

Orange County Beekeepers Association

Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2023

Nancy Oglesby, OCBA President, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the May meeting. The meeting was attended by 35 members (10 via Zoom, and 25 in-person at the Orange County Extension Office in Hillsborough).

Prior to the start of the meeting members were able to buy plants leftover from the Hillsborough Garden Club garden tour/plant sale (which Dawn brought to the meeting).

Janet Staats, OCBA Vice President, introduced our speaker, **Ryan Adams**, Extension Associate in the Center for Integrated Pest Management at NC State University.

Presentation:

“The Whole Kit and Caboodle: IPM, Bees, Plants, Design, and More!” – Ryan Adams

Ryan’s presentation provided a lot of great information for anyone looking to reduce the use of herbicides and pesticides in their yard and garden. He highlighted the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy, which aims to manage pests by using a toolkit of economically and environmentally sustainable practices using the “PAMS” approach: Prevention, Avoidance, Monitoring, and Suppression.

Prevention is the first line of defense. Strategies include using high quality plants and seeds (certified, pest-free), planting low-maintenance easy to grow plants, and choosing cultivars/species adapted to the location and situation they are placed. Other preventative methods include cleaning pruning shears and other tools to avoid transfer of disease between plants, and the use of trap crops. Some examples of trap crops he mentioned included soybeans, zinnias, and white roses for Japanese beetles; arugula, mustards, and napa cabbage for flea beetles. However, the use of trap crops does pose the risk of attracting more pests to your yard. Ryan also mentioned companion planting, however, this practice is not always accurate or backed by research (but it certainly can’t hurt!). Some examples include: nasturtiums to repel squash and cucumber beetles (one of the few combinations that has been substantiated by research), beebalm for mosquitos, and marigolds to deter whiteflies and thrips.

Avoidance strategies include crop rotation (to mitigate soil borne diseases), watering practices (eg, avoid foliage wetting, which is especially helpful for preventing/delaying powdery mildew), and implementation of barriers or netting (the trade-off of netting is poor pollination).

Monitoring is a critical aspect of an IPM strategy to know what pests are present and to determine if levels exceed tolerable thresholds.

Suppression tactics must be used if prevention and avoidance is not enough. Suppression tactics can be biological (ladybugs, lacewings), chemical, or physical (mowing or mulching for weed control, hand-

picking/squishing insect pests) A fun way to do the latter, Ryan called “wine and squish”, ie, combining a happy hour stroll through the garden with some pest control. Judicious and minimal use of chemicals as a last resort can be part of an IPM program, but care must be taken to select chemicals based on least damage to the environment and reduced collateral damage to desired plants and beneficial insects. Ryan noted that caution should still be used when applying certain “organic pesticides” like insecticidal soap and neem oil, because these can still harm pollinators foraging on flowers. Just because the label says organic, doesn’t mean it is safe for pollinators! Better alternative organic pesticides include garlic or citrus oils. He shared a pesticide comparison chart compiled by the Xerces Society:

https://xerces.org/sites/default/files/publications/19-005_web-screen.pdf

At the end of his presentation, Ryan provided some great plant suggestions for various situations:

- Avoid modern hybrid flowers, especially “double-petal” varieties as these traits often come at the expense of nectar production, or accessibility of the nectaries to pollinators trying to forage on nectar.
- Five of the best flowers for pollinators include mountain mints, coneflower, butterfly weed, asters, and blanket flower.
- Some great shade tolerant flowers include Lenten rose (hellebores), golden alexanders, columbine, and bee balms (monarda species).
- The holy grail, deer resistant plants: tend to be herbs/flowers with strong aromas, prickly, fuzzy leaves, and bitter tasting.

Ryan admittedly covered a lot on this topic, but he hopes that everyone attending takes at least one thing from the talk and implements it. It makes a difference and no garden is too small!

Club Business:

- Nancy announced there were some back issues of American Bee Journal, beekeeping supply catalogues, and a few small pieces of beekeeping equipment that members have donated, and they are free for the taking.
- Plants left over from the recent OCBA plant sale at the Hillsborough Garden Tour were offered at a reduced price to club members at the meeting. Thanks to Dawn Rogers for transporting them to the meeting.
- OCBA is still selling raffle tickets for the honey extractor donated by Bailey Bee Supply. (Proceeds to be donated to the NCSU Endowed Professorship fund)
- Nancy reminded attendees about the upcoming “Honey Bee Jamboree” to be held June 3rd. Ticket sales will be limited to 50. This is one of the club’s main fundraisers for the NCSU endowed professorship.

- June 3rd, 3-7pm: 6702 Doc Corbett Rd, Cedar Grove
 - Food: BBQ pig, chicken, sides from Hillsborough BBQ
 - Meet Dr. Tapy and his team
 - Raffle to win a honey extractor (proceeds going to the NCSU Endowed Professorship fund)
 - “Black Jar” honey competition (judged by attendees)
 - Honey dessert competition (best looking, best tasting, overall winner)
 - Equipment swap
 - Family-friendly bee-themed activities
 - Live music
 - Tickets are available on the OCBA website
- Honey Competition with the Durham County Beekeepers Association (DCBA):
 - This event will be held on Saturday September 30th, at the Durham County Ag Extension Center (downtown Durham on Foster Street, near Durham Central Park Farmers market). More information will be sent out to the listserv in the coming weeks.
 - The collaboratives are up and running. Contact Nancy if you haven’t heard from your collaborative yet.
 - Tour of Union Grove Farm (former location of Maple View Farms) on May 20th:
 - Martin Crompton, Vineyard and Project Director at Union Grove, who presented at our OCBA members meeting earlier this year has extended an invitation to OCBA members to come for a farm tour.
 - 43 people have already signed up!
 - Blackwood Farm Park is reopening! We are all invited to a Grand Opening celebration on Friday, May 19 @ 11am, and the park is open for visitors now. Lisa Vogel and Cynthia Woodsong maintain our community apiary there and have reported that someone has been messing with equipment in the bee yard. They found their smoker on top of a hive a few weeks ago and the baffle wasn’t in it, but was on the ground several yards away. Also, someone put an entrance reducer in one of the hives. Please let Lisa and Cynthia maintain those hives. If you have any suggestions or need to do an Outreach event there, notify them first or email the main club email (presvp@theocba.org) and Nancy will put you in touch with them.

Outreach

- Victoria announced that OCBA now has an Instagram account! [[“ocba.nc”](https://www.instagram.com/theocba.nc)] If you are on Instagram, please follow us!
- There are a number of Outreach events coming up. Victoria will be sending an Event Volunteer Sign-up via email. Events include: Sunshine Lavender Farm, Kidzu.
- Dawn provided a recap of the successful plant sale OCBA put on at the Hillsborough Garden Tour last weekend. She thanked the OCBA members who donated plants, and also Woods

Nursery (US 70) and GroSmart (Churton St, Hillsborough) for plants and plant tray donations. Bailey Bee Supply donated their sponsor table to allow us to be there and sell plants.

- Dawn also reported that OCBA had a successful booth at Glenwood Elementary School's STEAM2 night on April 26.
- Another event: CH High School Tiger Fest (2 sessions in the afternoon of May 24th), and Dawn wondered if anyone else would be interested in covering this.
- NC State Fair: Members were polled for interest via the listserv and again at tonight's meeting. It was determined there was not enough interest to have a booth at the State Fair this year. Instead, the majority of responders indicated more interest in holding the Honey Competition with the DCBA as a fall club event (see above). Members were reminded that everyone can still enter honey and other items into the fair competitions as individuals.
- Robert King had an idea for a late October event: a day of learning with the Orange County Gardeners Club (will need to talk to the OCBA Board). Contact him if you are interested in being involved.

Door Prizes

1. Plants: 3 Korean Hyssop, 2 Mountain mint and 1 Beebalm: 2 winners, their choice (each person got to pick)
2. Coffee mug
3. Necklace
4. T-shirt

Next Month's Speaker

For the June OCBA meeting, we will be debuting a new format: "Meet the Locals". There will be 5 short presentations (5-10 minutes) given by members. Topics will include: the second Apprenticeship presentation (Jasper Nunn), propolis envelope (Kent Robertson), cutouts and building equipment (Richard Dunnagan), creamed honey (Lisa Vogle), and agritourism (Robert King).

Erika Wittchen
OCBA Secretary