extensive sharing. www.bushfarms.com/bees.htm
- Ed Levi, EAS Master Beekeeper and recently retired Arkansas State Apiary Specialist / Inspector.
- Roger Simonds, Manager of the USDA Lab in Gastonia, NC.
- Carl Chesick, Director of the WNC Center for Honeybee Research.

For more information, go to <http://www.centerforhoneybeeresearch.org/Happenings/CalendarofEvents/tabid/61/ModuleID/392/ItemID/22/mctl/EventDetails/Default.aspx> 🍯

National Honeybee Day

National Honeybee Day this year is August 18th, with the theme "Sustainable Agriculture Starts with Honeybees!" There are a variety of programs and opportunities to participate; check out nationalhoneybeeday.com.

Show Schedule

North Alabama Beekeeper Symposium

- Saturday Aug 11, 2012
- Calhoun Community College 6250 U.S. Hwy 31 N. Tanner, AL 35671

2012 EAS Conference

- Monday Aug 13, 2012
- 2012 EAS Conference @ University of Vermont for more Info www.easternapiculture.org/conferences/eas-2012.html

Georgia State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Saturday Sep 8, 2012
- More Details to Come

Tennessee State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Sep 28, 2012
- September 28-29 TN Tech University Cookeville, TN

2012 WAS Annual Conference

- Thursday Oct 4, 2012
- 2012 WAS Annual Conference @ Embassy Suites Hotel, 15920 West Valley Highway, Seattle, WA 98188

Alabama State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Oct 12, 2012
- October 12-13 Taylor Rd. Baptist Church

Arkansas State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Oct 12, 2012
- October 12-13 Ozark Folk Center State Park

Mississippi State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Oct 26, 2012
- October 26-27 More Details To Come

Wisconsin Honey Producers Fall Meeting

- Thursday Nov 1, 2012
- November 1-4 Waupaca, WI 54981

Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Nov 9, 2012
- November 9-10 Lewisburg, PA 17837

Iowa State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Friday Nov 16, 2012
- November 16-17 Marshalltown, IA 50158

Louisiana State Beekeepers Fall Meeting

- Monday Dec 31, 2012

BeeCause

4-H and Bees in Muhlenberg County

In October of 2011 Darrell Simpson, the Muhlenberg County Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources, and 4-H Program Assistant Judy McGehee began planning how to involve their youth in becoming beekeepers and learn about the important role that bees play in the lives of every person.

The “Paradise Bee Keepers,” a beekeeping association in Muhlenberg County, was approached about financially helping the 4-H members get started. The Paradise Bee Keepers also assigned members to mentor the kids as they began their beekeeping journeys.

Word went out about this project and seven youths—Haley and Taylor Cornette, Josh and David McDowell, Olivia Perkins, Hannah McGehee, and Jonathon Henry—signed on for this new adventure.

Darrell Simpson contacted the Walter T. Kelley Company and ordered complete bee kits for each youth and placed an order for bees with a marked queen for each. Mentor Shurley Stirsman and Darrell picked up the kits and the fun began with the building of boxes and frames and getting them painted and ready for the arrival of their bees.

In April the 4-H youths headed to Clarkson, Kentucky to the headquarters of Walter T. Kelley to pick up their new bees. While at Kelley’s the youths enjoyed a demonstration from the staff on how to get the bees into their new homes.

It was an exciting day as each member and mentor came home and installed the new bees. 4-H members have to monitor their boxes and make sure all is going well. Most have already added supers to their boxes for their expanding colonies. Educational programs of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.

Questions or comments
about this article?

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 



Mentor Earnest Cornett and Nathan Lovell helping to construct bee boxes.



Hannah McGehee finishing her frames with the wax sheets.



4-H member Haley Cornette shows us what our new bee equipment looks like.



Mentor Nathan Lovell and 4-H member Olivia Perkins prepare to install bees as family and other 4-H members have a look.



4-H Member Hannah McGehee and David Stanley looking for the queen before putting on a half super for her expanding bee colony.



4-H youth Olivia Perkins, Haley and Taylor Cornette, Josh and David McDowell, Jonathan Henry, Hannah McGehee and parents along with their mentor Shurley Stirrsman pick up bees for their new boxes at Walter T. Kelley in Clarkson, Kentucky.

Featured Products

Ventilated Jacket & Coveralls

While others are offering ventilated protecting clothing, Kelley's is making this technology affordable.

The polyurethane-coated 65% polyester and 35% cotton mesh garment has three layers to make it more sting resistant. Jackets are available in sizes Large - 2XL

Also available in full coveralls (Cat # V65) in sizes Small - 2XL and with a hat/veil combo.



Cat # V25H



Cat # V65

Youth Pullover Cotton Jacket

Kelley-made 100% cotton pullover jacket is perfect for younger beekeepers. Whether inspecting the hives or assisting, this jacket will provide the protection they need.

Features Velcro® adjustable sleeves, elastic waist, and a detachable veil.

Available in a zippered folding veil or zippered hooded veil. Helmet required for folding veil. Available in size S (4-8) or L (12-14)



Cat # 25PC-Y



Cat # 25CH-Y

**Be sure to check
the web for
our Hot Sizzling
Summer Sales!**

<http://bit.ly/MVPeW4>

FAQs

Please note: Correspondence submitted to the Kelley Bee News Modern Beekeeping newsletter (or subsequent publications) becomes the property of the Walter T. Kelley Company. We reserve the right to print or not print any correspondence and it may be edited for length and/or clarity. It may be published or republished in any format or medium and/or licensed to others for publication. If we publish your correspondence, we may attribute it to you and may include your name and city, unless you expressly request that you remain anonymous.

Q: I live in Nashville, just two hours away from you, and I know you are experiencing the same extremely hot, dry weather. I have a two-part question.

First, I have screen bottom boards with west traps. Would you remove the bottom tray to allow for more ventilation? And second, because most of the flowers are dead or dying because of the heat and no rain, would you feed them? Looks like their nectar sources are scarce right now. I'm using gallon baggie feeders with 1:1 sugar water and would like to know if you approve or not. The girls attack it with a vengeance and it's empty in a little more than a day.

Love your products and newsletter. I missed your field day this year but several members from my club told me how great it was, so I will plan to attend next year. Thanks a bunch.

A: Beekeeper and Kelley President Jane Burgess fielded this question for us:

Yes, remove the traps but also assure they don't have more room than they need. If you pulled honey and put supers on you may want to work on getting them back to two boxes so they can adequately protect their home from hive beetles and wax moth.

Both fresh water and feed are important when nectar and pollen sources are unavailable—I like to do a community feed about sixty feet away so it doesn't attract hive beetles to the hive. You can also offer some pollen patties so the queen will continue laying, keeping the hive strong. These should also be fed about sixty feet from any hives, as they are a beetle attractant.

Q: Got a phone call today (late July) from a woman with a HUGE topless tree with a beehive inside. The top blew off years ago and the tree now looks precarious, so they've decided to have it removed. The tree is between two homes with not much clearance on either side so the tree removal company must chainsaw sections and lift them out with a crane. They refuse to touch the tree until the bees are dead, or it is winter so the bees won't be active. Unless I can come up with a way to get the bees out now, the tree company will tackle it in the winter (and the bees will likely die.) Ideas on how we can remove them safely first? And any tips on capturing a hive from a tree?

A: We turned to Cleo Hogan, inventor of the Swarm Harvester and all around bee expert, for his thoughts. He noted that there aren't a lot of good options, and that "Twenty feet up is too high to safely trap, and it is too late in the year to trap them out, as that can take weeks."

He added, "I have never known bees to be bad when a tree is being cut down with a chain saw. The smoke from the chain saw is the same as smoke from a smoker. I would try to supply the tree company workers with veils and gloves and cut the tree now. Then remove the bees, carry off the comb and honey and let the tree people do the rest.

Smoking before they cut is not really necessary, but does not hurt either. It would force lots of bees out of the tree and out of harm's way when the tree falls.

Don't block the entrance to keep bees in the tree. If you do, more bees will be killed when the tree hits the ground, or die from being drenched in honey when the comb breaks up.

Your probability of finding the queen is low. It is most important to remove all wood which has the smell of the hive, all honey, and all brood from the area. Have a hive with two or three drawn combs, grab handfuls of bees, shake them off the pieces of wood and place them in the hive. If you can find a little comb with brood on it, place it in the hive, (you can tie it to a frame or just set it on the bottom board inside the hive) and once all residue of their colony has been removed, the bees will go into the hive and the queen will follow. It is important to watch because if the queen does not like the hive, she will take the bees and leave, normally settling very close to the area, and then you handle it just like capturing any swarm.

Very important to keep watch and see if you got the queen. It will soon be getting late to buy a queen if the feral queen is killed or you don't get her. You might have to give them a frame or two of honey from another hive to get them through the winter."

Q: How do I move bees? If during the summer, how? Best time of day, minimum distance, etc. I have a hive I want to move closer to my house before winter as they're in an open area ideal for the summer, but probably not the winter.

A: Dr. Larry Connor, prominent speaker and author, fielded this question for us.

Moving bees 100 feet?

- Move two feet a day for fifty days or
- Move main hive to new location and place a nucleus where the colony was to capture returning foragers or
- Provide winter protection with bales of straw, a snow/wind fence, a woven fence, etc.

The key is to maintain sun exposure during winter and reduce the wind—more critical in the far north, less of an issue in the mid-south. I've used wood pallets propped beside the hive out of desperation.

Moving bees to another apiary? Anytime.

- At night when bee flight is done.
- Two miles minimum.
- Ventilation. I'd have the screened bottom board open and a top moving screen.
- Screen the entrance—put on after flight ends and remove when secure in the new location.

Of course, everything should be fastened together with moving straps, hive staples, or (in a panic) duct tape. Every beekeeper should have a moving strap AND hive staples at all times.

Q: I received my 2 queens in the mail today and they were in great shape. I am a 2nd year beekeeper, and I want to replace a queen in a swarm hive because she (or her daughters) are quite aggressive. My questions are:

1. Do I remove the old queen and leave the hive without a queen for a day, and then insert the cage, or do I put the new queen in the cage in the hive right away?
2. The weather here has turned brutally hot! Today it is 104° F! We never get this type of hot weather in Indiana. Is it safe to the "girls" to get into the hive at this temperature? How long can I keep the queen in her cage? I could get in the hive in the morning, but this hive will consume me.



Cat # 678, available of course from Kelley's.



Cat # 178, Hive Staples



Cat # 345, Hive Strap.

A: We again turned to Jane for this question, as she's had one of those hives. She shared that when she elected to requeen that hive she surprisingly found it queenless.

Jane's advice: You want the hive to be queenless for at least 24 hours—suit up well and check the gloves and veil twice!

When you remove the queen, pinch her against the replacement queen; assure you give the caged queen a drop of water daily.

Good luck. They do get better (generally it takes about six weeks) but if you have many hives that gene pool may have spread a bit due to drones mating with other queens. I have a corner that I often dread going into; thank goodness they are great honey producers. It makes it a bit more tolerable.

Q: I love to read the newsletter. Here's a photo of bees lined up like pigs at a trough on my hummingbird feeders. I do NOT enjoy that! Anyone have a hint to prevent the problem? (Vaseline does not work.) Thanks for a great publication.

N. Schwartz

H Pocklington wrote: Try Vicks Vapo-rub or one of the products used to get bees out of supers (Fischers Bee-Quick, etc). Birds do not have a good sense of smell.

J Albrecht, of Montana, suggested: One reason the bees are taking from the feeder: they need water. I have found that as soon as I start the sprinklers in the yard and out by the bee hives, the bees stop coming around the house looking for water. We have 4-5 hummingbird feeders every year, feeding about 40 birds. We do not have any problem with the bees on the feeders.

J. Fischer, of New York, provided these insights: I've fixed this problem multiple times. The photo in your newsletter reveals two problems, both most easily solved with the purchase of a better-quality hummingbird feeder.

The photo shows bees lined up at the seam between the reservoir and the base of the feeder. This indicates that sugar syrup is leaking there or was sloshed there when the reservoir was screwed into the base.

If it is leaking, one or the other may have a crack and need to be glued.

If it is not leaking, wiping off the rim of the reservoir and the threaded part of the base when refilling should remove the residue.

The bees around the "flower" indicate a badly-designed hummingbird feeder. The tubes down to the nectar should be much longer than a bee's proboscis. The bees are showing us that this feeder has such short tube depths that bees can feed where only the hummingbirds should feed.

The flowers can be replaced with "Par-A-Sol - BEEPROOFFT" retrofit flowers, but it is often cheaper to buy a new feeder that is bee-proof, such as the "HummZinger" or the Backyard Nature Products "Hummerfest."

Hummingbirds have tongues that twice as long as their beaks, so this means that any hummingbird can easily handle a 1-inch tube depth. Nectar an inch below the top of the tube would be far beyond the reach of any bee.



Photo courtesy of N. Schwartz.

Questions or comments about this article?

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 🍯

Sweet as Honey

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As readers of this newsletter know, bees are amazing. Here's further proof:

The Latest Weapon in the War on Cancer: Honey Bees (<http://bit.ly/Pa6MhQ>)

“ This was my first time ever seeing the newsletter ... I read the entire thing. Couldn't wait to see what other fun things were in it after I saw the picture of Charlotte and her twin brother.

J. Kitzinger, Owosso, MI

Last month, a reader asked if maybe beekeepers could develop an immunity to Lyme disease; he'd seen some indications that there is a link. Here's one response we received:

“ I live in Minnesota and at least four beekeepers I know have had Lyme disease. Bee stings offer no protection.

L. Struthers

Need motivation to share your experience on beekeeping and Lyme disease, or your opinion on treating hives with medications? This newsletter goes to 13,000+ folks, and they appreciate you sharing your knowledge. Check out this email:

“ Good-day. Many thanks to all the relevant information that you have been communicating to us. Here at BKAZ we have found the materials through your newsletter to be very informative and guiding. Looking forward to a continuous relationship.

Regards

Chaipa (BKAZ National Coordinator), Zimbabwe

Hopefully by the time this August issue is distributed, the drought will be over. But that's doubtful. Make sure you're keeping your bees (and yourself) hydrated. Sponges in a birdbath work, as does this, shared by Jim Dunn. It's a 200+ gallon container which trickles water into a sled. And now you know what they use sleds for in the south! 🍋



A lucky beekeeper sent us this photo of a lovely swarm, which weighed nearly 40 pounds. Photo courtesy of Stacy, from Molalla, OR.



Photo courtesy of Jim Dunn.

Foraging for Fun

By Camilla Bee, Editor



In March we ran this intriguing photo of curious bees, and asked readers for captions of what they might be saying. A few more delightful ones have recently been submitted:

“ You put your right leg in, you put your right leg out. Do the hokey-pokey...
B. Johnson

“ See that spot on the collar where the zipper isn’t quite closed? On the count of three,
let’s all attack there!
L. Beech

If something comes to mind when you see these furry darlings, please share with KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com! We also welcome your photos, recipes, and interesting bee-related stories.

Last month marked our third anniversary. We offered up one of our fun bee magnets in appreciation for your answers to one, two or all of these questions.

The responses have been wonderful, and we look forward to sharing the wisdom we’re collecting. Because your answers are proving to be such a rich source of information for all beekeepers, we want to encourage you to share your insights and experiences (good and bad). We’re extending the free magnet offer until the end of August.

Some of the responses have also been quite enjoyable; here are a few of them.

1. What’s one thing you wished you’d known/understood when you started keeping bees?

“ That bees can be so wonderfully creative when it comes to dying off in big bunches:
“Shall we all poop ourselves to death from Nosema? Splendid idea! Should we all croak
in a big clump with a full frame of honey only an inch away? Certainly! Might we crawl
up and commit mass suicide on top of the inner cover? Why of course!”
I really thought bees were smarter than that (and beekeepers, for that matter).
T. Springer

2. What do you like or dislike about this newsletter?

“ I like the practicality of the writing and the depth of responses to the common problems that beekeepers face. The newsletter’s articles often anticipate the very issue that I’m trying to solve. Also, the newsletter’s editor set me up on a blind date with her cousin, who I ended up marrying.
T. Springer

3. Why do you keep bees?

“ I don’t keep them; that’s just a rumor. They’re free to come and go as they please.
V Marek 🍯

1. What’s one thing you wished you’d known/understood when you started keeping bees?

2. What do you like or dislike about this newsletter?

3. Why do you keep bees?

Please email your answer(s) to KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com, and please remember to include your snail-mail address so we can send you a magnet.

Recipes

HONEY/CINNAMON TOAST, EASY AS 1,2,3

For each slice of bread:

Spread with 1 T. coconut oil

Drizzle 1-2 T honey

Sprinkle with cinnamon

Bake @ 350 degrees about 10 minutes.

Submitted by Mary K Franklin, Walter T. Kelley Co.

HONEY-BASIL LEMONADE

Makes 4 servings.

2 cups of water, divided

1/4 cup of honey

2/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

4 large fresh basil leaves, finely torn

Combine 2/3 cup of the water and the honey in a small saucepan.

Cook, stirring continuously until honey is dissolved.

Remove from heat.

Combine lemon juice and basil leaves in a pitcher.

Press the basil leaves with a wooden spoon to bruise the leaves.

Stir in remaining 1 1/3 cups of water and honey mixture.

Serve over ice. Enjoy!

Note: For a more attractive drink, add a slice of lemon if desired.

Submitted by Rhonda Meredith.

We love to eat!

And would like to publish your favorite honey recipes.

Please send them to:

KelleyBeesEditor@gmail.com.



Dronings from a Queen Bee

Children, and Bees, Moving On

By Charlotte Hubbard

When you're throwing an outdoor event like a graduation party, there are plenty of worries. Will it be too warm? Enough food? What if it storms? What if everyone comes at once? Or no one comes?

Wally's family recently worried about those things for daughter Sarah's high school graduation party. And as is so often true in life, you often worry for nothing. While the day was perhaps a bit too warm, the food was fabulous and guests came and went over time, allowing for everyone to relax in the shade in the beautiful backyard.

A few uninvited guests showed up. It happens—perhaps some high school friends brought along some other friends. No big deal. There was certainly enough mouth-watering barbeque.

And then a few more uninvited guests show up. They seem to find each other, like they planned to meet at that festive venue and crash the party. That was a little annoying, both that they showed up uninvited, and that they hung together and didn't bother to mingle. Oh well, what are you going to do?

And even more uninvited guests showed up.

The gathered friends and family of Sarah paid attention to this growing number of "intruders," noticing that their behavior and demeanor was a bit different, that they didn't bother to say hello to Sarah, that they clustered away from everyone sort of to themselves, that they all had stingers.

My brother-in-law Jim was invited to Sarah's graduation party. Jim was sipping an icy beverage and making small talk when he, like so many others, noticed the uninvited guests gathering on a limb over a picnic table. He immediately called me up.

"Up," he said, "what are you doing RIGHT NOW?"

I explained that I'd just come in from working hives at an outyard and unloading all that equipment, and was hot, sweaty and starving.

"Well," he explained, "I'm at a graduation party with a swarm of bees. You interested? There are also really good meatballs here; you could probably sneak a few."

Free bees? Absolutely. And meatballs? Bonus! I reloaded the truck with all the equipment I'd just unloaded and headed out.

If I'd understood prior to meeting him what a great sense of humor that Wally, Sarah's father, had, my bee-keeping buddies and I would've fully suited up and "Ghostbusted" our way into the party. But, not knowing if we'd freak out folks, we decided to first subtly slip in and check out the swarm. We even grabbed lemonade and meatballs (and brownies and chips and some more meatballs) so it looked like we were real guests as we nonchalantly made our way to the bees.

It was a small swarm, conveniently reachable with a small step ladder. The grad party was winding down. Because the bees showed no sign of leaving, and many of the guests had already gone, we decided to capture them. My experience has shown that swarming bees are quite docile. The remaining guests were

generally interested in how we were going to capture the swarm, so we decided to put on a show for them—right after I finished a small plate of veggies and dip of course.

We brought in a nuc and stepladder. We suited up—tucking pants into socks, checking that our gloves were snug, zipping our hoods, all with a flourish. Thinking about Facebook and the graduation scrapbook, Wally posed us for pictures with guest-of-honor Sarah, who declined our invitation to wear the extra bee suit and help.

We thoroughly sprayed the small swarm with sugar water—I figured if I was drenched in sweat they should join me in dripping liquid. This made them sticky and slower, and probably a bit cooler. I considered spraying myself as well.

We brushed the bees off the limb and they largely fell into the box with a swoosh and a splat. Several dozen bees circled the spot on the limb where the small swarm had initially gathered. I explained to Wally that we'd probably just let them, well, be. If we opened the nuc to sweep them in, we'd let an equal number out. But we'd hang out for a while to make sure there weren't more than a few dozen (and because the cake was really good). Besides, what always happens when folks find out you're a beekeeper was happening: people were swarming us with questions.

As I stood there in my bee suit, hood open, gloves tucked in my back pocket and a meatball in my mouth, a grinning guest came up to me.

"Be straight with me," he gestured with his carrot stick. "Everything Wally does is over-the-top, a bit beyond the usual. Did he hire you guys to do this? Because people will be talking about the graduation party with the bees all summer."

He was joking—I think. I explained that we weren't hired. We were certainly willing to show up in bee suits at social events for a fee, but it is hard to find bees who will swarm at the right time and to the right location. In fact, my bees are well-known for swarming at the wrong times, and it is never to a low-hanging branch in my backyard.

After about 15 minutes (or, if you're counting calories, after about 3,000 more), we left with our new bees and a couple of cookies. Within an hour, they were installed at my apiary. The bees, not the cookies, although those were also "installed." We named the hive Sarah.

I'm delighted to report that two months later, Sarah has been crowned with a second deep box and seems well on her way to building up for the winter.

We hope its future is as bright as the young lady's whose party they crashed.



Beekeeper Dov and new graduate Sarah.

Questions or comments about this article?

Please go to kelleybees.com/blog. 🍯