

## **Orange County Beekeepers Association Meeting Minutes**

**January 14, 2021  
7:00 - 9:00 pm via Zoom**

Carrie Donley, OCBA president, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She explained that the meeting would begin with an educational program followed by the business meeting. The meeting was attended by 63 people. The agenda followed the same order as last month with the speaker presenting first, then the business meeting.

Carrie introduced our speaker, Dr. Samuel Ramsey, whose talk was titled “Fight the Mite Thailand Edition: Understanding the Mysterious *Tropilaelaps* Mite.” *Tropilaelaps mercedesae*, he explained, is among the least-studied potential threats to U.S. honey bees. The Fight the Mite Initiative was established to learn more about *Tropilaelaps* before it arrives in the U.S. Partly funded by the beekeeper community, Dr. Ramsey’s research has focused on the behavior, lifecycle, and vulnerabilities of *Tropilaelaps mercedesae* to chemical and other treatments. Though the project ended abruptly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Dr. Ramsey shared his discoveries and data collected to date, noting the need for continued study. He said *Tropilaelaps* seems to be capable of reproducing in some colonies but not in others. He found that Formic Pro, Formic Thai Style, and heat treatments achieved similar levels of immediate mite reduction, but Thai Style often depopulated the colony, leading to collapse.

### **NCSU Honey Bee Lab**

Charles Heatherly, NCSBA Apiculture Science Initiative chairman, joined the meeting to explain the current state of the state bee lab, which has fallen into disrepair. For more about the bee lab, visit <https://www.ncbeekeepers.org/tag/ncsu-bee-lab>. And to encourage the NC legislature to fund the construction of a new bee lab, write, call, or email your state legislators. You can find contact information here: [www.ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators](http://www.ncleg.gov/FindYourLegislators).

### **Bee School Update**

Randall Austin said there is still time to sign up for Bee School, which can be done online (click on “Education” in the top navigation; select “Introduction to Beekeeping Class”). The 2021 Bee School begins next Tuesday, January 19. Currently, 133 students are registered, with 89 from Orange and surrounding counties, 22 from Wake and surrounding counties, 10 from across North Carolina, 8 from elsewhere in the US, and others who did not provide addresses.

### **Journal Club Announcement**

Randall said that about 25 people have signed up for Journal Club. He noted that OCBA provides lots of educational opportunities for beginning and intermediate beekeepers, but not a lot for advanced beekeepers. The Journal Discussion Group will be targeted to those individuals, but it is open to all who are interested in reviewing and discussing academic articles. The first meeting will be January 28 at 7:30 pm. To join visit the OCBA website, select “Education” from the top navigation and “Journal Discussion Group” from the dropdown menu.

### **Membership Renewal**

Mary Anne Rhyne reported that 90 people have renewed their membership. With our 53 lifetime OCBA memberships, that brings our total membership to 143. Those who have not yet renewed their membership can do so via the website. Click on “Membership” in the top navigation, and select “Renew your Membership” from the dropdown box.

### **Outreach Update**

Dawn Rogers reported that she presented to four classrooms at Northside Elementary School in Chapel Hill on December 17 via Zoom. Unfortunately, they experienced technical issues, and the school’s IT staff member was not available to help. Dawn said OCBA members should encourage any schools, teachers, or groups who want a presentation on beekeeping to go to the OCBA website and fill out a request form. It can be found under “Education” in the top navigation. Click on “School and Community Education.” The option to request a speaker is at the bottom of the page.

### **Apprentice Update**

Vicki Robertson said that she and Kent Robertson have been working on a scheduling checklist. She said they have been in contact with the two new interns, who attended the meeting.

### **February Speaker**

Tim Struttman reported that state inspector Nancy Rupert will be our speaker for our February 11 meeting. She will discuss swarm prevention and what to do when you catch a swarm.

### **Master Beekeeper Study Group**

David Eckert reported that the study group will start a little later this year. He and Chris Apple are making some changes, and the new sessions will begin sometime in March.