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THE PENNSYLVANIA BEEKEEPER

The Official Organ of the Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association

News 'n Views...

Brrrr. It is still downright chilly at the end of April. Some stretches of warm temperatures allowed bees to fly, forage and the queens to lay some eggs. Continued cool temps seemed to finish-off those tiny hive clusters that still showed promise a few weeks earlier. If the old foragers don't get back on the early flights, the colonies seem to cross the point of no recovery. My losses are 50%. 68 dead, 67 alive. The bright side is some of the survivors are monsters. They're still good on honey and bees wall to wall. Those get another deep box of honey from the dead-outs. I'm sure to give them some drawn drone comb, so queen rearing can start as the drones begin to hatch.

As I write this the third week of April, any other year I've already put bees into cherries for pollination. This year the buds are still swelling and blossom looks to be two weeks away. Oddly, a couple apple trees in my back yard want to open already.

Don Shump and I gave an urban beekeeping presentation at the PSATS (Pa State Association of Township Supervisors) convention at Hershey Lodge. The presentation came off nicely. Our audience was attentive. The attendance was… well…rather poor. The convention brings together township staff from all across the state. It also has many workshops at the same time. And our presentation was the last session of the day. It was still worth the effort to get into the system. Perhaps PSBA can do it again.

Being from the extreme opposite corner of the state from Philadelphia, Don and I have not been able to talk face to face. My experience of Philly is what I see in the news media, which doesn't make it very attractive. I want to compliment Don and the Philadelphia Beekeepers Guild. They have maintained beekeeping within the city and without need of any regulations. They work smart and responsibly to keep it that way. A great example of how 'less' is better. Rev. L.L. Langstroth must be proud.

Steve Repasky, president of Burg Bees, was not able to attend the conference. His portion of the PowerPoint presentation was another illustration of how beekeeping in urban settings is working and successful. Burg Bees have overcome many obstacles in regulations to make this possible. There are still some problems with permit fees that are overburdening. Steve and Burg Bees put in a tremendous amount of time and effort to continuously educate new beekeepers and the general public. Salute.

Winter loss surveys. If you have not completed the winter loss surveys, please do so on line from our website. The national survey by Bee Informed Partnership (BIP) may be extended. Record keeping may be one of the more cumbersome tasks, but information learned from the data may help us all steer in more successful directions with our management methods.

Secondly, a very short and painless survey is being conducted for our own Pennsylvania beekeepers. http://pastatebeekeepers.org/survey.htm You may also do this on a paper copy and mail it. We have not been able to separate Pennsylvania information from the BIP survey in an efficient way. Loss information is only a rumor if we don't have actual data. Please do the state survey.

A couple questions ask about how many packages and nucs are being brought into the state for winter replacement. This is for the purpose of determining economic impact. Few people beyond beekeepers understand how much money is spent to reload dead hives each year. This is largely the independent beekeeper with a passion to keep bees. We need to be able to show the importance of the beekeeping industry in terms of dollars spent and pollination contribution. I think the numbers will surprise people.

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In This Issue

News 'n Views (Continued from Page 1)

The Pa Honeybee Advisory Board will be meeting with the Pa Department of Agriculture in the near future. Some topic issues will include review of the voluntary Best Management Practices that were approved last year. We have not heard much feedback from the field on any problems with this document. It has been used successfully with some zoning in the Pittsburgh area. It is intended to be a common sense guide for keeping honeybees in all types of locations. If anyone finds areas of BMP that might need reviewed, please contact your association leaders.

Since Food Safety Act 106 has taken place at the beginning of 2011, it has been more cumbersome to establish a honey house, honey bottling or selling honey. My own facilities were 'grandfathered' in and my township is not zoned, so these things have not affected me much. However, many of you may have ran or battled the gauntlet of regulations. Honey has never been a high-risk food for the history of mankind.

Problems or roadblocks need to be known, so they can be addressed. I would accept your emails regarding problems encountered. Specific information would be useful, as well as county and township or municipality. I certainly understand the importance of safe food. Minimal guidelines should be the concern of everyone. However, some regulations have no impact or enter the food-stream when processing honey. Even the work 'processing' is misleading. The 'process' is moving from one container (honeycomb) to another (pail/jar). With comb honey, nothing changes.

Final thought this month… The majority of registered beekeepers in Pennsylvania have fewer than 25 colonies (94%). Many are beginners or have a few years experience. Many don't think they 'count' in the big scheme of beekeeping. 94% IS important. Data and records are valuable to researchers, studies and other beekeepers. There are some tremendously active bee associations across the state. Stay involved. Help educate and relieve fears. More studies are always coming along. Become a "Citizen Scientist", do surveys and offer your data. This is another way to show this as a more than just a "hobby".

Perhaps we can begin a "Citizen Scientist" column to consolidate information and stories. Volunteers may apply.

Charlie Vorisek
President PSBA

Attention Counties: Please submit your 2014 list of officers and meeting dates to Yvonne as soon as possible. Her mailing address and email are listed on Page 8.

March Observation

The following note was sent to PSBA through the website and permission given to share in our newsletter. The writer, who lives in Stroudsburg, wishes to remain anonymous.

I wanted to tell you about what I saw some bees doing last month, and what I thought it might mean.

I have been feeding the wild birds all winter. I spread the birdseed on a tray on my deck and I got lots of birds visiting but also, of course, some squirrels. One day I ran across a mention somewhere that mixing bits of hot pepper among the birdseed would repel the squirrels. (It doesn›t harm birds; some bird owners even feed hot peppers to them as part of their veggies). So I sprinkled cayenne pepper powder amongst the seed and all around it, and that did scare off the squirrels. But one especially warm day in early March, when the temperature went up to almost 60 degrees, I noticed about thirty honeybees flying back and forth over the tray, and some of them landing on the tray and scrabbling furiously with their legs. I stopped what I was doing and watched the bees for some minutes, and I realized they were gathering up the cayenne powder! I saw that at least some of them were collecting it in their pollen baskets on their last pair of legs. After some minutes I saw that the cayenne powder was almost all gone, so I sprinkled some more on the tray. I refilled the tray two more times after that!

Naturally I was wondering why the bees were collecting this stuff. I thought of the fact that practically all honeybees are plagued by varroa mites, among other parasites, and I wondered if the bees were taking the opportunity to gather up a little «pest repellent» of their own. We hear so often about all sorts of animals seemingly having an instinctive understanding of what natural items will cure illnesses, so might what I saw be an example of that?

PSBA Summer Picnic

August 9th

Wade Fisher Bee Farm, McVeytown

A pig for roasting will be provided, and everyone is asked to bring a side and/or dessert to share.
Watch for additional information

Swarm Essentials

By Stephen Repasky

It's Spring! The dandelions are blooming and that means several things in our colonies. Abundant forage (pollen and nectar) coming in giving additional nutrition and a boost in reproduction. This increase in brood rearing adds to congestion in the hive and sets the stage for those colonies to prepare for swarming! Swarm Season, as we affectionately call the time between May 1 and the end of June (for most of us) is a time that keeps us beekeepers on our toes! There are a few things that we should consider during this time of year while inspecting our hives.

- Space – how much drawn comb is available for the queen to lay in?
- Presence of queen cells – are there queen cells present? If so, are they supercedure, emergency or swarm cells?
- Are there eggs present? If not, it may be that your colony has swarmed.
- Is nectar being stored above the brood nest or in the cells that previously contained brood?

Swarming is a natural event that occurs in all colonies healthy enough to reproduce. As beekeepers, we have the ability to manage colonies to minimize swarming to take advantage of the large numbers of bees bringing in copious amounts of nectar. Swarming can be prevented in colonies but requires significant management at crucial times. There are several techniques that are used to minimize swarming. It is important to mention that no technique is good as a stand alone option and often several techniques must be used in conjunction with each other or progressively in order to reach the goal of minimizing swarming.

- Reversing Hive bodies – this is the simplest of techniques. When dandelions bloom, simply reverse the hive bodies so that the more empty lower hive body is moved to the top. Be careful not to divide the brood nest in half if it expands across several hive bodies. In that case it is best to not reverse.
- Making Splits. Utilize those swarm cells to make more hives! Simply removing a frame or two of capped brood, a frame of honey, a frame of pollen and adding another frame of undrawn foundation for growth creates a nucleus colony for apiary growth, for selling, getting a new beekeepers started or simply creating a resource for a backup queen or bees if needed!

The most important thing in dealing with swarm management is to start early! Do not wait until those swarm cells appear to try and figure out what to do. Plan ahead and be ready with extra equipment. Of course you also want to be prepared in case your colony or maybe a neighbor's colonies swarm. Have that swarm catching equipment handy and ready to go! A cardboard nuc, frames and foundation, and a pair of pruners may be all that you need! It's an exciting time of the year for us beekeepers and it will sure be keeping us busy! May everyone have a bountiful harvest this spring and catch lots of swarms (just as long as they aren't your own)!

*Stephen has just released a new book entitled ***Swarm Essentials: Ecology, Management, Sustainability*** Foreword by Thomas Seeley and is published by Wicwas Press. The book covers the biology of swarming, how to recognize and manage your colonies to minimize swarming, what to do if your colony swarms and how to utilize those swarms to create a sustainable apiary. It is available through Stephen's website, www.meadowsweetbees.com/products/ or through many of the major bee supply companies as well. Cost is $23 including shipping. You can reach Stephen at meadowsweetbees@gmail.com or at 412.445.7872.

PA Honey Queen Report

Hello beekeepers!

I hope you are all enjoying this wonderful spring weather! My college semester is quickly finishing and this month I attended the Farm Fast at the Lehigh Valley Zoo. I had a great time educating visitors about the importance of honey bees and pollination. I also made a bee craft with the children, and gave out "I love Honey" stickers to kids who told me something they know about honey bees. I was fascinated by how many parents were interested in learning as well, and had lots of great questions!

As summer is quickly approaching, don't miss out on your chance to invite me to your event. To invite me to an event, contact Rachel Bryson, queen program chair, at honeyqueen@pastatebeekeepers.org or 717-300-0146.

By Kaylee Kilgore

W.W.B.D. (What would Bill do?

We regret that there is no article this month. If you have a question you would like to send to Bill Mondjack, Master Beekeeper, please email it to him at: billzbeez@mondjackapiaries.com with the subject line being WWBD, and he will respond with an opinion as *'what he would do'* if the problem or situation was his.

Jeremy's Corner

I am sometimes asked why native bees cannot provide the necessary pollination services, which implies that honey bees, as an imported species, are trespassers on American soil. The same argument applies to plants, that we need to replace 'exotics' or invasives' with native species.

Let's ignore for a moment that fact that many of the 4000 species of bees native to north America also appear to be in decline, which is troubling in itself, and extend this question a little further. If we need to replace exotics with natives then horses, domesticated pigs, cattle and even chickens must go, which means no beef, veal, bacon, pork, but also no dairy products - milk, cheese, yogurt Most of our fruit trees were originally imported at the same time as the bees, so oranges, apples, pear, plums, peaches and apricots would no longer grace our tables, as well as potatoes, tomatoes, avocados, sweet potatoes, strawberries, carrots, radish, spinach, beets, cabbage, cauliflower, dates, figs, olives, pineapples, grapes, legumes, watermelon, rhubarb - you get the picture. Even dandelions were imported by the New England settlers to provide leafy greens early in the year. An interesting exercise, say at dinner, is to remove first from one's plate everything that was pollinated by a honey bee, followed by all of the non-native foods. That would include coffee, regular tea and chocolate, and anything that included wheat or rice. With a hamburger, for example, one is left with the tomato.

To go even further, much of our life style is not 'native', but based on European culture - our houses, language, much of our music, educational system - the same culture that provided us with honey bees which of course are themselves not native to Europe but are 'exotics' from Africa. The chances are good that the substantial majority of people reading this newsletter, were they plants, would be labeled as 'invasive.'

So where would that leave us?

Protein would not be difficult to find - venison, bison, alligator, bear, wild boar, possum, groundhog, raccoon, squirrel, wild turkey, rabbit, prairie dog - but the side dishes might be a little more sparse. The staples would be corn, squash and beans, with pumpkin, wild onions, cactus and wild rice in support. To drink there might be a variety of herbal teas, for example peppermint, spearmint, clover sage and rosehips.

Berries would be plentiful - blueberries, raspberries, huckleberry, cranberries, - and some fruits - black cherries, chokecherries, mayapples, concord grapes, crabapples, black walnuts and prickly pear.

It's a ridiculous notion of course. The point is that we have developed an industrial commercial agricultural system that, apart from grasses like wheat, rice and corn, which are essentially wind, pollinated, is strongly reliant on honey bees because of the behavioral traits that make them particularly effective as pollinators. The fact that honey bees over-winter as colonies, compared to most other bees which leave a queen or eggs to hatch in the spring based on warmth or daylight hours, allows them to build up quickly in the spring to the point that they are at peak capacity when the main nectar flow starts. And the unique dance language allows bees to focus their pollination activities and act collectively, compared say to the size of the bumble bee which makes him the best single pollinator but he works alone and is not plant loyal, thus making the fertilization process less efficient.

We know that the latest generation of insecticides is systemic; i.e. the toxins will appear in every cell of the plant as it grows, and every insect that feeds from those cells will die, whether it be bee, ladybug or aphid, beneficial or not. We have some control over honey bees in that we can move colonies in and out of fields before spraying, but we have no control over native bees, which are totally susceptible to man's use of chemicals.

As with so many things the answer lies in a balance. A Xerces Society publication, *Organic Farming for Bees - Conservation of Native Crop Pollinators in Organic Farming Systems*, which promotes the use of native bees, says in part that "Wild native bees improve the pollination efficiency of honey bees in hybrid sunflower seed crops by causing the honey bees to move between male and female rows more often. The only fields that had 100% field set were those with both abundant native bees *and* honey bees." (My emphasis)

The United States is big enough to provide a home for people of many origins and ethnicities in what I imagine to be a salad bowl rather than the more conventional melting pot. Just as lettuce is lettuce and a carrot is a carrot, so do they combine to form a different and greater whole. One does not have to lose one's identity to be an American. It's like individual honey bees working in equilibrium as a super organism, or native and exotic plants interacting to develop a more expansive landscape. Mother Nature has done this for literally millions of years. The trouble comes when we try to manipulate and control nature for our own particular benefit in the form of vast expanses of monolithic crops and orchards, or genetically altered plants that allow us to kill everything else that is considered a 'weed' or 'wild' or 'invasive' that grows between the rows. We interrupt the

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Subscription Rates

(These are for PSBA members ONLY!)

American Bee Journal		Bee Culture	
1 year	$21.00	1 year	$21.00
2 years	39.75	2 years	38.00
3 years	56.25		

The Small Beekeeper's Journal
$12.95
(Regular Rate)

Please send 6 weeks before subscription runs out as we send them in once a month.

PSBA Advertising Rates

1 Month		3 Months	
Full Page	$33.00	Full Page	$ 50.00
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1/8 Page	22.00	1/8 Page	36.00

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In order to reflect the interests of all facets of Pennsylvania beekeeping, articles submitted for publication may on occasion express ideas contrary to the philosophy of the P.S.B.A. or a majority of its members.

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Application for New and Renewal Membership
Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association

❑ $1.00 Junior Membership (under 17) annual dues
❑ $20.00 annual dues ❑ $25.00 family dues ❑ $200.00 Lifetime Membership
I understand the dues entitle me to the Newsletter and all other benefits of membership.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

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❑ New ❑ Renew

Make checks payable to: PA State Beekeepers Association
Send to: Yvonne Crimbring, 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724

Jeremy's Corner (Continued from Page 7)

natural order of things, often unaware of the consequences, and instead of healthy competition between species we tip the playing field and one species becomes dominant.

Increasingly I think of it as capitalism without a conscience.

Honey bees are our canaries in the coal mine, telling us that our environment is increasingly toxic. Yes, the bees can 'disappear' and we can fool ourselves into thinking that countries like China, Chile, Israel and South Africa will supply us with the fruits and vegetables we can no longer grow in sufficient quantities ourselves. But that is like hanging out the washing as a hurricane approaches. We are denying the main issue which is *why* are bees, birds, frogs, toads, bats and many other species diminishing at ever increasing rates, what has our role been and what do we need to do to change this pattern?

That requires action rather than words, perhaps sacrifices and change, even a redefinition of what we have long accepted as quality of life and standard of living, not to mention 'progress.' It's easy to find excuses and blame, and more onerous to take the initiative, which is what beekeepers do every day.

Jeremy Barnes

Copies of previous issues of Jeremy's Corner can be found at honeybeewhisperer.simplesite.com

Recipe

Fat-Free Honey Berry Milkshake

1 pint - nonfat vanilla ice cream or nonfat frozen yogurt
1 basket - strawberries, hulled; or an assortment of berries, approx. 2-1/2 cups
1/2 cup - nonfat milk
1/4 cup - honey
4 small - mint sprigs, optional garnish

In blender, combine all ingredients except mint sprigs and blend until smooth and creamy, about 30 seconds. Serve immediately in tall, chilled glasses. Garnish with mint sprigs.

Nutritional Information: per serving (1 cup) **Calories:** 247, **Carbohydrates:** 57 g, **Dietary Fiber:** 2 g, **Cholesterol:** <1 mg, **Fat Total:**<1 g,**Sodium:** 122 mg,**Protein:** 8 g,**Calories from Fat:** 1%

From the National Honey Board
www.honey.com

Upcoming Dates To Remember

Deadline for the June-July issue of *The Pennsylvania Beekeeper* is June 12th.

Chester County Beekeepers Seminar
Saturday, May 10, 9:00 a.m. at the Stroud Preserve, West Chester. Visit the Association's website www.ChescoBees.org for more information.

Lancaster County Beekeepers
Tuesday, May 13, 6:00 p.m. at the Southeast Ag Research and Extension Center, Manheim. Contact Jim Pinkerton at jim@gatheringplacemj.com for more information.

Monroe County Beekeepers
Wednesday, May 14, at the Monroe County Environmental Center. For more information, contact Bob Armstrong at 570-620-9421 or email RJArmstrong1@verizon.net

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers
Thursday, May 15, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag Center, Allentown. Steve Finke will speak on "Cloake-Board Queen Rearing". Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email sjfinke@msn.com for more information.

Montgomery County Beekeepers
Thursday, May 15, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skippack. Question and Answer with Jerry Hayes. Contact Jim Bobb at 610-584-6778 JimBobb@Verizon.net or visit their website: www.montcobeekeepers.org for more information.

Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley
Tuesday, May 20, 6:00 p.m. at the Aucker's Apiaries, Millville. For more information, email: info@thebeeyard.org or visit www.thebeeyard.org

York County Beekeepers
Thursday, May 22, 7:00 p.m. in the Rhul Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Guest speaker, Dr. Vince Aloyo: "Pheromones in the Hive". Contact honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com for more information.

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA
Saturday, May 24, 1:00 p.m. at the James Wood Apiary, Lawton. Checking Split Hive. Contact James Wood at 570-934-1166 for additional information.

York County Beekeepers
Saturday, May 24, Association Picnic at John Rudy Park. Contact honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com for more information.

North East PA Beekeepers
Wednesday, June 4, at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepa-honey@gmail.com for more information.

Chester County Beekeepers Seminar
Saturday, June 8, Annual Picnic, time and location to be determined. Visit the Association's website www.ChescoBees.org for more information.

Monroe County Beekeepers
Wednesday, June 11, at the Monroe County Environmental

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Upcoming Dates (Continued from Page 9)

Center. For more information, contact Bob Armstrong at 570-620-9421 or email RJArmstrong1@verizon.net

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA
Friday, June 13, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Bldg., Montrose. Contact James Wood at 570-934-1166 for additional information.

Lancaster County Beekeepers
Tuesday, June 17, 6:00 p.m. at the Southeast Ag Research and Extension Center, Manheim. Contact Jim Pinkerton at jim@gatheringplacemj.com for more information.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers
Thursday, June 19, 7:00 p.m. at the Lehigh County Ag Center, Allentown. Topic: "Introduction to CSA's". Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email sjfinke@msn.com for more information.

Montgomery County Beekeepers
Thursday, June 19, 7:00 p.m. at the 4-H Center, Skippack. Speaker: Dr. Kathy Spreen, Lyme Disease Expert. Contact Jim Bobb at 610-584-6778 JimBobb@Verizon.net or visit their website: www.montcobeekeepers.org for more information.

Beekeepers of the Susquehanna Valley
Saturday, June 21, 12:00 noon in Middleburg. Summer Picnic. For more information, email: info@thebeeyard.org or visit www.thebeeyard.org

York County Beekeepers
Thursday, June 26, 7:00 p.m. in the Rhul Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Guest speaker: Charlotte Hubbard, humorist and beekeeper. Contact honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com for more information.

Beaver Valley Area Beekeepers
Monday, June 30, 7:00 p.m. at the Beaver County Conservation Wetlands, Aliquippa. "Making Splits for Overwintering." For more information, contact Pattie Zyroll at 412-848-3506, email: pattie.zyroll@elkem.com

North East PA Beekeepers
Wednesday, July 2, at 7:30 p.m. at 32 Comm St., Honesdale. Contact Charles Kinbar at 570-497-6402, email: purepa-honey@gmail.com for more information.

Monroe County Beekeepers
Wednesday, July 9, at the Monroe County Environmental Center. For more information, contact Bob Armstrong at 570-620-9421 or email RJArmstrong1@verizon.net

Susquehanna Beekeepers of NEPA
Friday, July 11, 7:00 p.m. at the Claverack Bldg., Montrose. How to: Facts about queen rearing. Contact James Wood at 570-934-1166 for additional information.

Lancaster County Beekeepers
Tuesday, July 15, 6:00 p.m. at the Southeast Ag Research and Extension Center, Manheim. Contact Jim Pinkerton at jim@gatheringplacemj.com for more information.

Lehigh Valley Beekeepers
Saturday, July 17, 5:30-8:00 p.m. at the Louis M Moore Park, Bethlehem (tentative). Picnic and plant swap. Contact Steve Finke at 610-737-7676 or email sjfinke@msn.com for more information.

Capital Area Beekeepers
Friday, July 18, 7:00 p.m. at the Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg. Election of officers, program to be announced. For more information,

York County Beekeepers
Thursday, July 24, 7:00 p.m. in the Rhul Community Room, Penn State York Campus. Guest speaker, Joe Lewis "Beekeeping 2.5". Contact honeybeewhisperer@gmail.com for more information.

Montgomery County Beekeepers
Saturday, July 26, Summer Potluck Picnic at the historic Harriton House in Bryn Mawr. Contact Jim Bobb at 610-584-6778 JimBobb@Verizon.net or visit their website: www.montcobeekeepers.org for more information.

PSBA Summer Picnic
Saturday, August 9, 2014 at the Wade Fisher Bee Farm, McVeytown. Additional information will be posted on the PSBA website and printed in the newsletter as it becomes available.

Ag Progress Days
August 13 through August 15, 2014 at the Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center, Pennsylvania Furnace. See ad on page 19 for contact information to volunteer at the PSBA Booth or for details visit www.agsci.psu.edu/apd

PSBA Annual Conference
Friday and Saturday, November 14 & 15, at the Country Cupboard/Best Western Inn, Lewisburg. Additional information will be posted on the PSBA website and printed in the newsletter as it becomes available.

Address Changed?

If you have changed your address (mail, email or temporarily away) please notify secretary Yvonne Crimbring. We have been receiving newsletters returned by the post office due to "temporarily away" or "incorrect address". This costs the association .57 per returned newsletter. Also please update your email address if you have made a change. These returns prevent you from receiving information pertaining to beekeeping and our association.

IF THE READER WHOSE MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES 1/15 and receives the newsletter at 563 Hassenplug Road, Millmont, PA will send his/her name and an account of his/her beekeeping operation to the editor at 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724 by July 10th, he/she will receive a years free subscription to either *Gleaning in Bee Culture*, *American Bee Journal*, or *The Small Beekeepers Journal*. When you respond, please specify your choice of magazine.

Nature Notes

In late April and early May, after buds open and soft new leaves appear, **leaf-eating insects** hatch. Around the second week of May, a flood of sparrow-sized birds arrive from the south, some from South America, to feed on the leaf-munchers. About twenty species of brightly-colored **warblers** will be in our trees. Some species stay and nest; many follow the leaf-break north to breed in northern forests and swamps.

Two warbler species nest over much of North America and are not too difficult to see and hear. **Yellow warblers** nest in brushy areas with apple tree-height trees. Yes, they are bright yellow and they sing "Sweet-sweet-sweet, a little more sweet." **Common yellowthroats** have bright yellow throats and black raccoon masks. The live in brushy areas near water, usually staying within a car-length of the ground. Common yellowthroats sing "Witchety, witchety, witchety."

A third warbler, the **ovenbird**, is easy to hear. Ovenbirds nest on the ground in forests and sing a loud "teacher-teacher-teacher" song.

Wood thrushes return from South America. They are robin-size and robin shape, live in woods, and sing "Ee-o-lay," drawing out the last note to a ringing rattle or buzz.

Carolina wrens, which may have a nest on a shelf in the garage, sing a raucous, loud "teakettle, teakettle, teakettle" or some other similar-sounding song.

Some lucky people will find a **luna** or a **polyphemus moth** near an outdoor night light. These are the two most common Saturnid moths. Their larvae spend months feeding on leaves, becoming handsome fat green (harmless) caterpillars. The caterpillars that survive spin silk cocoons around themselves, change to pupae, and wait until the next spring to emerge as moths with 4-5" wingspans. Lunas a **pale green** Polyphemus moths are named for the one-eyed Cyclops Polyphemus of Greek mythology and are **brown with a large, single, dark eyespot** on each hind wing. Saturnid moths are harmless and do not feed in their adult moth stage. They mate, females lay eggs, and the adults all die.

Why does nature put so much time and energy into making a caterpillar into a moth? Although it may grow up as part of a group of caterpillars feeding on the same big tree, a winged adult male moth will fly upwind along the scent trail emitted by a female. This increases his chances of mating with a not so closely-related female. Sexual reproduction (two parents) is an important ingredient in evolution: mix those genes! None of us is exactly like either of our parents. Over immense amounts of time, those little differences, plus occasional mutations, lead to different species.

Those twenty warbler species share a common ancestor warbler species, the ovenbird. The **algae in a pond** reproduce asexually (only one parent) and still, millions of years later, look pretty much they way they always have.

"Over short periods of time, mixing the genes means that no two of us are quite identical in our chemistry - which means that no two of us are equally vulnerable to *parasites* such as infectious bacteria and viruses. Some argue that this is the primary reason sex is such an evolutionary advantage." Thanks to James Sterrett for this insight.

Tulip poplar trees (which are neither tulips nor poplars) produce copious nectar in flowers that look like tulips. We can taste the sugar in the nectar on the base of petals torn from fresh tulip poplar flowers. **Black Locusts** are excellent nectar sources, too, if a downpour doesn't wash the flowers off branches.

April's Nature Notes said that Saturn was the planet near Spica. **That is incorrect**. Follow the arc of the **Big Dipper's** handle to **Arcturus** then speed on to **Spica**. Above Spica is dusty, red **Mars**.

By Tim Sterrett

The PSBA needs your Help!

Volunteers needed to scoop and serve honey ice cream at our 2 annual events, Farm Show and Ag Progress. The proceeds from the events go directly to support the Pennsylvania Honey Queen program.

Pennsylvania State University
Ag Progress Days
State College PA
August 12 – 14, 2014

The 99th Pennsylvania Farm Show
Harrisburg PA
Watch for 2015 Dates

For more information please contact
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717-242-4373

WINNOWING

We don't need the mice
An' we don't need rats.
If there are no mice,
We don't need the cats.

We don't need 'possum
An' we don't need hogs.
We don't need the ticks
Or the polliwogs.

We don't need roaches
An' we don't need bears.
We don't need spiders.
An' we don't need hares.

We don't need 'skeeters'
An' we don't need gnats.
Without them 'skeeters',
We'll never need bats.

We don't need the wasps
Or the centipedes;
We don't need the sharks
Or the canine breeds.

We don't need tigers
An' we don't need fleas.

We need only us...
An' the honey bees!

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Mail vs. Email

The Pennsylvania State Beekeeper's Association is sending out the newsletter via email instead of through the USPS to those members who are interested. If you would like to receive "The Pennsylvania Beekeeper" by email, please contact Yvonne Crimbring at pabee1@frontier.com and include your name, mailing address, phone number along with current email address stating that you'd like to receive the PSBA newsletter via email.

The Pennsylvania State Beekeepers' Association represents the interests of the members of Pennsylvania. State dues of $20.00 per year entitle members to the newsletter published ten times per year at Canton, PA, plus other benefits. Anyone 17 and under may become a junior member @ $1.00 per year state dues.

All correspondence should be addressed to: Yvonne Crimbring, 2565 Southside Road, Canton, PA 17724. Phone: 570-673-8201 Email: pabee1@frontier.com

The Honey Market at the PSBA Farm Show brings honey in from across the state of Pennsylvania. If you have a surplus of honey this year, consider donating to the 2015 Farm Show.

Photo by Charlie Vorisek