The Texas Beekeepers Association
Journal

May / Jun 2021 *www.texasbeekeepers.org* Issue 21-3

President's Report
from Ashley Ralph

Well, we've had rain and shine, freeze and heat. This year continues to be an interesting one as we creep into the Texas summer. Reports of delayed flowers and some general shortage of forage mean that many bees have had to be fed more than usual this time of year.

This will be a short update because there are many updates throughout this issue, however, I wanted to take a moment to recognize the TBA Legislative Committee and especially, Leesa Hyder, for all the hard work that has been put into monitoring bee-related issues at the Capitol this year. Dodie Stillman and I got to spend a couple days talking with our friends at the Capitol about bees and we continue to learn so much each year as we work towards our goals. We've had opportunities to have conversations with State and even Federal lawmakers about issues that affect Texas Beekeepers. We continue to keep bee health, the professional beekeeping industry, forage, and beekeeper resources at the forefront of our efforts.

We're excited for our virtual summer event. We had Tom Seeley on the books for 2020 when we had to cancel our Summer Clinic last year and he graciously agreed to join us for the virtual event this year. We've been awaiting an event with Dr. Seeley for years now and we're excited to highlight his expertise along with Dr. Juliana Rangel and Dr. Ferhat Ozturk. This event will be worth attending and is super affordable for our members.

In the meantime, the event team is rigorously planning our Fall Convention so please save the date. It will be in Galveston, Texas at Moody Gardens, November 6-7, 2021. We're looking forward to hosting an in-person event again and getting to see our members.

In This Edition

Cover Picture from Kevin Stillman

Vice President's Report
from John Swan

Well, it would seem that our April showers were a bit late this year. Luckily though, rains finally arrived just in the nick of time at the tail end of May. Although, some areas may have gotten a bit too much too fast. For those of you recovering from the recent floods my thoughts are with you and yours. With this much needed moisture there is still a chance that the last bit of our spring flow will finish strong through June. At least, here's to hoping anyway.

World Bee Day has just past, and our Virtual Summer Clinic is quickly approaching! After many delays and rescheduling due to COVID over the past year and a half, we are so excited to FINALLY welcome Dr. Thomas Seeley as our Keynote speaker! Dr. Seeley will be presenting two different subjects with extended tine for Q&A after each session. These topics will be on the topics: Honey Bee Colonies are an Information Center; and The Craft of Bee Hunting. We will also be joined by Dr. Juliana Rangel and Dr. Ferhat Ozturk as well. Dr. Rangel will be discussing Nutritional Ecology of Honey Bees in a Changing Landscape, while Dr. Ozturk will be giving us an update on his ongoing research on the Bio-Activity Levels of our Texas Honey. All of this will be taking place on Saturday, June 19th starting at 10:00 a.m. If you can't make it on the day of the event itself, no worries, all ticket holders will be able to watch the recorded version of each presentation at their leisure starting the day after the event. Tickets are on sale now for this Virtual Summer Clinic and we hope to see you there!

Lastly, the 2021 Texas Legislative session is drawing to a close. The TBA Legislative team has been monitoring each bee related bill closely. You can see the history and commentary of each bill by visiting the TBA website and selecting Bee Law Update from the Resources menu.

I hope that the nectar gods treat you well this session. And don't forget to save some of that golden goodness to submit for this year's Texas Honey Show in November!

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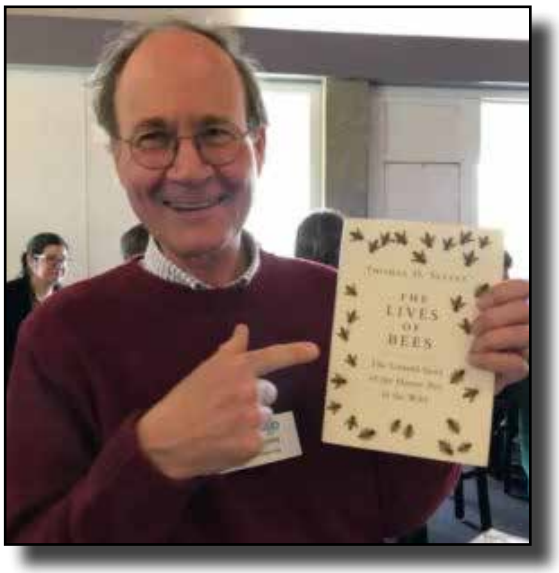
Go to Smile.Amazon.com
Same products and same prices
Choose THBEA (Texas Honey Bee Education Association)
Amazon will donate a percentage of your purchase to us
This supports the Texas Honey Queen program
and many other Educational Activities

TBA Virtual Summer Clinic
Saturday June 19th, 2021
Registration open at texasbeekeepers.org



Dr. Tom Seeley - 10 am

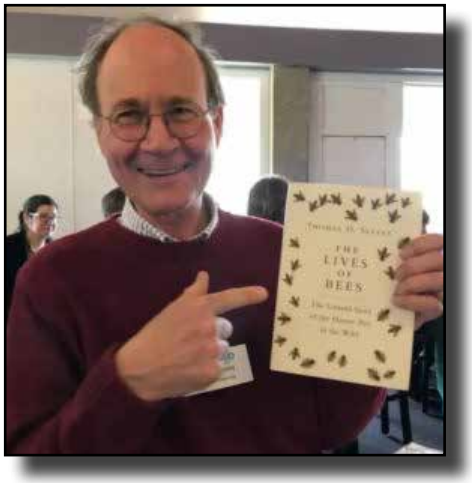
The Honey Bee Colony is an Information Center

Whenever foraging is possible, a honey bee colony must solve the problem of keeping its foragers optimally allocated among the flower patches that its scouts have found. Flower patches that are large and highly profitable should be allocated many foragers, while those that are small or less profitable should be allocated relatively few foragers. We will look at how a honey bee colony solves this highly dynamic problem, and we will see that the logic of the solution that they have evolved (the so-called "Honey Bee Algorithm") is extremely important to human beings as well, for we use the same logic for allocating server computers (analogous to worker bees) among web sites (analogous to flower patches) around the world.

Dr. Juliana Rangel - 11:15 am

Nutritional Ecology of Honey Bees in a Changing Landscape

In this lecture we will go over the main nutritional needs for honey bee foragers and nurses, including macro and micro nutrients. We will also discuss recent research from the Rangel Honey Bee Research Program looking whether honey bees regulate their macronutrient intake (in laboratory and field conditions) by performing choice and no-choice experiments with foragers and nurse bees. Finally, we will go over our ongoing work exploring the role of macronutrient intake ratios as potential tools for combatting honey bee pathogens.



Dr. Tom Seeley - 12:15 pm

The Craft of Bee Hunting

In this talk, we look at bee hunting—locating wild colonies of honey bees—which is one of the most fascinating games in the world. We will review the equipment involved and the process of establishing and following beelines, which are lines of bees flying back to their secret homes. This outdoor activity is one of infinite variety, of suspense, disappointment, perseverance, and triumph. You go out into the fields. Before you rises a hillside with ten thousand trees. One of those trees is a bee tree. With simple equipment, and special skills, you can find it!

Dr. Ferhat Ozturk - 1:30 pm

Bio-Activity Levels of Texas Honey

In this presentation we will get an update on the current research that is looking into the bio-activity level of different honey submissions from across the state of Texas. How does Texas honey stack up against the likes of Manuka and Buckwheat honey when it comes to potential medicinal uses.

On-line Admission is $20 for TBA Members and $25 for Non-Members

Go to texasbeekeepers.org to register

Renew your Membership, or Join Us.
www.texasbeekeepers.org
If you change your address or email please contact
Shirley Doggett at *sdoggett@mindspring.com*
or call (512) 924-5051
Look for the Honey Locator and Events Calendar

The Brantley Column

from S. S. Brantley
2016 Life Member Texas Beekeepers Association
2017 Life Member Louisiana Beekeepers Association

Hopefully the spring nectar will still be available in sufficient quantities for the bees to collect and store in your hive's supers. Some of the calls I am receiving indicate the humming bird feeders are already being visited by hundreds of bees looking for something to eat. This does not usually happen until the birds are on their autumn trip to the wintering location in South America and may be indicative of a shortage of natural nectar. Most stores carrying hummingbird feeders have two types available. By reading the label, you will find that some have "bee guards" and some do not. The bee guard will not allow the bee's short tongue to reach the feed inside and she soon goes away. Without a guard, the bee can reach the food, fill up and return to the hive to spread information about the free lunch. Several of the hummingbird manufacturers provide "bee guards" in separate packages that can be installed on your feeder. Amazon has several listed on their website. I checked at a couple local retail stores but did not find any in stock.

Having said all of that makes me wonder about available nectar. In a normal year, nectar is still available during most of June in quantities that will allow the excess to be stored in the super. Sumac and Horsemint may still be producing sufficient nectar since they are later blooming plants.

You will probably need to check your super often to determine if you have anything to harvest. If there is honey stored in the double deep brood boxes, I suggest that you definitely DO NOT EXTRACT brood nest frames of honey. This is the food for the bees in the hive and not for the "sometime manager" of the hive, i.e., the beekeeper. Many bees starve because of the actions of their greedy owners who rob the brood nest honey.

If you have fully capped frames of honey in the super, you can begin to harvest in June. Harvesting should be done in dry and warm weather. This ensures the honey will not absorb moisture from the air as it would on a cloudy or rainy day. Normally, you should extract those frames that are at least ¾ capped. In the event you have frames that are not sufficiently capped, you can test to see if the honey is ready to be extracted by turning the frame over, with the top bar toward the ground, and giving the frame a sharp shake downward. If the honey does not shake out when you give the frame that sharp downward shake, it should be dry enough to extract. If the honey "rains" out, return the frame to the super because the honey has too much moisture in it and will probably ferment if extracted and bottled. It will not take a very large quantity of "too moist" honey to ferment your entire extraction.

There are several ways to remove the bees from supers so you can collect frames for extraction. Smoke the bees from suppers. Brush the bees off each frame and place the frame in a bee-proof container. Use a "bee-escape board" beneath the super, requiring at least two trips to the apiary. Use a fume board. My favorite is to use a leaf blower to quickly blow the all the bees from the frames of a full super. Place the super on the ground or on top of another hive, with the super standing on its short side so the frames do not collapse on each other. Direct the leaf blower air stream from the top bars toward the bottom bars so the bees will be easily blown out. Frames that are fully capped will have fewer bees in the super so the job should be quick and easy.

The severe cold spell of February has killed or severely damaged Tallow trees in East Texas. In my area around Jefferson, a few trees have very small new sprouts coming of the tree trunk about three feet above the ground but no other spring growth. Many trees are showing no growth at all. Honey production is going to be drastically effected in this area for some time to come. USDA is studying releasing a non-native beetle and moth as a control of Chinese Tallow as it is considered an invasive species. Beekeepers across the state have been protesting this proposal. Coupled with the effects of this freeze, we do not know the future of Tallow as a bee forage source in Texas.

We see on the local and national news about the rapid increase in the price of lumber products and the effect on the cost of home building. I suspect we may see a future impact on the cost of our woodenware. You may wish to order needed supplies before prices increase.

Survey of Colony Losses from February 12th Winter Event

from Leesa Hyder & Dodie Stillman

In March, TBA conducted a survey of Texas beekeepers to gather information on colony losses attributable to the February freeze to assist state agencies and legislators in assessing economic damage to Texas agriculture from the event. A link to the survey was published by TBA via email and social media, TAIS and through other beekeeping related avenues. The following is a summary of some of the results of the survey.

- There were a total of 373 responses, with 230 respondents reporting colony losses.
- The breakdown of respondents by category according to number of colonies maintained was:
  - 100 – 500 colonies: 7
  - 50 – 100 colonies: 17
  - Less than 50 colonies: 206
- The survey reflected losses in 97 different counties in Texas.
- The largest number of respondents were from Collin county.
- The counties reporting the largest number of colonies lost were Anderson, Brazoria, Clay, Collin, Ellis, Frio, Guadalupe, and Hidalgo.
- Respondents reported an average loss of between 30%-40% of colonies due to the freeze.

In the survey, we also asked respondents about their experience with the USDA Farm Service Agency's ELAP program. Ten respondents reported that they had previously filed claims under ELAP while seventeen indicated they had filed claims related to the February event. (For more information about the ELAP program see Texas Beekeepers Association Journal, Mar/Apr 2021, Issue 21-2.)

We appreciate those who took the time to complete the short survey. The information from the survey has been provided to Dr. Mark Waller, Associate Head for Extension and Program Leader in Agricultural Economics who is continuing to gather data from various agricultural industries to compile the economic effect of the February 2021 weather event on Texas agriculture.

Chinese Tallow Update

from Leesa Hyder and Dodie Stillman

To the surprise of many, APHIS once again extended the comment period on the Environmental Assessment proposing the release of the non-native *Bikasha collaris* (aka Chinese flea beetle) and *Gadirtha fusca Pogue* (aka Chinese moth) as biological control agents for Chinese Tallow trees. **The comment period remains open through June 22, 2021. If you have not posted a comment, we urge you to do so.**

We appreciate all the local associations that posted comments on behalf of their members. If your local association has not yet posted a comment opposing the release, please urge them to do so on behalf of their members. There have been over 900 comments posted in response to this Assessment since January 20th. Texas beekeepers were still posting comments up to and including April 23, 2021, the previous deadline.

We appreciate the growing support for beekeepers from elected officials in Texas and from other agricultural organizations opposing permits for release of these non-native insects.

Senator Charles Perry of Lubbock-District 28, a beekeeper himself, became very interested in this issue when he learned about it. Senator Perry is Chairman of the Water, Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee. He mentioned in one of his committee hearings the proposed release of non-native insects to damage a tree that is an important source of forage and honey production. so that others were made aware of it as well. Senator Perry did his research and posted a letter on the APHIS comment site opposing the release. His April 21, 2021, letter is on TBA's website at https://texasbeekeepers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/APHIS-2020-0035-0885_attachment_1.pdf. He also sent a copy of the letter to the office of Legislative Affairs at APHIS and several Texas Congressional offices. We understand his letter got the attention of a number of people in Washington and we very much appreciate his willingness to get involved in this issue in support of Texas beekeepers.

We want to thank Congressman John Carter, District 31, Bell County for his interest and efforts in this matter. He has made the USDA aware of his concerns. Congressman Carter has been an advocate for Texas beekeepers in this, and a consistent supporter of Texas beekeepers and the U.S. beekeeping industry.

The Texas Department of Agriculture was provided a copy of TBA's response to the Assessment in February. Commission Sid Miller was asked specifically about the proposed insect release on a local program in early April. You can see Commissioner Miller's response at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ukNUjmm2pI.

We appreciate the American Farm Bureau Federation for their letter of April 20 urging APHIS to "…reconsider its recommendation to release *Bikasha collaris* and *garditha fusca* as biological controls for the Chinese Tallow and further evaluate the economic impacts this decision would have on the agriculture industry." Mississippi, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia Farm Bureau Federations also posted a letter asking APHIS to reconsider the release.

We are staying engaged in this issue and will keep TBA members updated on the TBA website. https://texasbeekeepers.org/flea-beetle-appeal/

For current legislative updates please go to

www.texasbeekeepers.org/beelaws/

and click on the link in the bill you are interested in.

Update from Texas Apiary Inspection Service

from Mary Reed,, Chief Apiary Inspector

Hello Texas Beekeepers!

Spring is in full swing, which means warmer weather, rain, blooming flowers, and of course more bees! Here at the Texas Apiary Inspection Service, we have been busy working through our spring inspection schedule. During this season, we have many migratory operations that move their hives to Texas after almond pollination in California. Texas, with its early warm weather and availability of natural resources, provides beekeepers an opportunity to jumpstart raising new bees and queens, making splits, and making a honey crop. During this time, my inspectors are constantly on the road visiting these beekeepers and inspecting hives to make sure the bees are looking healthy. Every spring we typically see a little bit of Chalkbrood disease pop up, as well as European Foulbrood. We saw a similar trend again this spring, but fortunately did not have any serious or widespread cases.

Spring is also the season of starting new hives! By now, many you may have already purchased new bees, new queens, and are off to a fresh start to the year. It's a very exciting day when you pick up your bees, but that is where your role as a beekeeper starts. Once you bring them home, it's important to keep an eye on their development. So, in this article I'm going to do a quick overview of purchasing new bees and what to watch out for as the hive starts to grow.

Let's start off with the two most common ways of starting a hive: purchasing a package of bees, or a nucleus (nuc) hive. Both of these options are great ways to start a new hive, but they both have their benefits and their downsides:

Nucleus Hive	Package of Bees
Established colony	No comb built
Brood and honey stores present	No brood or honey stores established
Comes with a laying queen	Comes with a caged mated queen
Faster colony development	Lag time on colony development
Possible presence of pests and diseases	Lower levels of pests and diseases
Higher purchasing cost	Moderate purchasing cost

Each beekeeper is going to have their preference on how to start a new hive, but it's equally important to monitor those new hives in the initial stages of development. Next, let's talk about what you should keep an eye out for whether you are starting with a nuc or a package of bees.

Nucleus Hives

Nucleus colonies are a very popular way to sell bees and start a new hive. The main benefit of nucs is that it is a jumpstart to a productive hive. It should come with a strong population of worker bees, a laying queen, brood already being produced, and stores of pollen and nectar/honey. Since nucs are essentially mini, fully functioning hives, it's important to closely monitor its development. If the nuc is not checked on a regular basis, there is a chance that the bees will run out of room to store their resources and the queen won't have enough space to lay eggs, thus causing the hive to swarm. If the hive swarms, then you have just lost that nice queen your nuc came with and a lag in productivity will occur. And we don't want either of those things to happen! If you see that the majority or all of the comb is being utilized, and the worker population is strong, then it's time to move that nuc into a bigger box. Once you have upgraded the hive box, make sure to feed the bees sugar water so they have enough energy to generate wax and build comb on any of the new frames. Also, make sure that the queen continues to produce brood and that the brood pattern looks healthy. Changes in brood production can be influenced by several different factors (i.e. pest and diseases issues, pollen/nectar resources, queen quality), so it's important to monitor these variables throughout the spring and summer seasons. Finally, it's critical that beekeepers pay attention to any health concerns related to pests and diseases. Symptoms of these concerns are often seen in the brood area, so any time you open a hive, make sure to look at a minimum of two frames of brood. Ensuring healthy brood and bees will result in a strong and productive hive.

Package of Bees

Packaged bees are another common way of starting a hive. To me, the benefit of using packages is that you are starting out with just the bees, and thus have a lower instance of pest and disease issues, and you have the opportunity to build fresh wax comb. However, building new comb can be considered as a downside since it will contribute to a lag in colony development. As a result, you will want to regularly feed your bees sugar water so they have the energy to generate wax and build comb quickly. Once your bees have some comb built, you should start to see the queen laying, as well as nectar and pollen stores starting to develop. I like to continue to feed my bees sugar water until I see that a sufficient amount of comb has been built and I notice that they are on a good nectar flow. I will continue to keep a close eye on their development, and if I notice a stagnation due to lack of

resources, I will start feeding them again. In addition, continue to monitor the laying behavior of the queen, as well as any health issues that may appear in the brood area.

Maintaining a watchful eye on the development and health of your starter colonies will result in a successful hive later on. As a quick recap and guide to what was discussed above, below is a checklist to use as you monitor the growth of your colonies.

Checklist for new hives:

- Resources
  - How much nectar/honey is stored?
  - How much pollen is stored?
  - Is there enough space available for additional resources?
- Brood production and laying pattern
  - Is the queen laying eggs?
  - Is there enough space for the queen to lay?
  - What does the brood pattern look like?
- Worker population
  - Is the worker bee population growing?
  - Are there workers covering the majority of the frames?
  - Do the adult bees look healthy?
- Pests and diseases
  - What are the Varroa mite levels?
  - Are there any other symptoms of pests/ diseases?
- Potential for swarming
  - Does the colony have enough space to grow (i.e. space to lay eggs, space for resources, size of worker population)?
  - Are there queens cells present?

This article provides only a brief overview of managing a new hive, so I encourage you to explore additional resources if needed. Below are a few online resources that I think are useful in these beginning stages of hive development, as well as supporting a healthy hive throughout the year:

1. NewBee's Guide to Texas Beekeeping - https://thbea.com/resources/
2. Honey Bee Health Coalition's Best Management Practices - https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/hivehealthbmps/
3. The Bee MD - http://www.thebeemd.com/

As always, if you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to reach out to my office (979-845-9713; *tais@tamu.edu*).

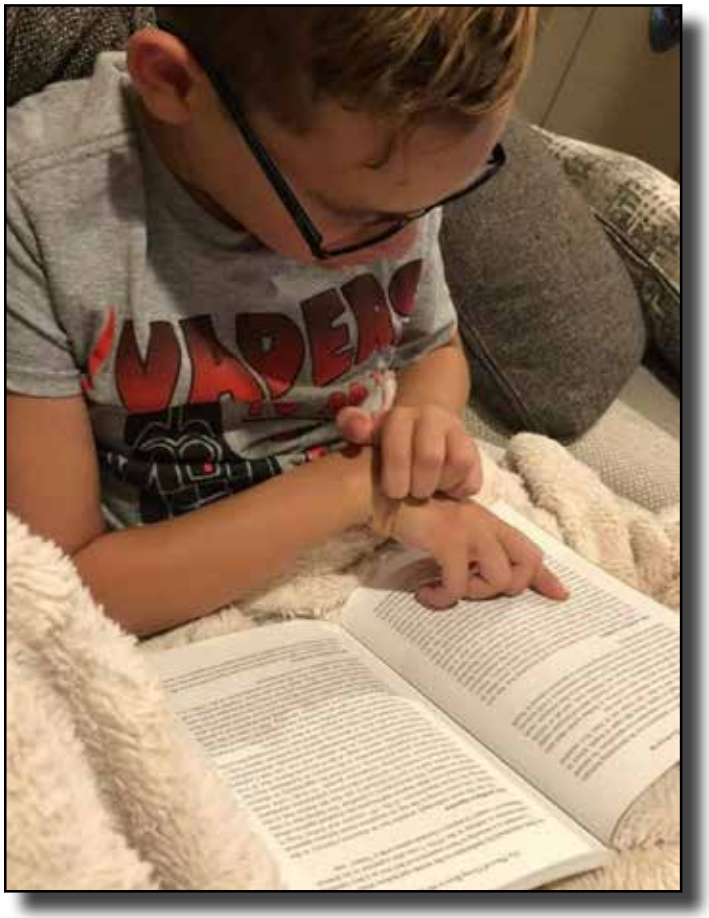
Happy Beekeeping!

Morris Weaver presenting Mary Reed, Chief Apiary Inspector, with a copy of Nevin Weaver's book, "Nonrandom Memories and Pot Shots".

TAIS has a great collection of old publications, including papers from Jim Petty. Morris Weaver wanted to add Nevin Weaver's book to their collection. If TBA members wish, Mary is happy for them to visit and look through their collection.

Our Youngest Master Beekeeper - Gavin

from Julie Norman, Winding Creek Apiary and Bee Supply



Gavin is the youngest Master Beekeeper. He began studying at age 10, took the test at age 11 and passed!!

He came into our store with his Mother and I gave him a book to read - which I try to do whenever young people show an interest in bees. When he came back into the store a few days later, he told me that the honey bee was our future and he wanted to be the youngest Master Beekeeper. I gave him a copy of "First Lessons in Beekeeping" and let him know that this was the book that adults study when first looking into taking the test. He immediately sat down and started reading the book while his Mom was buying beekeeping supplies.

Gavin buys his own bee supplies with money he receives from selling honey. He has 12 hives and has already produced and sold two nucs. He bought a brand new smoker and I understand that he is very proud of it.

When he came into the store the other day, he thanked me for supporting him in his dream and showed me his certificate and badge.

Apart from his beekeeping - and he taught his homeschool group beekeeping class for four weeks in a row - he is on the swim team, is involved in jiu jitsu and builds model planes.

There is a great deal of enjoyment and satisfaction in helping young people learn and practice beekeeping and I can't wait to hear the next episode of Gavin's progress.

Texas Beekeepers Association congratulates Gavin and looks forward to his ongoing progress

The Texas Honey Bee Education Association (THBEA) is proud to introduce a great new way for Texans to support education and research programs dedicated to preserving and protecting honey bees. The new THBEA "Love Honey Bees" license plate is now available for sale online and in county tax assessor offices where license plates are sold and renewed across the state.

For every license plate purchased, $22 will go to the THBEA for youth and beekeeper education programs, information resources for farmers and the general public, and research programs to improve honey bee health and longevity.

Order On-Line at:

https://www.myplates.com/design/background/passenger/love-honey-bees

Nevin Weaver

from Morris Weaver and Danny Weaver

Nevin was born January 4th, 1920 and he left this mortal life, August 20, 1995, the son of Roy Stanley Weaver, Sr., and Lela Piere (Binford) Weaver. Nevin was a great biologist and beekeeper, and rightly famous for seminal investigations, among them work identifying royal jelly and its many constituents as the key substances that endow queen honey bees with reproductive fecundity, an order of magnitude longer life and many striking physiological and morphological distinctions compared to genomically co-equal worker bees. His investigations of that substance, so vital to the social organization of honey bees and other hymenopterans, rightly earned him accolades at the time. Subsequent studies on honey bee development and differentiation, genomics and epigenomics, earn him and his early work continuing citations in seminal books and papers on social biology and insect biochemistry today.

Nevin's first lessons in beekeeping and the biology of bees came from his father, Roy Weaver, Sr. Nevin's father and his uncle Howard began production, sale and distribution of queen honey bees at commercial scale when Nevin would have been about 5 years old.

After graduation from High School, Nevin left home to study biology at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Then World War II intervened and among Nevin's deployments was a post-war assignment to Nagasaki, Japan, where he witnessed first-hand the enormous devastation of atomic war and the genuine contrition and dedication to social advancement of post-war Japanese. I still have a wooden Japanese samurai sword that Nevin and Betsy gave me years later, though now a bit the worse for wear and tear.

After the War, Nevin returned to beekeeping for Weaver Apiaries, and was in charge of operations in the Rio Grande Valley, and Northeast Texas for a few years. A tornado that destroyed the large honey house that he and his father and uncle and had built probably helped propel his destiny toward academic pursuits, and he embarked on graduate studies in Botany (M.S.) and Entomology (PhD) at Texas A&M College, shortly thereafter.

After earning his PhD, Nevin received a faculty appointment in the Department of Entomology at Texas A&M, and was funded by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station to conduct investigations into honey bee biology and the improvement of apiculture. Nevin embarked on a storied career exploring, among other things, the mechanisms contributing to the differentiation of honey bee queens and workers, and the physiological and behavioral differences of the worker and queen castes. Notably, in 1952, the first year of operations for the National Science Foundation, Nevin Weaver received one of prestigious inaugural awards from the NSF, granted to study the nutritional factors influencing the differentiation of honey bees.

Later, in a series of sabbaticals exploring and conducting research in the Yucatan Peninsula, including especially, the bees and beekeeping practices in the village of Yaxcaba, he and his wife, Betsy, developed a trove of data on the stingless honey bees

of the genus Melipona, and the indigenous beekeeping methods of people of Mayan decent who kept both Melipona and Apis bees. Sadly, much of that work was never published, as Nevin refused to promote the manuscripts he had developed after the underlying data perished in a tragic house fire.

Nevin got to know John Gordon Thomas during Nevin's time as an assistant professor in Entomology at Texas A&M, circa 1965, and John and I often talked about Nevin and what a rare man he was. Brilliant, but humble and self-effacing; Intellectually rigorous and intolerant of less than full commitment but happy to help students, friends and anyone else who asked; Critical of flawed reasoning or weak argument, yet generous with encouragement for students and colleagues trying their best. John Thomas and Nevin Weaver were good friends, and John never tired of reminding people that apicultural research vanished for many years after Texas A&M let Nevin get away, but the Department of Entomology has now resumed its place as a premier honey bee research institution.

I first remember Nevin from the time when I was about 5 or 6, visiting him and his wife, Elizabeth Chadwick (Clarke) Weaver and my cousins, Eric and Liz Clarke, at their house in College Station where Nevin was professor of Entomology at Texas A & M; and equally from their reciprocal visits to Navasota to see us (Bennie Lou, Binford, Robert and me), our cousins, and our grandparents, whom we all called Mom & Pop. Nevin had met and married Betsy (Elizabeth) in Boston, and Barnstable Harbor, respectively, after he left Texas A & M to continue his work on honey bees at Harvard. His many enduring friends and colleagues from that time at Harvard and Nevin's subsequent acceptance

of a professorship at the University of Massachusetts, included E.O. Wilson. We had the opportunity to travel and see Nevin and Betsy in Lexington, MA, and spend time with them when they traveled back to Texas. I remember sitting around the coffee table and talking when playing dominoes as they practiced the Mayan language in preparation for their upcoming trip to the Yucatan. When I was 14 and 15 years old Nevin and Betsy spent an extended period of time in Lynn Grove building a rustic house in the woods, constructing a masterpiece using only hand tools and old-fashioned wood joinery including mortise and tenon fastening.

Late in life, Nevin remained resolute in the face of the inescapable consequences of the disease that took him down - amyotrophic lateral sclerosis - Lou Gehrig's disease. A brief story provides a parable of his mental and emotional intelligence in dealing with his impending demise: when his decline quickened, he named his battery-powered wheelchair after his brother, Binford's horse, Chipper. That was a perfectly evocative name. Chipper was a truly a means of conveyance, with a canter that would cover miles, effortlessly, and more than once took Nevin, me, my brother Robert and anyone else who rode him, blissfully off into the distance with a speed and gentle rocking motion that was at once both exhilarating and soothing.

Memories of Nevin from Morris Weaver

My earliest memories of Nevin was about January 1946. I was eight years old therefore some of my memories may not be exact.

Evidently Nevin went to work for Weaver Apiaries shortly after World War ll. At that time Weaver Apiaries was owned by Roy S. Weaver Sr. and Howard Weaver. Weavers had about 1,000 colonies in the Rio Grand Valley to produce citrus honey and after the citrus flow was over the bees were moved to Collin County in north Texas to produce clover and cotton honey. Nevin oversaw taking care of this part of the business.

In January 1946 Howard took his family to the valley to help Nevin build a larger honey house. I think we stayed about two weeks. Roy S. Weaver Jr. and his wife also came down to help.

In Collin county there was an old building that had been used to make soap and was rented as a honey house. At some point Howard went to Collin county to help Nevin build a new honey house. It was about 40 feet by 100 feet. When the build was complete Howard came home arriving some time during the night. The next morning Nevin called Howard and told him a tornado had destroyed the building that night. They found what material they could and rebuilt the building.

In 1948 a hard freeze killed all the citrus in the valley. About this time Nevin decided to go back to Texas A&M to further his education. I visited Nevin at his lab at A&M probably in the late 1950s.

When Dr. John G. Thomas was a student at A & M he worked in the bee lab with Nevin.

TEXAS HONEY BEE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

In December 2009, Dr. John and Janice Thomas and their daughter Valerie Thomas established the **Nevin Weaver Honey Bee Excellence Endowment** through the Texas A&M Foundation. The purpose of the endowment is to provide support for the Janice and John G. Thomas Honey Bee Facility in College Station. Research at the honey bee lab is currently under the direction of Dr. Juliana Rangel. The **Texas Honey Bee Education Association** (THBEA) is exploring opportunities to increase funding for the work of Dr. Rangel through the Nevin Weaver Endowment and looks forward to sharing this information with TBA members in the very near future.

Dr. John Thomas

from Valerie Thomas

John Thomas became fascinated with bees at a very young age. He was raised in West Texas in the 40's so life was hard and both of his parents had a minimum of 2 jobs at any time. His father was a county agent and his mother held a variety of jobs, but they always farmed as well, raising their own foods and selling what they could. He and his siblings were expected to help, and there was always work to be done.

I think his fascination with bees was both a respect for how these insects helped farmers raise their food, pollinating and producing a food crops, but also was a deep scientific fascination for the insect world. From a very young age, John helped a bee keeper, Mr. Gillespie. He learned how to keep the hives, handle the bees and harvest the honey. He had a honey stand by the highway which helped earn the money he would use to pay for his college. His bee keeping led to an opportunity when he was 11 years old to travel to College Station by train, to speak at a meeting of the Texas Beekeepers. He often told me he decided to go to Texas A&M, because he knew he wanted to be an entomologist, and that was the one university he knew of that had the course of study. I think that, and the fact his father had attended Texas A&M helped clinch the deal.

By the time dad came to A&M, Nevin Weaver was already a fixture at the Texas Agriculture Experiment Station. His knowledge of honey bees was extensive and his detailed papers fascinated my father. Dad worked with Nevin and he considered Nevin Weaver to be the premier author of scientific papers on honey bees and apiculture, including his early works on the composition of royal jelly.

After completing his bachelors and Ph.D., he went to work for the Texas Agricultural Extension service (now the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service) as an entomologist. Dad had many scientific interests and areas of expertise, authoring many papers on various crop insects and on integrated pest management (IPM). His passion was IPM, a management plan which both reduced chemical applications through the careful timing to crops, and broaden non-chemical control practices such as beneficial insect use and non-chemical control methods.

These techniques both decreased the cost to the farmer, and dramatically spared the beneficial insect populations. Prior to this science, most farmers simply applied chemicals whenever they saw the insects (or nearly continually), as opposed to carefully timing limited applications every ten days, for maximum efficiency to kill insect crop pests, while sparing the beneficial insects. Though based in College Station, he spent innumerable hours throughout Texas in the fields, educating farmers and taking the latest in cutting-edge research from Texas A&M out for real-worlld applications.

He even served a stint in the Federal Extension Service, implementing IPM in numerous states. His respect for the hard-working honey bee was, I think, one reason he was passionate about balancing the use of pesticides on crops. He had an appreciation for all beneficial insects including the honey bee,

and his deep respect translated into a desire to protect them, in part through preaching the judicious use of pesticides on crops.

John's fascination with bees was lifelong. Dad raised bees for most of his life. Driving out to our bee yard to help check hives, and collect honey was one of my fondest memories growing up (but not so much the getting stung part). I also remember many trips in our old Ford, hauling a trailer of bees from Presidio Texas, where Mr. Gillespie retired, up to western Oklahoma clover fields where the bees helped pollinate crops, then back again in the fall to overwinter the bees. Dad could easily rattle off the monetary value of apiculture, from the numbers of crops they pollinated, and the numerous products we enjoyed because of their labor.

However, he also appreciated the magic that was the collective work of a hive to convert nectar to honey, the varying flavors of it, and the fascination of watching the hive work and communicate in unison. He considered the bee a true partner to the farmer. Dad admired Nevin Weaver for his devotion to the honey bee. Even after Nevin moved to the Boston MA area, dad continued to be a fan.

Dad also spent innumerable hours educating beekeeper and the lay-public on the importance of honey bees with the Texas Beekeeper Association. He recognized the critical importance of commercial beekeepers to industry and to farming. He also realized early on that the hobby beekeepers were also an important partner to ensure honey bees survival in the changing landscape. Because he realized the changing nature of the populace, the increasing loss of pasture and diverse farmland and the loss of commercial beekeeping operations through increasing economic pressures, he believed that the survival of bees would rely on both the commercial beekeepers and on increasing the hobby beekeepers to keep pollinators in our increasingly urbanized landscapes.

Dad always took time to educate anyone that showed an interest in becoming a beekeeper. Because of this, he was equally passionate educating the commercial beekeeper with a thousand hives as he was the new hobbiest with one or two. His mission was to educate the public on the critical importance of apiculture and honey bees to our food and to nature and he was a driving force for the creation of the Honey Bee Lab at the RELLIS campus, which to this day produces and disseminates research, and educates apiculturists across Texas.

How to Build Strong Honey Bee Colonies

from Bruce Ford, Owner Ross Creek Honey Bees
President Fayette County Beekeepers Association

It is easy to build more honey bee colonies with my process. I start with a strong 10-frame colony with one or two deep boxes of capped brood, liquid brood (eggs and open larvae) and bee bread which is a mixture of pollen and nectar or honey.

Nuc building process:

1. Read the frames and move three strong frames of bees to the center of a separate 5-frame nuc box.
2. These three frames should have a mix of capped brood, bee bread and open brood and lots of bees.
3. Add two frames of drawn comb or wax foundation starter strips, one on each outside of the first three frames of bees.
4. Add a caged, mated queen. (Be sure to pull the cork from the sugar plug side!)
5. **Add a 5-frame, hive top feeder** to support the fast growth of the honey bees.
6. **Keep the hive top feeder filled** with a sugar water mixture. (See my recipe below.)

My sugar water mixture:

In a 5-gallon mixing bucket: add two - 10 pound bags of cane sugar. Add about five tablespoons of apple cider vinegar.

1. Add 10-20 drops of **Tea Tree** essential oil.
2. Add 10-20 drops of **Spearmint** essential oil.
3. Add 10-20 drops of **Wintergreen** essential oil.
4. Use a garden hose with a streaming velocity-output to fill the 5-gallon mixing bucket. This will aerate and dissolve the sugar water.
5. Use a smaller bucket and a funnel to fill recycled one gallon water bottles or milk jugs with the sugar mixture.

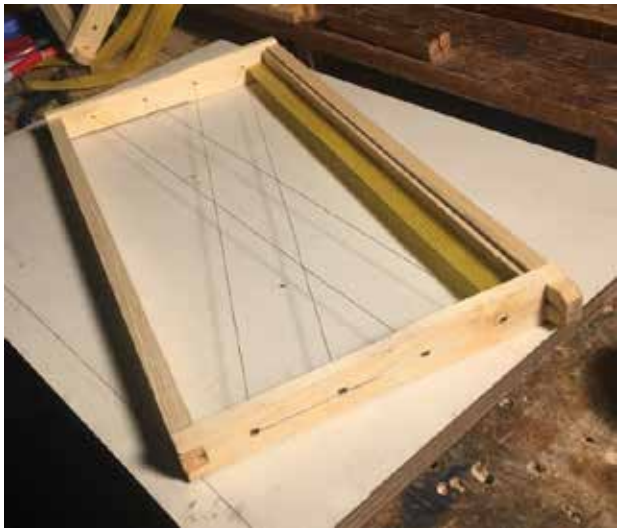
I buy food grade essential oils online from: https://www.lorannoils.com The customer service is great, and they love beekeepers. Just mention that you are a beekeeper when you sign up for an account and they might give you a discount.

I use the **apple cider vinegar** to ensure the sugar water mixture does not ferment on a warm day. I use a tiny amount of **Tea Tree** essential oil, that is derived from Melaleuca Alternifolia, and is known to have anti-fungal, antibacterial and antiviral properties. Honey bees can be stressed by internal viruses. I use a tiny amount of **Spearmint** essential oil to assist in treating for varroa mites. I use a tiny amount of **Wintergreen** essential oil ward off varroa mites and other insects around the beehive. Feeding honey bees with wintergreen oil mixed in sugar syrup can keep the predator insects away from the bees as well as the hive. I believe this formula builds the honey bees' immunity system, helps their digestive system and reduces stress.

I will explain why this system works for me to produce 5-frame nucs and expand hive colonies quickly. I read the frames and pick frames loaded on both sides with capped brood. Lots of young bees will be attending to the capped brood as they hatch. I make sure one frame has some **bee bread**. This substance is the main source of food for honey bee workers and larvae. The exact composition of the bee bread varies depending on what plants bees forage. **Most important** is that the bee bread is used to nourish the queen so she can lay lots of eggs. I make sure one frame has open larvae to attract the young worker bees.

Many beekeepers do not have fresh drawn comb for nuc building.

I build natural, bee's wax starter strip frames. I have found that honey bees will festoon on the bee's wax starter strip frame and build wax comb overnight. As quickly as the wax comb is produced, the queen has locations to lay eggs, which builds a new colony very quickly.

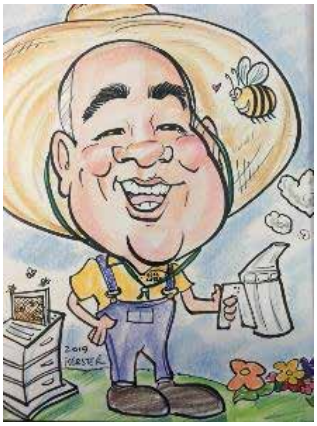


This starts a cycle of lots of hatching bees that expand to forage and bring back pollen for bee bread. The worker bees then feed the bee bread to the queen, so she has the nourishment to lay even more eggs.

The **second critical action** is to use my custom **Hive Top Feeder** on my 5-frame nuc box to feed the bees. A hive top feeder allows the worker bees to climb internally, gather the sugar water mixture without drowning and build fresh, new wax comb quickly! This process produces immediate wax comb results.

Three frames with the correct combination can become a full 5-frame nuc in less than two weeks if you keep the hive top feeder filled daily with my sugar water mixture!

With a full, 5-frame nuc, you can then transfer the frames to the center of a 10-frame beehive box. I place the 5 nuc frames in the center and more starter strip frames on outside. Then I place a **10-frame hive top feeder** to build more wax comb quickly.



Bruce Ford is the owner of Ross Creek Honey Bees and Ross Creek Organic Farm. Bruce is the president of the Fayette County Beekeepers Association and an active member of the Colorado County Beekeepers Association, the Central Texas Beekeepers Association and the Texas Beekeepers Association. As a Texas-raised naturalist, Bruce is passionate about bee, butterfly and wildlife habitat development. He consults and mentors Texans on wildlife habitat management plans and permaculture homestead design planning with emphasis on honey bee yards.

Would any member of TBA interested in helping with this Journal contact Chris Doggett
ckdoggett@gmail.com

Help includes:

Obtaining suitable articles

Working with Adobe products to format articles appropriately and similar editorial activities

Thanks

North Texas Beekeepers Suffer Honey Bee Losses Due to Winter Storm Uri

from Emily Henvey

When local meteorologists began warning about Winter Storm Uri, Dan Brantner knew he had done all he could to ensure that his beehives at the Texas Honey Company in Plano were fortified for the storm. As a master beekeeper, Brantner understood how dangerous the freeze could be for the bees.

Beekeepers begin preparing for winter storms in the fall. For Brantner, part of that preparation involves ensuring that his 14 bee colonies are facing south to block the cold north winds and are fortified them with 40-60 pounds of honey inside the boxes. After an afternoon spent fortifying them, he closes the lid to the boxes holding the beehives. He knows that opening the hive just for a peek was not an option. Letting in cold air would be detrimental to his hives. It's also the reason he reduced the size of the entrance into the hives.

In Josephine, about 25 miles east of Plano, John Talbert, the owner of Sabine Creek Honey Farm, had shipped his stronger bees to California to pollinate almond crops. His weaker bees stayed behind to face the coming storm.

Like their bees, both Brantner and Talbert had to ride out the storm and hope for the best.

"When it gets cold, bees cluster together real tight," Talbert says. "Bees have the unusual ability to disengage their wing muscle from the wing and move it. It's like they're running in place to create heat, and this helps to conserve energy. They get close around the center of the hive and the queen and work to keep the center of the hive at 95 degrees, and the outer perimeter of the cluster has contact with the honey; that way they can get to the honey and get energy to keep warm."

If bees can't reach the honey, even if they are half an inch away, Talbert says they will get hypothermia and die.

Winter Storm Uri wasn't kind to Texas honey bees. They were already in crisis due to habitat losses and threats posed by Varroa mites, Brantner says, but the most recent winter storm may have exacerbated the problem.

Now the Texas Beekeepers Association is surveying beekeepers across the state to determine the honey bee colony losses suffered during this year's cold spell. The survey deadline is March 31, and results will be available later on their website.

Walking outside to check on his honey bees during the heavy snow, Talbert says he could tell just by looking which hives were alive and which were dead.

"On top of the hives that were alive, the snow had partially or completely melted from the tops of the boxes due to the heat the bees generated," he says. "I knew the boxes that still had a full pack of snow held dead hives."

Talbert lost 40% of his honey bees that stayed in Texas. He claims that he has gotten calls from many beekeepers who have faced 30% losses because their bees died from the cold weather.

"Bees — like us right now in this pandemic — we are in the same situation," Talbert says. "Outside pathogens and parasites are killing off the bees. It is a challenge to not lose only 30% of a colony.Many beekeepers see a 50% loss each year. That's bad for beekeepers."

Dan Brantner, Master Beekeeper, works in his apiary and opens one of his hives on March 21st.

Threatened

Across the U.S., honey bees, critical for pollination of flowers, fruits and vegetables, are on the decline. Texas loses 40 percent of honey bee colonies every year, says Dr. Juliana Rangel Posada, Associate Professor of Apiculture at Texas A&M University.

The decline is due several factors, one being habitat loss. Because of habitat loss, which ties to poor nutrition, Rangel Posada says there is not enough food available for bees to eat.

"Honey bees pollinate one third of all the food we consume and are critical for food security," she says."Without their help, food shortages will impact the consumer."

Similar to Brantner, Talbert has seen this habitat loss first hand in his area. He has been working with bees for more than 35 years and has over 400 hives on his farm in Josephine, Texas.

"We used to have small plots of farmland with fence rows and wild flowers," he says. "Now, we have no fence rows or small farms."

Population growth, he says, is also having a negative impact. "We also have a new crop of shingles out in Josephine with houses under them. Then there is the pavement. The loss of land is making it harder for the bees and other beneficial insects to survive."

To combat this issue, Talbert suggests that people plant wildflowers which he said contain the nectar that bees need to survive.

"So many flowers from the nursery are bred for beauty and they take away from the nectar and pollen production," Talbert says. "Through propagation and grafting, they breed the nectar out of the flowers because the nectar attracts bugs. And homeowners don't want insects."

Master Beekeeper Dan Brantner examines the bees in one of his hives on March 21st.

Pesticide Peril & Varroa Mites

Using pesticides to fend off insects is an additional cause for honey bee decline.

Both Brantner and Talbert encourage people to reduce their use of pesticides to help the bees. Talbert points out that this will help increase the quality of life for small organisms, which in turn helps with human quality of life.

"I'm not a tree hugger. I use what I have to," Talbert says. "But, I also try to minimize my use of chemicals."

Talbert has also witnessed the devastating impact pesticides can have.His father, a dairy farmer, accidentally inhaled a pesticidal dust as he was pouring it into a paper bag. The dust got in his lungs and destroyed them.For the next 20 years his father was operating at 20% of his lung capacity.

"That made me aware of how dangerous those chemicals are," Talbert says."We don't think about it, but the more insects we destroy, we also knock out a lot of birds. Birds eat the insects. Other, beneficial insects eat the non-beneficial insects."

Varroa mites, which feed on bees and carry destructive viruses, are another highly destructive cause of bee decline. Varroa mites which originated in Asia and later appeared in Africa and Europe, were first documented in the U.S. in the 198os.

"Bees have no natural immunity," Talbert says.

Talbert points out that Collin County has a good density of small hobby beekeepers. "It takes a concentrated effort to manage bees in a way that they won't die," he says. "In our club, we make sure people are aware of the bee situation, and we ask that people encourage their friends and neighbors to plant wildflowers."

Despite his losses, Talbert said that he has spent two afternoons checking on his California bees, and they still look strong, and some of his other hives are doing well. The hives are ready to be split in two to create new, strong colonies.

Today Talbert was starting his morning delivering honey from his surviving hives.

"The storm put us a full week behind what we needed to do on our farm," Talbert said. "But beekeepers are optimistic people. Farmers in general are the most optimistic people in the world."
beekeeper teaches kids about texas honey bees

Dan Brantner teaches children about bees and their hives at the Mountain Creek Branch Library in Dallas, Texas

In the Apiary

Hearing about Colony Collapse Disorder and the plight of the honey bee population a number of years ago caught Brantner's attention. He signed up for a two hour introductory course in 2013, and says he has been enjoying the company of bees ever since.

He currently has 14 Italian honey bee colonies, and thankfully, they all survived the recent winter storm. Branter plans to add 12 more colonies this spring.

Brantner, along with his wife Donna, now has his own apiary business, offering between 250 to 300 pounds of honey. They also won the Texas State Fair honey competition for 2020.

"The class was fascinating, and I immediately decided to try my hand at beekeeping," he says. "I realized that beekeeping provided a unique opportunity to combine my love of the outdoors and the environment with my hobby in woodworking."

Over the years, Brantner has given beekeeping presentations to various schools and youth organizations. He says the most frequently asked questions relate to bee stings. "On average, I would estimate that I get stung about 10-15 times a year," he says. "I have had as many as 10 bee stings in one day. You do get used to it."

In the spring, Talbert offers beekeeping seminars at his farm. He's been offering classes in the springtime for 20 years. More than 1,000 people have signed up for his courses.

People interested in taking up beekeeping could learn more from Talbert, Brantner and others through the Collin County Hobby Beekeepers Association, which provides information and support for honey bee hobbyists.

Through the CCHBA, Talbert also offers a scholarship fund so that kids can also be exposed to the art of beekeeping. To date they have had 125 kids and their parents go through the program on the scholarship.

"We try to expose kids to things they wouldn't ordinarily get," Talbert says. "Kids who have gone through our program have gone on to do great things. American Honey Queens and Princesses have been through our program."

A sign at Burger Fixins in Celina, TX advertises the sale of Local Honey

Local Honey

Rangel Posada encourages everyone to buy honey from a neighborhood beekeeper instead of the grocery store.

"The neighborhood beekeeper can tell you when the honey was harvested, what flowers the bees may have visited, and they can tell you about their apiary management style," Rangel Posada says.

Additionally, she says that honey purchased in a grocery store may contain contraband such as non-honey sweeteners, or may contain some honey that has been illegally imported.

Brantner also recommends honey from a local beekeeper. "There are a number of very talented beekeepers in Texas and particularly in Collin County who are dedicated to supporting our honey bees and producing great local honey," he says. "Once you tasted the difference between true locally-produced honey and the typical off-the-shelf honey, you will never go back to store bought honey."

Helping Texas Honey Bees

Brantner and Talbert suggest these ideas for helping honeybees and local beekeepers.

1. Plant Texas wildflowers and other bee friendly flowers.
2. Reduce your use of pesticides.
3. Support your local beekeepers and buy local honey.
4. To remove a bee swarm or colony from your property, visit Texas Beekeepers Association to find contact information for local swarm removal companies and other information on bees and honey suppliers.

Learn More

Collin County has one of the top beekeeping associations in the state. The Collin County Hobby Beekeepers Association meets on the second Monday each month (via Zoom during the COVID-19 pandemic).

Contact Texas Bee Supply or David Brantner, certified Master Bee Keeper and Collin County resident at 972.365.5592 . He offers lessons in his apiary.

Take a seminar at Sabine Creek Honey Farm with Mr. Talbert and his team.

Visit Texas Bee Supply to find more information on beekeeping and supplies.

Purchase Honey

Purchase honey from a local supplier mentioned in this article.

Texas Honey Company (Daniel and Donna Brantner). If you want to be notified when honey is available for purchase, please email txhoneyco@gmail.com.

Sabine Creek Honey Farm – in Josephine, Texas and owned by Mr. Talbert.

To find other Texas honey suppliers, Rangel Posada says to visit Rangel Real Texas Honey, a nonprofit organization that certifies and promotes honey only produced by honey bees in Texas. Local honey bee farmers and more information on local honey producers can also be found at Texas Beekeepers Association.

THBEA NewBee' Guide

This NEWBEE guide is printed on waterproof paper and has great information for the new and not so new beekeeper. You can see both sides of this 4 part brochure at THBEA.com/resources/ - Just click on the brochure.

Because it costs over $2 per copy to print, we are offering quantities of this publication in return for a donation towards the cost.

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TEXAS HONEY BEE
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Drones, Love Them

by: Robin L-S Young, Metro Beekeepers Association

Pictured above: Drones warming themselves under the lid of a top-bar hive. Drones are the male gender of the honey bee. They are essential to the continued existence of honey bees.

This spring I started my usual beekeeping activities and as I opened one of my top-bar hives I saw something I had never seen before. I ran to my truck and grabbed my camera and took the photo above. What you are looking at is a solid frame of emerged drones. They worked their way to the top of the hive just under the lid where it is warm. I am sure they were pushed out of the hive by the female worker bees. Drones, the male version of the honey bee, has been pushed aside, and sacrificed so much over the years that their importance has been lost.

In some of the most prestigious lecture halls on beekeeping, you might very well hear of destroying capped Drone brood comb to lower your varroa counts. The thought process behind this is very sound. A female varroa mite sneaks into a drone larva chamber just before capping. The first egg she lays is a male, the rest of the eggs she lays are female. It takes five to six days for a male varroa to develop and seven to eight days for a female to develop. Drone honey bee larva takes the longest time out of the honey bees to mature, around sixteen days on average. Drone cells make a perfect incubation chamber for Varroa mites. What is recommended is to pull the capped drone frame from the hive and put it in the deep freezer for serval days killing the drone larva and varroa mite larva. Then sticking it back in the hive for the worker bees to clean up and reuse. You can do this process over and over using the same frame. Beekeeping suppliers even offer a green colored plastic frame that is specifically made for drone laying. On some level this system is attractive to me because I run a chemical free beekeeping operation. There is a level of perfection to it, no chemicals, low varroa mite count. What is not to love? Except for the resources used to grow the drones

Drones, Love Them

by: Robin L-S Young, Metro Beekeepers Association

(royal jelly, honey, space in the hive), I thought there was extraordinarily little negatives to this system.

Dan Weaver inspecting a frame of queen larva that his students grafted the previous day.

When I attended the "Queen Rearing" two-day class down in Navasota Texas at the Bee Weaver location, Dan Weaver discussed drones and drone genetics. He told us his endeavors to breed a Varroa Mite Hygienic honey bee had failure after failure until he started looking at the Drone or male component of genetics. He realized how vital superb genetics on both sides was a must. This was truly eye opening. We always hear about the queen and it is so easy to totally forget how vital drones are.

Susan Cobey at the A&M Honey Bee Lab teaching a class on "The Art of Queen Rearing"

I then attended a class at the A&M Honey Bee Lab. Renowned Susan Cobey was there as a guest teacher. She specializes on artificial insemination of queen honey bees. Much of her discussions was on high quality drones.

Dr. Rangel demonstrating how to "pop a drone" to collect semen for insemination, pictured above

I found that every queen breeder I talked to stress the importance of high-quality drones. They warned that beekeepers may be depleting the supply of drones in their queen breeding program. This allows for outside and feral drones to quickly insert their genetics into a breeders, thought to be controlled, breeding program destroying all that hard work. What they really need to do is over saturate their queen breeding yard with the genetics they want to perpetuate. Beekeepers trying their hand at queen breeding should focus on high quality drones. High quality genetics can over come many problems in a hive even Varroa Mites. Until next time bee friends, give your drones some love!

Pictured above: queen larva

Proverbs 16-24 Pleasant words are a honeycomb sweet to the soul and healing to the bone.

Greetings from Dr. Juliana Rangel at Texas A&M University

Assistant Professor of Apiculture, Department of Entomology, Texas A&M University

Dear TBA members,

Spring has sprung and is in full swing… and it has been damp! We have had constant storms that have threatened us with hail, flash flooding and tornado warnings. I hear that bees in our area have had a delay in the nectar flow, which I hope will come soon. We also have new regulations and a new way to circumvent the COVID-19 pandemic. I am officially done teaching for the year and look forward to focusing more on research and mentoring this summer. It has been a stressful but particularly productive semester full of activities and accomplishments, which I want to highlight below. In the midst of so much uncertainty and chaos, there are still reasons to celebrate.

That's why, in a series I am calling REASONS TO CELEBRATE, I want to share with you the multiple accomplishments of our incredible group of students and staff.

REASON TO CELEBRATE #1: Congratulations to all of our undergraduate students who presented at TAMU's Student Research Week. Impressively, ALL FOUR students who presented placed first or second in their category. Congratulations also to graduate student mentors Alex Payne and Pierre Lau for their guidance! Cora Garcia and Jordan Gomez obtained 1st place in the category "Biology" with their joint talk titled "Honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) macronutrient regulation and Deformed wing virus tolerance." Marybeth Buchman obtained 2nd place in the category "Biology" with the talk titled "Evaluating the effectiveness of a commonly used protein source on honey bee colony growth during the summer dearth." Omar Khan obtained 2nd place in the category " AG Economics" with the talk titled "Impact of COVID-19 on beekeeping operations in Texas and Louisiana." We are very proud of you!

REASON TO CELEBRATE #2: Congratulations to undergraduate students Jordan Gomez and Cora Garcia (and their graduate mentors Alex Payne and Pierre Lau), who recently presented at Student Research Week and not only obtained 1st place in their category "Biology" with the talk titled "Honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) macronutrient regulation and Deformed wing virus tolerance." MOST IMPRESSIVELY, they also received THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH AWARD (only one for undergraduate students, for excellence in research, broad-scope and high-impact research, rigorous and high-quality methods, and propitious practical future plans).

REASON TO CELEBRATE #3: Congratulations to Rangel Lab Ph. D. candidate Pierre Lau, who was just selected for a 2021 Association of Former Students Distinguished Graduate Student Award for Excellence in Research - Doctoral. His outstanding academic record and significant contributions in research have earned you one of Texas A&M's highest levels of recognition. We are very proud of you!!!

REASON TO CELEBRATE #4: Congratulations to Rangel Lab Ph. D. candidate Alex Payne, who recently received the highly prestigious Montgomery Award from the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies at Texas A&M University.

> "The Montgomery Award is funded with income from an endowment and in recent years went to the President of the Graduate and Professional Student Government. Students eligible for the Montgomery Award are student leaders making major contributions to the academic opportunities and quality of life of their fellow graduate students here at Texas A&M. Whether through demonstrated leadership in international student groups or service organizations, students must show their dedication to serving Aggie graduate students in addition to excellent academics and scholarship."

REASON TO CELEBRATE #5: Congratulations to Rangel Lab Ph. D. student Taylor Reams, M.S., who recently passed her doctoral preliminary exams, making her a Ph. D. candidate. Congratulations Taylor!

REASON TO CELEBRATE #6: Congratulations to Rangel Lab Ph. D. student Jordan Twombly Ellis, who successfully defended her doctoral dissertation proposal titled "Determining the drivers of the Honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) self-removal behavior as a potential social immune response." Congratulations Jordan!

REASON TO CELEBRATE #7: Congratulations to Pierre Lau, who successfully defended his Ph. D. dissertation titled "Honey bee foraging preferences and nutritional ecology" and is now closer to graduating and starting his new career in the field of nutritional ecology.

REASON TO CELEBRATE #8: Congratulations to former Rangel Lab member Liz Walsh (now a Postdoctoral Research Associate with Agriculture Canada), undergraduate student Omar Khan, and collaborators, for getting the paper in press in the journal Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution!!! This article is part of the research topic special issue: "Insect Fertility in a Changing Environment: Shifting Climates, Pollutants, Pesticides,

and Disease." Article title: "Honey bee (*Apis mellifera* L.) queen pesticide exposure during development does not affect larval feeding rates, brood pheromone composition, or adult morphology." Authors: Elizabeth M. Walsh, Omar Khan, John Grunseich, Anjel M. Helms, Nancy H. Ing and Juliana Rangel

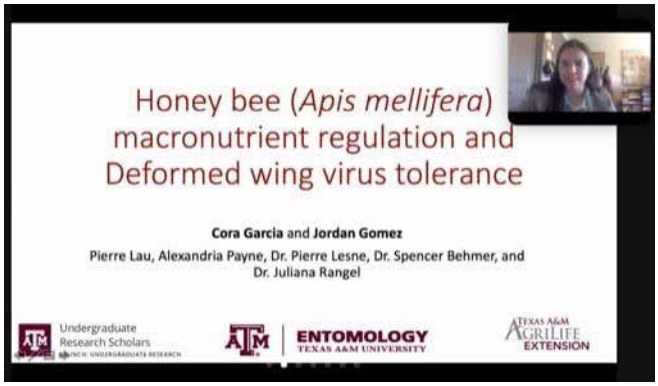
REASON TO CELEBRATE #9: Congratulations to Rangel Lab Ph. D. student Myra Dickey, who, by 27 May, will have defended her doctoral dissertation proposal titled "Disease ecology and microbiome characterization in a wild population of Africanized honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) in South Texas." Early congratulations Myra!

The one announcement I have for you is this: the next session in the At Home Beekeeping Series will be Tuesday, May 25, from 6:30-7:30 PM CST. Our speaker this month is LSU's Kristen Healy. She will be speaking on how to work with mosquito control to protect our bees. Please help us out by sharing this info on your social media sites and sending the flyer to your partners and local beekeeping associations. Here is the link to the event on Facebook: https://fb.me/e/1Z4zPmde1. As always, all of the presentations are posted for two weeks after the live showing at the Lawrence County Extension page: https://www.facebook.com/LawrenceCountyextension. Feel free to re-share this post from our site or just share the event onto your Facebook sites, or create your own post with the jpg attached.

As you can imagine, it is simply great to be working with such a fun and capable group of students. We have several undergraduates that are joining us this summer, so we'll continue mentoring them and will share with you their accomplishments in the future. As always, for up-to-date information regarding our program, or for new and interesting posts regarding bees and beekeeping, please visit us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/TAMUhoneybeelab.

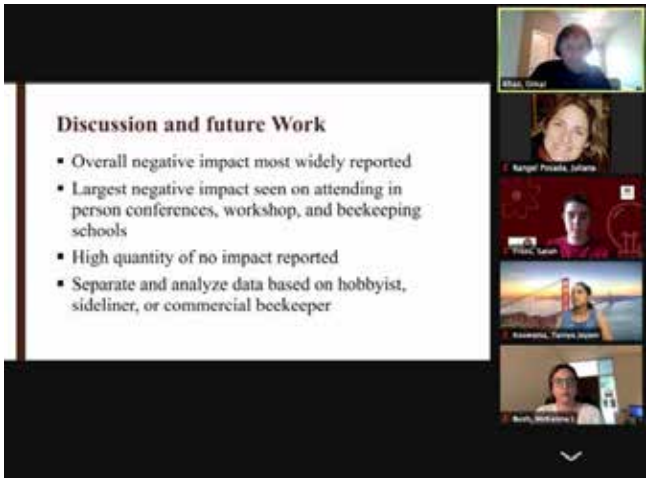
Sincerely yours,
Juliana Rangel

Undergraduate student Cora Garcia presenting her research project at Student Research Week



Undergraduate student Jordan Gomez presenting her research project at Student Research Week

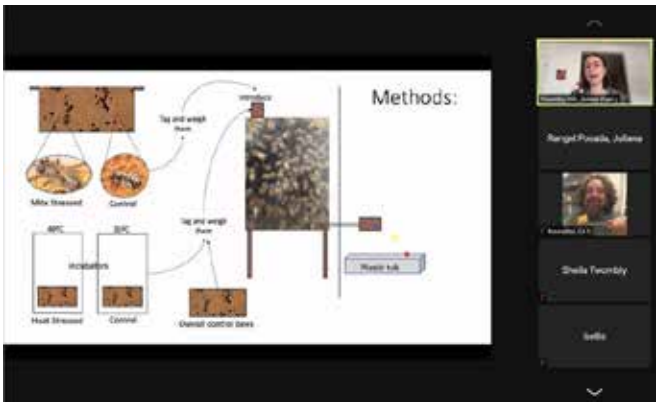
Undergraduate student Marybeth Buchman presenting her research project at Student Research Week



Undergraduate student Omar Khan presenting her research project at Student Research Week

Pierre Lau receiving the 2021 Association of Former Students Distinguished Graduate Student Award for Excellence in Research – Doctoral

Alexandria Payne receiving the highly prestigious Montgomery Award from the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies at Texas A&M University



Jordan Twombly Ellis during her Ph. D. dissertation proposal defense

Taylor Reams taking her Ph. D. candidacy exam

All are welcome!! Join us for this free event!!

- **May 25: Working with mosquito control to protect bees, *with Kristen Healy***
- **June 29: Reading a honey bee frame, *with Kate Ihle***
- **More dates to come!!!**

Last Tuesday of the month

6:30 – 7:30 pm Central Time

Watch via Zoom Webinar

https://auburn.zoom.us/j/904522838

or Facebook Live: **https://www.facebook.com/LawrenceCountyextension/**

Questions? Email Allyson Shabel ams0137@aces.edu

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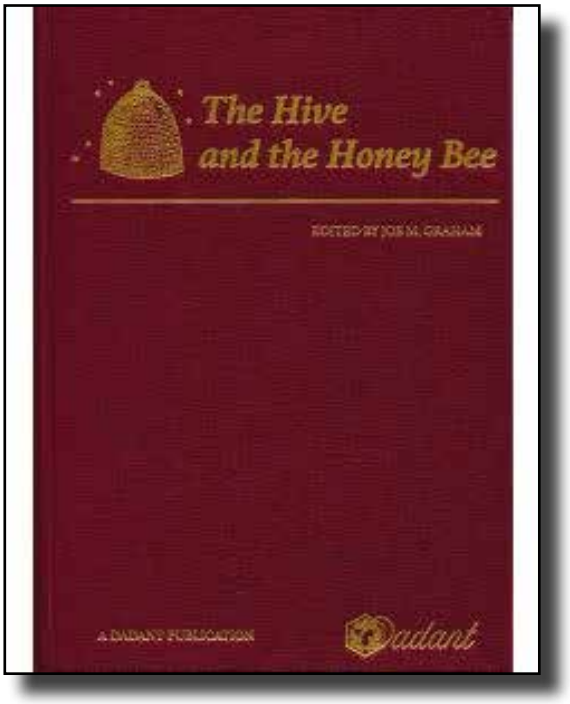
See our efforts: ACES | Auburn | Florida | Georgia | Louisiana | Mississippi | Tennessee | Texas A&M | USDA

Three Books Every Beekeeper Should Own

from Kirk Kirksey, Master Beekeeper, Dono-Bee Club

My obsessive habit of buying beekeeping books keeps my poor wife in a constant quandary. She can't decide which we will run out of first - money or bookshelves. I frequently must remind her, there are tons of great beekeeping books out there with more being published each year, and I REALLY need to read them all.

That being said, I've noticed a pattern over the past couple of years. Every time I have a problem with my bees or write an article or prepare a presentation for a bee club, I always turn to the same three books first. The reason is simple. More often than not, I find what I need, or they point me in the right direction. So, here are my picks for the three books every beekeeper should own.



The Hive and The Honey Bee
2015 Edition. Graham, Joe M (ed). Dadant
SRP (Dadant): $56.15

This book has a long, impressive history. It began in 1853 when Lorenzo Langstroth (yes, THAT Langstroth) wrote "Langstroth on the Hive and the Honeybee." In 1885 Langstroth was not well, and he entrusted rewriting his book to Charles Dadant (yes, THAT Dadant). A new version was published in 1889. Over the next 50 years, revisions and rewrites were made. Around WWII a great grandson of Charles Dadant took the book in a new direction. It became a multi-author encyclopedia of beekeeping knowledge with each chapter written by beekeeping scientists and experts. This new and ambitious edition called The Hive and the Honey Bee was published in 1946. Major revisions and rewrites continue to be published. The current edition is 2015.

It is difficult to imagine a more complete work on beekeeping. In total the book is 1057 long. Experts write each of the 26 chapters, each of which ends with an extensive bibliography. Content runs the gamut – from the historic ("The World's Beekeeping – Past and Present") to the scientific ("Honey Bee Sociogenomics") to operational ("Wintering Management of Honey Bee Colonies").

Another plus are the illustrations. The 2015 edition is the first rewrite to include color photographs and graphics. The "Anatomy of the Honey Bee" chapter has plenty of fascinating electron micrographs. Personally, the electron microscope shot of a worker bee stinger gives me the willies.

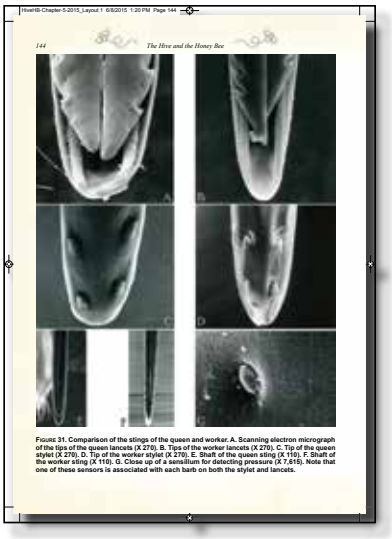
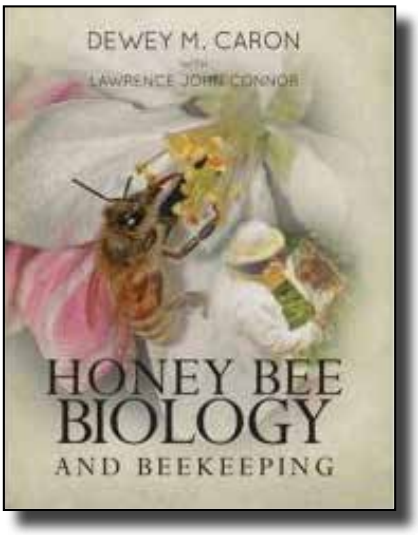

144 The Hive and the Honey Bee

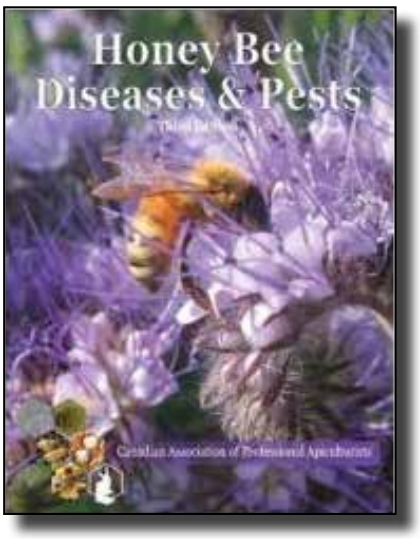
Figure 31. Comparison of the stings of the queen and worker. A. Scanning electron micrograph of the tips of the queen lancets (X 270). B. Tips of the worker lancets (X 270). C. Tip of the queen stylet (X 270). D. Tip of the worker stylet (X 270). E. Shaft of the queen sting (X 110). F. Shaft of the worker sting (X 110). G. Close up of a sensillum for detecting pressure (X 7,615). Note that one of these sensors is associated with each barb on both the stylet and lancets.

Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping
2013 Revision, Caron, Dewey with Lawrence John Connor. Wicwas Press.
SRP (Betterbee) $57.95

You have probably heard this author's name. Dr. Caron is a giant in the beekeeping world. He is an author (8 books), teacher, and emeritus professor of entomology at the University of Delaware. Dr. Caron wrote Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping as a textbook. He clearly states his goals in the book's Forward: "My intent is to explain bee and beekeeping basics in a manner meaningful to a person who lacks extensive background in biology."; "Readers should consider this book as a starting point, not a final quest…"

As the title implies, Dr. Caron's book is neatly divided in two parts. Chapters 1 through 10 describe honey bee biology - HB Anatomy, Dance Language, Pheromone Communication, etc. The remainder of the book is nothing less than a roadmap of practical beekeeping covering "Spring Management", "Fall and Winter in the Beehive", "Honey Harvest" and more. The book is hard to put down because every chapter is well written, under-





standable, and easy to read.

Design of the book is as impressive as the content. Paper quality is good with a thoughtful font selection making the print easy on the eyes. Clear illustrations are in wide page margins that leave plenty of room for notes. And, as Dr. Caron points out; "There are nearly 50 boxed selections which detail key/interesting aspects." My favorite (not to mention very useful) parts of the book are the Discussion Questions and Exercises at the end of each chapter.

Honey Bee Diseases & Pests
Third Edition (2013, 2nd printing 2015). Pernal, Stephen F.; Clay, Heather (Eds).
Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists
SRP (Dadant) $18.50

Mites, viruses, microsporidians, louses, beetles, fungi, bacteria, spores – all want to attack our bees!!! What's a poor beekeeper to do? One thing is certain when problems occur, we need rapid, accurate diagnosis and an effective response. Honey Bee Diseases and Pests is organized with these necessities in mind.

Expert authors cover bacterial, fungal and viral diseases as well as parasitic mites, insect pests, animal pest/predators and other colony problems. When applicable, for each disease and pest there is a clear description of Life Cycle, Impacts, and Controls. Color photos of symptoms and pests are very well done.

The "Diagnostic Table of Honey Bee Disease" toward the end of the book is a quick-look cross reference symptoms and possible causes.

DOES READING ALL THESE BOOKS MAKE ME A BETTER BEEKEEPER?

Good question. Here's the argument I frequently hear for not shelling hard earned cash for pricey beekeeping books. In the age of Google, Youtube, and Instant Online Information a book is outdated the moment it's printed. So why buy them?

Certainly books have their downsides with some (usually not nearly all) outdated material. One recent example comes to mind. For the past twenty five years, we have believed and been taught the Varroa mite feeds on a mature honey bee's blood (hemolymph). I'm betting most beekeeping books on the market today say Varroa eats bee blood. In fact, two of the three the books I'm recommending here say Varroa mites mainly feed on honey bee hemolymph. I've said the same thing in many times in presentations.

Ooops! A recent study (https://www.pnas.org/content/116/5/1792) has shown, the Varroa mite feeds primarily on honey bees' fat body – much more harmful to honey bees than eating hemolymph. I am fairly certain this new finding hasn't made into the popular beekeeping press yet. Do these kinds of discrepancies devalue good beekeeping books? Not by a long shot.

No doubt, it takes books several years to catch up with current scientific discoveries. Many discoveries being made today will disprove what we think we know about beekeeping. This is exactly how science and scientists are supposed to work – produce new knowledge by challenging established facts. Good beekeeping books will always contain some amount of outdated material. This comes with the territory. Limited amounts of outdated material aside, good beekeeping books remain invaluable. Here's why.

A second year beekeeper with a Youtube video does not an expert make, and anyone can say anything on an Internet blog, forum, comment, etc regardless how ridiculous and inaccurate. I won't get my dander up by saying more about misinformation on the Internet.

Don't get me wrong. I am not saying ignore Internet based information. I use it all the time. I am saying be careful what you believe. As we know all too well, there's a lot of junk out there.

Good beekeeping books tend to be written by established experts and scientists. Much of their material is based on peer-reviewed studies. Editors and publishers prefer evidence based, well researched information because much is at stake. Bad reviews and credibility dings lead to poor sales and shady reputations.

So until I either run out of money or bookshelf space, I'm sticking with good (emphasis on good) beekeeping books as a major as a major source of information. In this article I have recommended the best books I know.

Routine "NewBee" Hive Inspections

Photo - Hudson Old, *East Texas Journal*

"The Continuing Journey of Two Ninth-Year Small-Scale Beekeepers"
TBA Journal Article – May 2021

by Roger and Sue Farr, Caddo Trace Beekeeping Association (CTBA), Mount Pleasant, Texas;
Master Level Beekeeper - Texas Master Beekeeper Program (Roger)

Pictures are by the authors unless otherwise indicated.

We have helped to conduct introductory beekeeping classes and have supplied nucleus hives for five years. Our goal now is the same as it was at the beginning: to meet new beekeepers, help them excel, and share what's really important in life.

One thing is consistent with "NewBees": their most challenging and terrifying task is opening their hives for that first "solo" inspection. Yes, the NewBees we teach have seen an inspection demo in class, and some have watched a video on conducting inspections. THBEA likes the videos from the University of Guleph, Canada, where bee researcher Dr. Paul Kelley works. His shorts and bare arms get their attention! When we deliver hives to NewBees, we go through each frame to make sure they know what they are seeing on the frames, and we listen to make sure they get what they paid for. Usually, we conduct the first inspection with them during the nucleus hive installation into their equipment. We encourage them to do the next inspection in seven to ten days…on their own. We also commit to return in about a month to see how each new hive is progressing, to show them how to conduct a proper varroa count, and to answer questions. Sometimes, we discover at that one month-mark that they have not gone into their hives during this intervening four-week period. "We have fed the bees as you recommended." "There are bees going in and out of the hive." "We're waiting for better weather." This is Texas, and stuff happens. It is our job as beekeepers to help NewBees understand why those responses are incomplete.

We discussed our experiences, mentally replayed the scenarios, and finally reduced our thoughts to paper. The "Inspection Considerations," below, are what we teach, discuss, and model with our NewBees. This one sheet is not meant to be a primer in how to do inspections; rather, it's a written reminder to them – and to us – that some things are essential to make a hive inspection successful.

We are not trying to write a definitive text book on hive inspections – great beekeepers have already done that. We simply share what we consistently do in our apiary and what we have found to be helpful for beginning Texas beekeepers. We start with the "Why?" of inspections and then highlight the "What?" beekeepers look for. We outline "When?" to conduct inspections and some planning and preparation considerations. We focus on safety in the bee yard. Finally, we suggest ways to wrap up an inspection and to effectively prepare for the next one.

Perhaps this "Inspection Considerations" list will be helpful for you, too. We can all be better beekeepers when we have a plan and follow it – as far as Texas weather and the bees allow!

We'd love to hear about your hive inspection guidelines and your beekeeping adventures!

Routine Hive Inspection Considerations

There are many ways to conduct hive inspections; this is what we do. Roger and Sue Farr 979.436.5310, rdfarr@gmail.com

Why?

- To know what is happening in the hive – Is all well, or is beekeeper intervention required?
- To add or subtract resources to "right size" the hive as the seasons and hive size change.
- To manage queen events before they become problems.

When?

- Spring/Summer – every 7 to 10 days
- Fall – every two weeks
- Winter – once per month
- Ideal conditions are:
    - Bees flying
    - Sunny and above 65 degrees Fahrenheit
    - Little or no wind
    - Usually between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Preparation/Planning?

- Know why you are entering each hive:
    - Routine inspection
    - Correcting a problem
- Know what you are looking for – each time you enter a hive:
    - Queen presence (see queen and/or larvae)
    - Resource quantity (pollen, nectar/honey, comb)
- Take equipment you will need to take care of what you find or are expecting; limit frustrating return trips.
- Load everything in your truck/4-wheeler/wagon so that you can easily transport it to the bee yard.
- Keep a bucket of dry pine needles to light your smoker. Bring a bucket and 1 quart of water to put the fire out.

How?

- Safety first: "The best time to prepare for a rodeo with the bees is BEFORE it starts."
    - NEVER go to the apiary alone. Let someone know where you are. Take your cell phone. Report in.
    - ALWAYS have a place where you can quickly (in 30 seconds) get away from the bees if necessary.
    - ALWAYS close the truck windows. Leave the keys in the ignition.
    - NEVER enter a hive without a lit smoker and at least a veil on. The smoker is your only defensive tool.
- Use a tool box for your inspection tools, needed supplies, and extras.
- Start by inspecting your weakest hives first, and then progress to your strongest ones.
    - Identify problems and fix them as you go along. Limit the number of times you open a big hive.
    - Keep records of what is in each hive. This makes it easier to find the resources you need later.
- Place a rock/brick atop a hives that is "finished." NO ROCK means that the hive needs additional work.

Finishing Up

- Take a look at your hives:
    - Is there a rock to indicate "doneness" for every hive?
    - Is there normal activity at the entrances? Or, is there robbing activity going on? Fix the problem.
    - Is all the equipment in place with no "extra" pieces lying around?
- Put out your smoker before you leave the bee yard.
- Sit in a safe shady spot, drink water, and rest.
- Look over your notes. Confirm the status of every hive. Record what you will look for on your next inspection.

Listing of Local Beekeepers' Associations in Texas with TBA Delegate and Regular Meeting Information Shown for Each

Please forward any changes and/or additions to
Leesa Hyder, Executive Secretary, *execsec@texasbeekeepers.org*

Alamo Area Beekeepers Association
Rick Fink - (210) 872-4569
president@alamobees.org
www.alamobees.org
Meetings: 3rd Tuesday on odd # months
Helotes Ind. Baptist Church
15335 Bandera Rd., Helotes at 7 pm

Austin Area Beekeepers Association
Dodie Stillman - (512) 560-7550
austinareabeekeepers@gmail.com
facebook.com/groups/Austin/AreaBeekeeperAssociation
www.meetup.com/Austin-Urban-Beekeeping/.
Meeting: 3rd Monday of each month at 7pm
Frank Fickett Scout Training and Service Center
12500 N I-35, Near Parmer Lane, Austin

Bees in the East Club
Mark de Kiewiet (210) 863-8024
beesintheeast@att.net
Meetings 4th Saturday of each month at 10am
Water Garden Gems, 3230 Bolton Road, Marion,

Bell/Coryell Beekeepers Association
Charles McMaster (703) 624-1337
bellcoryellbeeclub@gmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of each month (except December) at
Refuge Ministries, 2602 S. FM 116, Copperas Cove - 7pm

Big Country Beekeepers Association
Ken Hobbs - (325) 665-4045
paniolobee@icloud.com
Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of each month except December at 6:30pm
Ben E Keith Company Beverage Distributors (Budweiser Co.)
2141 Cottonwood St, Abilene
(entrance on Cottonwood St next to flagpole

Brazoria County Beekeepers Association
Steve Brackmann - (832) 884-6141
stevenbrackmann@yahoo.com
bcba@brazoria-county-beekeepers-association.com
www.brazoria-county-beekeepers-association.com
Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month
Brazoria County Extension Office, 21017 CR 171, Angleton at 6:45 pm

Brazos Valley Beekeepers Association
Nathan Krueger - (979) 324-1160
info@bvbeeks.org
www.bvbeeks.org
Meetings: 3rd. Tuesday of each month (except Dec.)
First Christian Church, 900 S Ennis St., Bryan from 6pm

Caddo Trace Beekeepers Association
Terry Wright - (903) 856-8005
tcwright7021@yahoo.com
Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month
Titus County Agrilife Ext. Bldg., 1708 Industrial Rd., Mount Pleasant at 7 pm

Caprock Beekeepers Association
Victoria Watts - (806) 392-2355
mystique175@att.net
Meetings: 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm
Freeway Bible Chapel, 5507 Marsha Sharp Freeway, Lubbock 79407

Central Texas Beekeepers Association
Michael Kelling - (979) 277-0411
CentralTexasBeekeepers@gmail.com
www.centraltexasbeekeepers.org
Meetings: Monthly on the 4th Thursday (except November and December)
Washington County Fairgrounds, 1305 E Bluebell Rd., Brenham at 7pm

Chisholm Trail Beekeepers
Scott Zirger (682) 385-0008 or (510) 301-5796 (cell)
scott@zirger.us or *chisholm-trail-beekeepers@googlegroups.com*
Meetings: Last Monday of each month
United Cooperative Services, 2601 S Burleson Blvd, Burleson

Collin County Hobby Beekeepers Assn.
John (Skip) Talbert (706) 761-7893
president@cchba.org
www.cchba.org
Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 pm
Collin College Conference Center, (Central Park Campus)
2400 CommunityDr. , McKinney

Colorado County Beekeepers Association
David Behlen (832) 230-5740
coloradocountybeekeepers@gmail.com
Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm
316 Spring Street, Columbus

Comal County Beekeepers Association
Julie Morgan - (210) 475-2924
e.julie.morgan@gmail.com
Meetings: 1st Thursday of each month
Beefy's on the Green Restaurant, upstairs room
12910 USHwy 281N at 6:30 pm

Concho Valley Beekeepers Association
Rex Moody - (325) 650-6360
cvbeekeeper@gmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of each month Jan-Nov at 6:30 pm
Texas A&M res. & Ext. Center, 7887 US Hwy 87 N, San Angelo

Deep East Texas Beekeepers Association
Ellen Reeder - (337) 499-6826
ellenswartz@sbcglobal.net

Denton County Beekeepers Association
Gary Barber - (972) 768-5505
board@dentonbees.com
www.dentonbees.com
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm
Please see calendar for location

Dino-Beekeepers Association
Chip Hough (817) 559-0564
dino-beeclub@hotmail.com
www.dino-bee.com
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of month at 6:30 pm
Glen Rose Citizens Center, 209 SW Barnard St., Glen Rose

East Texas Beekeepers Association
Richard Counts - (903) 566-6789
dick.counts4450@gmail.com
www.etba.info
Meetings: 1st Thursday of each month at 6:45 pm;
Whitehouse Methodist Ch., 405 W Main (Hwy 346), Whitehouse

Elgin Area Beekeepers Association
Jerry Lee - (917) 710-6072
elginbeekeepers@gmail.com
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7 pm
Various Locations

Elm Fork Beekeepers Association
Jan Hodson - (940) 637-2702
janrhodson@gmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Thursday of each month
The VFW Hall, 3332 North Grand Ave, Gainesville

Erath County Beekeepers Association
Kay Purcella - (325) 330-0745
kaysyellowrose@hotmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Monday of each month, Texas Agrilife Research and Extension Center, 1229 N US Hwy 281, Stephenville at 7pm

Fayette County Beekeepers Association
Mike Mathews (713) 805-9673
mmathews324@gmail.com
Meetings: First Saturday of the month, Feb, April,
June, August, October and December at 5 pm
Fayette County Ag. Bldg., 240 Svoboda Ln., La Grange

Fort Bend Beekeepers Association
Lynne Jones - (713) 304-8880
info@fortbendbeekeepers.org
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of each month (except December) at 7:30 pm
Long Acres Ranch Visitor Center, 2335 Richmond Pkwy, (then turn onto Circle Seven Dr.) Richmond TX 77469

Fredericksburg Beekeepers Association
Joe Bader - (830) 537-4040
fredericksburgbeekeepers@gmail.com
Meetings: Held on Zoom. Email joebees@gmail.com for information to join meeting.

Harris County Beekeepers Association
Jim Orr - (713) 213-7080
rjfarmandapiary@gmail.com
www.harriscountybeekeepers.org
Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month at 7pm
Golden Acres Center, 5001 Oak Ave., Pasadena

Hays County Beekeepers Association
Nathalie Misserey (512) 699-0605
hayscountyba@gmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of each month at
Vista Brewing, 13551 FM 150, Austin, TX 78737 at 6:30pm

Heart of Texas Beekeepers Association
Gary Bowles (254) 214-4514
gm.bowles@yahoo.com
Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month (except Dec.) at 7 pm
in Lecture Hall
MCC Emergency Services Education Center, 7601 Steinbeck Bend Road, Waco

Henderson County Beekeepers Association
Kathi Murphy-Boley (972) 467-5092
kdbmurphy@gmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00 pm
Faith Fellowship Church, 5330 Highway 175, Athens, TX 75762

Hill County Beekeepers Association
Robin Sliva - (254) 205-0534
rs.plumleeplace@gmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm
Hill County Courthouse Annex, 126 S Covington St., Hillsboro

Hopkins County Beekeepers Association
Jon Dalzell - Secretary, (214) 395-1730
dalzelljon@aol.com
Meetings: 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm
Hopkins County Agrilife Bldg., 1200 W Houston St., Sulphur Springs

Houston Beekeepers Association
Sandi Murray (713) 594-9273
info@houstonbeekeepers.org
www.houstonbeekeepers.org
Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm
Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bisonnet St., Houston

Houston Natural Beekeepers Association
Dean Cook
houstonnaturalbeekeepers@gmail.com
Meetings: Second Saturday of the month at 11 am
4466 Billy Street, Houston TX 77020

Johnson County Beekeepers Association
Bruce Watts, Jr. - (817) 992-2294
bruce.jr@sbcglobal.net
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm
2099 W FM 917, Joshua

Lamar County Beekeepers Association
Randall Childres - (903) 249-9105
lamarcoba@gmail.com
Meetings: 1st Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm
Lamar County Fairgrounds, Bldg B, 570 E Center St., Paris

Liberty County Beekeepers Association
Cameron Crane - (409) 658-3800
info@libertycountybeekeepers.org
www.libertycountybeekeepers.org
Meetings: 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm
Texas Bee Supply, 351 County Road 6243, Dayton TX 77535

Longview Beekeepers Association
Myra Smith (903) 639-2910
Meetings: 1st Tuesday of each month at 6 pm
Texas Agrilife Extension Office, 405 E Marshall St., Longview

Marshall Beekeeping Association
Beth Derr - (936) 591-2399
marshallbeekeeping@gmail.com
Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 5:30 pm
Cumberland Presbyterian Church. 501 Indian Springs Dr., Marshall

Montgomery County Beekeepers Assn.
Andy Knight - (281) 305-4072
mocobees@gmail.com
www.mocobees.com
Meetings: 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30 pm
Montgomery County Extension Office, Tom Leroy Education Bldg., 9020 Airport Road, Conroe

Northeast Texas Beekeepers Association
Rebecca Vaughan - (972) 841-3751
rebeccavaughan2@gmail.com
nethacantontexas@outlook.com
Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month at 6:00 pm
Canton Baptist Church, 303 South Athens St.,
Canton, TX 75103

Palo Duro Bee Club
Paige Nester - (806) 678-8048
nesterpaige@gmail.com
Meetings: 1st Thursday of each month
Creek House Honey Farm, 5015 4th Ave, Canyon

Pineywoods Beekeepers Association
Terry McFall - (409) 289-7387
tdmcfall@hotmail.com
Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm
Lufkin/Angelina County Chamber of Commerce
1615 S Chestnut St. Lufkin (just off Loop 287)

Red River Valley Beekeepers Assn.
Larry Roderick (940) 237-2814
roderickwaterwells@gmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of each month (except December) at 7pm
Bolin Science Hall Room 209, Mid West State University,
310 Taft Blvd., Wichita Falls

Rusk County Beekeepers Association
John Stewart - (903) 842-4433
jes.stewart@gmail.com
Meetings: Last Thursday of each month at 6 pm
Church of the Nazarene, 906 W Main St, Henderson

San Marcos Area Bee Wranglers
Gay Fraser (512) 264-2021
smabeewranglers@gmail.com
Meetings: 2nd Thursday of the month 7:00 pm - 9:15 pm
Extra Meetings: 4th Thursday of the month, March, April, May 7:00pm
Pecan Park Riverside RV Park, 50 Squirrel Run, San Marcos

Southwest Texas Beekeepers Association
Cynthia Schiotis (210) 317-5596
swtexasbeekeepers@gmail.com
Meetings: 3rd Thursday of odd numbered months at 6pm
Sutton County Public Library, 306 E Mulberry St., Sonora

Temple Area Beekeepers Association
Jim Billings (254) 760-2053
holly21351@aol.com
Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7pm
Troy Community Center, 201 East Main Street, Troy

Texarkana Beekeepers Association
Sarah Clinesmith - (903) 277-2145
sarahaddie@aol.com
Meetings: 3rd Monday of each month at 6pm
Texarkana Public Library, 600 W 3rd St Texarkana

Texas Hill Country Beekeepers Association
Linda Williams - (830) 688-0560
texashillcountrybeekeepers@gmail.com
facebook.com/TXHillCountryBKAssn/
Meetings: 4th Tuesday of odd months at 6:30 pm
Hill Country Veterans Center, 411 Meadow View lane, Kerrville TX 78028

Travis County Beekeepers Assn.
Tanya Phillips - (512) 560-3732
traviscountybeekeepers@gmail.com
www.TravisCountyBeekeepers.org
https://www.facebook.com/groups/TravisBeeks/
Meetings: First Monday of the month at 7 pm
Zilker Botanical Gdns., 2220 Barton Springs Rd., Austin

Tri County Beekeepers Association
Erin Davis - (903) 389-3436
erin.davis@ag.tamu.edu
Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month at 5:30pm
Sam's Restaurant, Fairfield, TX

Tyler County Bee Club
Scott Martin - (409) 283-4507
tcbclub16@gmail.com
Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month at 6 pm
Nutrition Center, 201 Veterans Way, Woodville

Walker County Area Beekeepers Assn.
Larry Fuchs - (936) 661-0633
walkercountybeekeepers@gmail.com
Meetings: Last Thursday of each month at 7 pm (not Nov or Dec)
Walker Education Center, 1402 19th St., Huntsville

Williamson County Area Beekeepers Assn.
Gillian Mattinson - (512) 961-9955
gillmatties@gmail.com www.wcaba.org
Meetings: 4th Tuesday of each month at 7 pm (except December)
Georgetown Public Library, 402 W 8th St., Georgetown

Wise Texas Bee Club
Donny Johns - (817) 939-3249
info@wisetexasbeeclub.org
Meetings: First Thursday of the month at 6pm
Public Library, Bridgeport

Wood County Beekeepers Association
Bill Zimmer - (469) 222-3901
woodcountybeekeepers@gmail.com
Meetings: First Tuesday of every month at 7 pm
The Red Barn, 100 CR 4830, Winnsboro

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Bee on Duranta Blossom