



General Membership Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2023

6:30 pm – Networking, 7:00 pm Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. In Memoriam
4. Presentation: 7:10 pm

“Winterizing and Early Spring Management to Prevent Swarms”- John Benham, Master Beekeeper, Kentucky (via Zoom)

Below please find the highlights from the pdf version of John Benham’s Presentation:

Three very important details:

- (1) The reduction of mites to a minimum with the accompanied result of reduction of viral infections.
- (2) The promotion of immune function and overall health of the upcoming phase of "Winter Bee" production.
- (3) The timeline of the treatment is such that if an unacceptable level of mites still exists after the treatment, a second treatment may be done within a time span that will allow for "Winter Bee" production and overall colony health to assure the harvesting and storage of over wintering food supplies.

The overall health and population of a colony of bees in the Fall will "Bee" reflected in the Spring. Cull and/or combine at this time.

Winterizing Summary

- Low, acceptable mite counts.
- Healthy population with preferably a young queen, culling and combining complete.
- Hives and apiary in general are ready for Winter all the way through the main flow and honey harvest. Mouse guards/entrance reducers, feeding shims, viable woodenware, etc.
- Ample food stores with considerations for supplements established.
- Management decisions and plans made concerning which colonies will be the primary honey producers and those likely to swarm. These decisions will be based on the prior season's colony performance (if applicable) and current reproduction likelihood (young queen, new colony, etc.).
- Quilt boards, hive wrapping and insulation may be required in your area.

Consult those who use these methods in their management programs

Late Winter Hive Assessment

- If and when a break in the weather occurs, the hive should be checked for remaining food stores. The most simple way of doing this without opening the hive is to lift or tilt the hive. A heavy hive means food is available and a light hive means a candy board or other supplement should be added or replenished.
- By mid to late December, the colony population will begin to rear brood and consumption of food stores will increase proportionally
- The Winter solstice will prompt the bees that working toward Spring must begin. Brood rearing will increase and will parallel the weather and associated Spring blooms.

Late Winter/Early Spring Hive Assessment/Look In

- When you open your hive for the first inspection of Spring, if the temperature is not at least 50 degrees but the bees are flying, make sure the winds are calm.
- If you pull any frames during the inspection make sure you *replace them in the location from where they were removed*

• When you first open the hive, if you notice that the bees are still in a cluster, do not disturb them, close the hive and wait for another opportunity

- An accurate observation of food stores and an estimation of whether or not more should be added is paramount during this period. This when the majority of overwintering colonies starve.

Conclusion

- Spring management *begins at the end of the honey harvest of the previous year*. During this period, mites are brought under control and colonies and queens are scrutinized with management decisions being made to deal with the weak and/or stifled *colonies before Summer ends* and the brief Fall flow begins.
- This will allow the beekeeper the opportunity to re-treat and get the mite count under control if the initial treatment did not provide desirable results. Acceptable mite counts are mandatory during late Summer as the bees begin their transition into the rearing of the long lived Winter bees.
- Woodenware suitability and general apiary conditions are also taken into account so that when the Winter season progresses into Spring and the bees transition into their "survival of the species reproduction" mode they can do so with little interference or imposed stresses from the beekeeper.
- The overall condition of a colony of bees in the Fall will be mirrored in the following Spring. This is when strong Spring honey producing colonies are established.
- The Spring build up by honey bees is the most intense and focused part of the honey bees' life and a good beekeeper will be ready to use this brief inflexible period to their advantage.

Additional Resources

Bee Informed Partnership -

<https://beeinformed.org/education-outreach/>

Arkansas Dept of Agriculture

<https://beehealth.uada.edu/assets/pages/beebroodconditions.html>

The Honey Bee Health Coalition

<https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/resources/varroa-management/>

<https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/resources/hive-health-best-management-practices/>

https://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/HBHC_VET_revised_1121

The Bee MD

<http://www.thebeemd.com/>

If you would like a pdf of the presentation, email your request to John:

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5. **Minutes:** Curtis Crowell motioned to accept the minutes and they were seconded by Elizabeth Piccola.
6. **Member Introductions:** The members of CJBA who joined via ZOOM also introduced themselves.
7. **Save the Date: Saturday, February 24th:** NJBA Winter Meeting and Election at the Eco Complex in Bordentown, NJ. If you intend to run for an office, please send your bio to Jeff Burd as soon as possible.
8. **Treasurer's Report:** Current balance is approximately \$29,000.00 with a few bills to pay.
9. **Committee Reports:**
 - **Membership Committee** (Jeff Burd): Letters were sent to members who have not reregistered and paid dues
 - **Audit Committee** (Vacant)
 - **Education Committee** (chair: Jeff Burd): A beekeeping course will be planned for mid February in Ewing.
 - **Events Chair** (chair: Geff Vitale)
 - **Donations Committee** (chair: Bill Woodard): Committee will request feedback from membership to determine which applications will receive donations. CJBA donates funds to the Friends of the Monmouth

County Park System who provide the tent for our display during the fair.

- **Social Media Committee** (chair: Danielle Garske): CJBA has a facebook page for members only
- **Honey Queen Update:** (Angela Juffey)

Katie's manuscript focusing on my research at MIT this summer on native plants and honey bee overwintering survival was just accepted into Harvard's Journal of Emerging Investigators. It will still be another 6-8 weeks before publication.

After conducting research on native plants and honey bee overwintering survival at MIT this summer, Katie reached out to NJS Assemblyman Alex Sauickie (12 district). Mr. Sauickie serves on the Agriculture and Food Security Committee.

Mr. Sauickie will be introducing her bill, "Parks, Plants and Pollinators" to the NJS Legislature on Monday and she should receive a bill # on Tuesday, 11/21. This legislation is designed to support the DEP use of native plants in landscaping, land management, reforestation efforts, and habitat restoration in New Jersey State Parks and Forests by establishing a grant program to prohibit the planting of non-native and invasive plants at NJS Parks, Forests, and local municipalities.

Below is a link to pictures and a video of the signing...

link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11ROILZrC02CBe2CydkXyDVxMbJjB7x4H?usp=sharing>

LATEST HONEY QUEEN UPDATE (11/22/23)

The bill # for Katie's Parks, Plants, and Pollinator's legislation is **Bill #A5764: Parks, Plants, and Pollinators** introduced by Assemblyman Alex Sauickie (District 12).

As you know, native plants are an inseparable part of the natural beauty of the landscape of New Jersey and must be preserved. This legislation is designed to support the NJ-DEP use of native plants in landscaping, land management, reforestation efforts, and habitat restoration in New Jersey State Parks and Forests by establishing a grant program to prohibit the planting of non-native and invasive plants.

New Jersey has more than 2,100 native plants species that are well-adapted to NJ soils, temperatures, precipitation levels, and other environmental conditions; thereby, making these plants the best option for conserving and protecting the State's environment. Unfortunately, 812 native plants in New Jersey are listed as endangered or species of concern and 39% of native plants in New Jersey are considered rare with 42 species that are considered globally rare.

New Jersey's native plant species provide food, such as nectar, pollen, seeds, foliage, and habitats, including essential shelter and nesting sites for various types of wildlife in the State. With their extensive root systems to control erosion, native plants moderate floods and filter water to improve water quality.

It is necessary for our State to encourage the increased cultivation of native plants and to improve public awareness of their importance and benefits.

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10. **Statewide Updates:** At the Fall Meeting, Chelsea Abegg (Rutgers Researcher) presented at the Cream Ridge location.

- **NJBA Election:** If you intend to run for an office, please send your bio to Jeff Burd as soon as possible.

11. **Old Business:** Tri-folds are available for each Association. Jeff Burd is storing the tri-fold for CJBA. Contact him if you need it for a presentation.

Old extractors that are in need of repair may be auctioned at the Summer Meeting.

12. **New Business:** A discussion followed regarding Farm Assessment and raising honeybees. It was noted that if a member does not meet the acreage requirement for farm assessment, they may receive a benefit regarding license plates or insurance. However this will be pursued on an individual basis and not by the NJBA.

We have been asked to participate in the Ocean County Fair. Elizabeth Piccola will be coordinating this effort and reviewing the application requirements. She will also pursue coordinating the Honey competition at the Monmouth County Fair.

13. **CJBA Officer Election**

A unanimous ballot was cast for the following uncontested 2024 slate of candidates:

President: Jennifer Cotton
1st Vice President: Mike Rein
2nd Vice President: Yasmin Qazilbash
3rd Vice President: Catalina Molina
Treasurer: Lew Goldberg
Secretary: Angela Juffey

Raffle Drawings (50/50 cash & prizes) Bob LoPresti donated Honeybee Democracy by Thomas Seeley as one of the prizes.

Meeting adjourned: 8:39PM

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Juffey
Central Jersey Beekeepers Association, Secretary