

OCBA Up to the Minutes News

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TheOCBA.org

May 2019

IT'S 5:00 O'CLOCK . . .

DINNER IS ON AT RADIUS PIZZA

Join OCBA, Join the Discussion

OCBA's pre-meeting dinner at Radius Pizzeria in Hillsborough was attended by 16 members and guests in May. Come join the discussion before each monthly meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend this group which has become more and more popular as a place to talk with fellow beekeepers and discuss successes, failures and everyday concerns. The group meets at Radius at 5:00 prior to each monthly membership meeting.

WORD OF THE DAY – "TEMPORAL POLYETHISM"

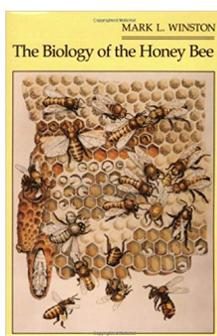
Honey bees wear many hats over their lifetime

Chris Apple, OCBA Master Beekeeper, helped us all understand the meaning of temporal polyethism in beekeeping. Those attendees who thought they would be hearing an idea dense PhD discussion were delightfully surprised. Polyethism, as Chris explained concerns the ever-changing roles of worker bees in the colony from the time they emerge as soft, fuzzy, stumbling stingless bees until they become hardened, sometimes defensive, mature bees working as guards, foragers and scouts. She shared many interesting facts like the role of the heater bees who raise their body temperature as much as 10 degrees higher than their sisters to keep the brood warm. These bees climb head first into empty cells scattered among the brood to distribute heat into surrounding cells. For beekeepers, the presence of heater bees calls into question whether those empty cells that we see are the work of heater bees, hygienic bees, or merely a weak laying pattern of an aged or poorly mated queen. Chris recommended Jürgen Tautz' book, "*The Buzz About Bees*," which served as the source of much of her information.

THE BIOLOGY OF THE HONEY BEE

A Review by Chris Apple

I recently borrowed Mark L. Winston's book, *The Biology of the Honey Bee*, from a friend. I have since ordered my own copy. Although this book was copyrighted in 1987, it is still extremely relevant. We make strides forward as new scientific techniques are developed, it's true. However, the basic biology of the honey bee seems to remain the same. The thing I really like about this book is how very readable it is. In the past I have relied on Dadant's, *The Hive and the Honey Bee*, when attempting to answer basic honey bee biology questions. Don't get me wrong, I still use my copy of *The Hive and the Honey Bee* often, but it can be a struggle. I also find Winston's book much better



organized. Just as there is much to be gained by a bunch of experts contributing to a comprehensive text, there is a loss of fluidity throughout the book. Winston's book moves effortlessly through a variety of well-organized topics. The book is not easy to find. I purchased mine on eBay, but it is available and I recommend it as a good addition to any beekeeper's library.

OCBA VOLUNTEERS – BUSY AS BEES

Spring is a busy time for beekeepers. As our bees bulk up in anticipation of the nectar flow, we are monitoring hive strength, feeding when necessary, and sometimes splitting hives to head off swarming. But OCBA volunteers always find time to share their fascination with honey bees with others. Below are recent activities coordinated by **Chris Apple**, in her role as Outreach Director, and supported by the many, many beekeepers who respond to Chris' calls for speakers.

April 1 – **Chris Apple** did a talk on pollinators at NC Botanical Gardens for UNC's Bee Club.

April 6 – **Brad Kosiba, Dorothy Hammett, Amy Singleton, Nancy Oglesby, Bryn Walker** and other students from the UNC Bee Club volunteered at the UNC Science Expo at the Morehead Planetarium in Chapel Hill. **Geneva Greene**, advisor to the UNC Bee Club took the lead on this education effort. OCBA's information table worked in concert with **Carrie Donley's** Electron Microscopy Lab to offer amazing highly magnified images of honey bees.



UNC Science Expo at the Morehead Planetarium

April 24 – **Chris Apple** did a presentation on bees to a group at Liquidia in RTP.

April 25 – **Chris Apple** did a presentation on The Amazing Honey Bee to a group at the Seymour Center in Chapel Hill.

April 26 – **Dawn Rogers** and **Lou Rascoe** did a fabulous job of developing a great activity for Earth Evening in Hillsborough.

Unfortunately, the event was cancelled at the last minute due to storms.

April 29 – **Chris Apple** visited 2 elementary schools in Chapel Hill to talk to their PreK classes about honey bees.

April 30 – **Chris Apple** again visited 2 elementary schools in Chapel Hill to talk to their PreK classes about honey bees.

May 4 – **Karen Lauterbach** organized a beekeeping and pollinator information table for the Hillsborough Garden Tour, which also included a pollinator plant sale. Plants were donated from Karen's garden and from the gardens of **Lisa Vogel** and **Jeanne Arnts**. OCBA made about \$248 dollars from the plant sale. In addition to the plant sale, OCBA members **Chris Apple, Lucy Wilson, Tommy Tuck, Ryan Chamberlain, Wayne Vanderburg, Mary Anne Rhyne, Louise Rascoe, Larry Arnold, and Mark Powers** and shared information about bees, pollinator plants, and much more, including options for controlling for mosquitoes that do not involve pesticides that kill all insects.



OCBA Pollinator Garden – Hillsborough Garden Tour

May 8 – **Chris Laudeman** did a fabulous job setting up an information booth for Grady Brown's Agricultural Evening.

Upcoming Events – Volunteers Needed and Welcome

If you would like to get in on the fun and help OCBA educate the public about honey bees and pollinators contact Chris at chrisapple1231@gmail.com.

- JUNE 6 & 7 - Annie's Lavender Farm. OCBA has been involved with this festival event for several years. We staff an information table. It is a great time to be in the lavender fields.
- JUNE 22 - Granville County Bee Jubilee. Last year OCBA had a booth set up. We made and sold lip balm and healing ointment. We could do this again depending on the number and interest of volunteers. Chris will be at the Jubilee with a booth for NCSBA. She is also giving a talk. So, she is looking for a lead volunteer to coordinate OCBA's other involvement in the Jubilee.
- JUNE 22 - Duke Homestead. This is the same day as the Granville Bee Jubilee. If there are enough volunteers to cover both events, that would be great. OCBA would staff an information table at this event.

STATE FAIR EXHIBIT PLANNING UNDERWAY

Dawn Rogers, OCBA's state fair exhibit coordinator updated members on progress and circulated a sign-up sheet to volunteers at the May meeting. The fair runs from Oct 17 to 27 with exhibit set up on October 14 and 15 Exhibits will be judged on October 16th.

Celeste Mayer will be providing input from her review of Sam Ham's book, "*Interpretation, Making a Difference on Purpose*," a guide that will help OCBA prepare a meaningful, eye-catching, educational display. Dawn has asked Adolphus Leonard, the Apiary Inspector who is in charge of State Fair Beekeeping Exhibits, for a larger booth. Dawn encourages everyone with creative talent, carpentry, or electrical skills to help out. Wax products, pictures, honey, mead, honey entrees, etc. will be needed. Contact Dawn at dawnrogers006@gmail.com with questions or to volunteer your assistance.

EXTRACTING MADE SIMPLE

If last year was your first year of beekeeping and you dutifully allowed your bees to draw out two or three boxes of comb and you made sure that they had sufficient honey stores to successfully overwinter, then this year you will get to extract honey for the first time. Those strong colonies are scouring the countryside for nectar to fill your honey supers. Once you've pulled the fully capped frames from the honey supers what's next?

What's next is OCBA's Annual Honey Extraction Workshop. **Brad Kosiba** and **Mark Powers** will once again explain the basics of honey extraction at Cedar Ridge High School in Hillsborough on Saturday, June 8th starting at 10:00 a.m.



Brad Kosiba demonstrates the hot de-capping knife

The workshop will familiarize new honey producers with the tools and equipment needed to extract honey and demonstrate their use. You will also learn about the array of extraction equipment that OCBA offers to its members at a modest \$5 per day rental cost.

Thanks once again to OCBA member **Keith Yow** and the administration at Cedar Ridge High School for making space available for this workshop.

MBP STUDY GROUP SAMPLES LESSER-KNOWN PRODUCTS OF THE HIVE

By *Randall Austin*

The OCBA Master Beekeeper Study Group meets once a month from February to June, ending in time for participants to take NCSBA Master Beekeeper testing at the NCSBA Summer Conference (Certified, Journeyman, Master, Master Craftsman levels). In April, in addition to learning about the nature, production and sale of the mundane Products of the Hive, the group sampled two products that rarely get attention in the United States but are highly sought-after in the rest of the world.

One was honeydew honey, which our bees make using not nectar but instead the extremely sugary exudate excreted by certain aphids and similar insects which feed on plant sap. Honeydew originates on a wide variety of trees, particularly conifers (pines, firs, cedars), which don't usually come to mind when we think of honey-producing plants. This particular honey came from the famous Cedars of Lebanon in the Middle East. Despite its lofty provenance, **Kim Talikoff** said that now that she has tasted it, she doesn't feel the need to ever taste it again!



Larry Arnold watches in amazement as Dawn Rogers samples sautéed bee pupae for the first time.

The other often-overlooked product sampled by the group was drone brood. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization has [recipes for honey bee brood](#), but the night's offering was simply young pupae sautéed in olive oil with a dash of Tabasco sauce and a little salt. Not everyone was willing to cross our American-culture dietary boundaries to try it, but those who did declared it delicious. Even Kim said that it was very good, especially on crackers. **Dawn Rogers** went back for seconds!

Be on the lookout in late fall for sign-up information for next year's MBP Study Group!

WHAT'S BLOOMING NOW?

You know the answer to this one . . . many, many things. There is no shortage of forage for your bees from mid-April through the end of May. Relax! Take a few pictures of your bees enjoying

nature's largesse – preferably with pollen baskets full. And then pass them along on OCBA's Discussion Forum for the rest of us to enjoy.

VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

Can't hurt, might help . . .

An international listserv for the informed discussion of beekeeping issues and bee biology recently asked its experienced members for quick tips to share with new and less experienced beekeepers. Here are two tips offered for working with bees.

- Never take off your veil for just one bee who managed to find her way inside your veil. Doing so will likely allow more bees to find your face. Instead, turn towards the sun and calmly walk away. The bee will most likely fly against the screen of your veil trying to get out toward the sun. Then you can either pinch the bee through the veil or safely remove her at some distance from the hive.
- If after removing your veil as you finish your hive inspection you are harassed by a persistent bee flying around your face, raise one hand above your head. Bees typically seek out the highest target. That's why they are buzzing around your head, after all. So rather than risk being stung on the face you may be able to redirect the bee to your hand. Your hands have undoubtedly been stung countless times, so they're used to it. Your face is not!

UPCOMING EVENTS AND SPEAKERS

June 13, OCBA Membership Meeting – Lewis Cauble, Master Beekeeper, past OCBA President and current NC Apiary Inspector for the mountain region, will return to Orange County as our speaker in June. His presentation will focus on what should give us comfort vs. what may be problematic as we read the frames in our hives. He will help us recognize what is typical, seasonal variation in our hives as we evaluate frames of bees, brood and stores.

Other Events of Note

(See page 2 for complete listing)

June 22, 2019 – The 4th Annual Granville County Bee Jubilee at the Granville County Expo Center in Oxford is a day-long event (9:00 – 4:00) filled with bee and pollinator related speakers and demonstrations, local arts and handmade crafts, non-profits, children's activities, silent auction, HONEY, North Carolina grown produce and more! The focus is on home grown, handmade, and local.

July 15-19, 2019 – Eastern Apicultural Society's Annual Meeting in Greenville, SC. Featured speakers include: Dewey Caron; Dennis vanEnglesdorp; Kirsten Traynor; and Jennifer Berry. Other speakers include OCBA's own, **Lewis Cauble**, and NC Bee Inspector Don Hopkins. Registration is open now and the workshop schedule for the conference will be posted soon.

August 8-10, 2019 – North Carolina State Beekeepers Association Summer Meeting, Hickory, NC. Note that the date is a month later than usual to avoid a conflict with the Eastern Apicultural Society's meeting in Greenville, SC.

September 8-12, 2019 – [Apimondia International Apicultural Congress](#), Montreal, Canada. Information about the program and workshops is now available online. [Keynote speakers](#) include: Rufus Isaacs; Gene Robinson; Peter Rosenkranz; and Tom Seeley. Plan now to attend.

Spring 2020 – North Carolina State Beekeepers' Association Spring Meeting, New Bern, NC. For beekeepers who really plan ahead.