

THE BEE SPACE



Will County
Beekeepers
Association
Est. 2011

THE PUBLICATION OF WILL COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION • JULY / AUGUST 2023

PLEASE JOIN US FOR NEXT MEETING:

August 16, 2023 at 7 pm
Will County Farm Bureau
100 Manhattan Rd
Joliet, IL 60433

FEATURED TOPICS:

- The bee gut and Strong Microbials
- Fall mite treatments
- Product review: royal jelly & propolis shampoo

THIS MONTH IN YOUR HIVES

JULY / AUGUST

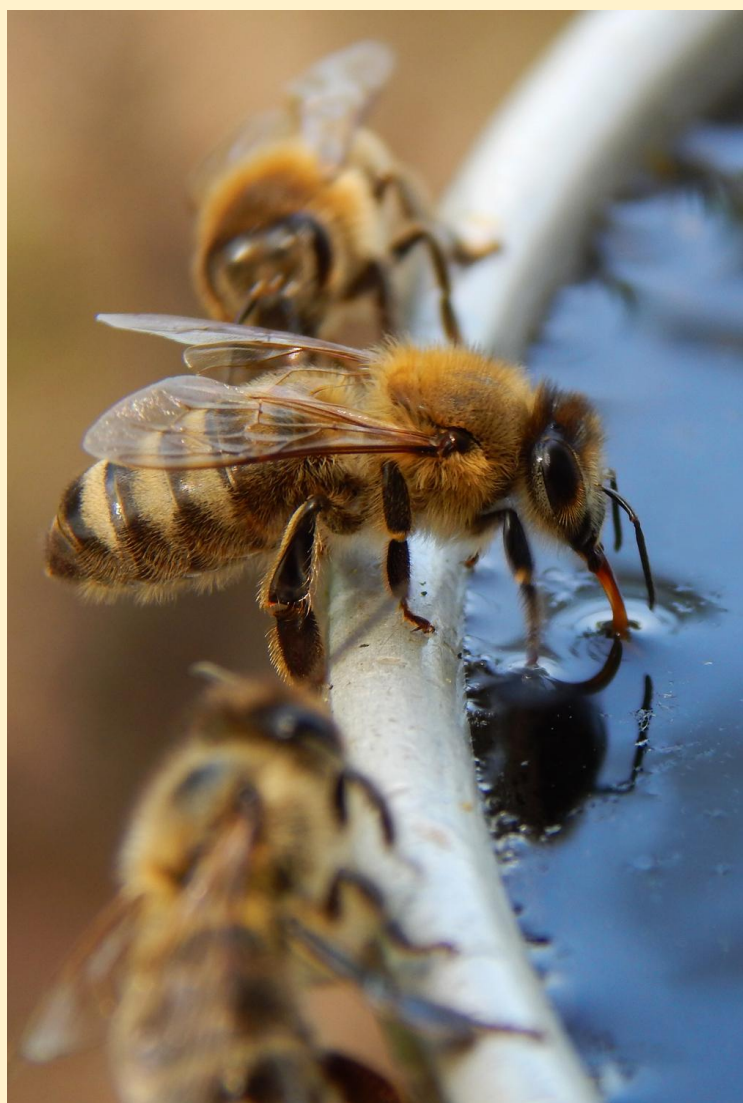
- Maintain the space around your hive(s) by trimming brush
- Provide ventilation by propping the outer cover open to allow more air circulation
- Make sure the bees have a water source
- Monitor for Varroa Mites - this is the time to begin treatments
- Harvest honey when super frames are capped
- Watch out for robbing and have a robbing screen ready

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE HIVE

Additional information regarding hives management for July and August was kindly provided by John Leibinger. Click to download.

[Chores of the Month – July](#)

[Chores of the Month – August](#)



Summer Picnic Raffle Prizes

DON'T GET STUNG AND MISS OUT ON JULY 22!

WillBees will be raffling a full bee hive, honey supers and a gift certificate along with other fabulous beekeeping prizes.

Get in on the action for only \$10 per ticket.

Must be present to win! See picnic announcement below.





BY KEITH MEISER AND FRAN MILLER

Mind Your Own Beeswax

Many new beekeepers that I have spoken with have given me the impression that beeswax from burr comb, scrapings, and even cappings are something of no value to be discarded. To the contrary, beeswax is a valuable byproduct with hundreds of uses.

Most of us know that comb foundation is made from pure beeswax or a plastic base coated with beeswax. It has physical properties that make it ideal for building the essential “honeycomb” with which the bees raise new bees, store pollen, and evaporate and preserve the honey for food and fuel for the winter. It also comes at a cost to the bees – it is estimated that the bees must consume 8-10 pounds of honey to produce a pound of beeswax. The conditions must be warm enough in the hive (94-97 F) and they have to have their stomach full of honey or nectar for about 24 hours before the wax glands on their abdomens start to secrete the wax. The payoff is that one pound of beeswax can hold 20 pounds of honey. The bees can mold it into any shape they need and can remold it if needed into drone or queen cells.

A VERSATILE RESOURCE

Of course beeswax can be made into the finest candles that resist dripping and burn cleanly. The candles used in the Roman Catholic Church services are beeswax. There are many other uses too. Carpenters and boat builders dip screws into beeswax to lubricate and prevent snapping brass screws. Beeswax is used extensively in cosmetics and other skin care products. Jewelry artisans fashion intricate and delicate objects from beeswax that are then coated in heat resistant mold materials that when heated cause the wax to melt out leaving a perfect reproduction when molten gold or other precious metal is poured in.

Beeswax is edible and is used in pharmaceuticals as binders and coatings, to seal cheeses for aging, and to coat



fruit to prevent drying. Because of its tackiness, it is used in many musical instruments to fasten the reeds and prevent cracking. It is an excellent coating on high strength thread and fibers for shoe stitching, sail making, and bow strings. The list is extensive.

A LITTLE BIT ADDS UP

All of that is fine, but is it worth it to collect the small bits of wax during the operations of a few hives? Yes, of course it is! Better than stepping in a glob and tracking it into the house (not that I have ever done that). Just get a small plastic bucket to drag along with you. As you examine a hive and remove burr comb, just scrape the wax from your hive tool into the bucket along with honey, drone brood, and a little propolis. You can add some water and let it soak to dilute the honey and rinse it, but it is not necessary. As it adds up, transfer it to a larger container and protect it from bees and moths.

BEESWAX FOLLOW-UP

In our next newsletter we will go into rendering your beeswax from scrapings, cappings, and old damage brood combs.



This month's recipe was submitted by Fran and is from healthyrecipesblogs.com.

Honey Roasted Nuts

Provided

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons honey
1 teaspoon smoked paprika (not regular paprika)
16 oz mixed nuts raw and unsalted (I used 4 oz each of hazelnuts, almonds, pecans, and shelled pistachios)
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon sea salt

Step 1

Preheat your oven to 300°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Melt the butter in a large bowl. Mix in the honey and smoked paprika.

Step 2

Add the nuts and use a rubber spatula to mix them into the butter mixture until well coated.

Step 3

Spread on the parchment-lined baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt. Bake the nuts in the preheated oven until fragrant and browned, for about 25-30 minutes.

Step 4

Remove the pan from the oven. Leave the nuts on the baking sheet and let them cool and crisp up, undisturbed, for about 20 minutes. When cool, gently separate them with your hands (they tend to stick together), then store them at room temperature in an airtight container for up to a week.

Notes

It's important to roast the nuts in a slow oven - 300°F is good. Don't be tempted to crank up the oven's temperature – the nuts won't roast as evenly, and they might even burn.

Have a favorite recipe that uses honey? We'd love to feature it in future issue of the Bee Space! Please email it to willbees-board@willbees.org

FIELD DAYS



BY DENNIS WISNOSKY

June 25, 2023 Field Trip

A good time was had by all on June 25th when the Will County Beekeepers Association held its first ever field trip to an out apiary.

Twelve members braved high winds across the prairie to visit the conservation easement property of Dennis Wisnosky, WillBees Vice President. The property is 10 acres with a 3 acre lake. Its abundance of native Illinois restored prairie vegetation provides ample foraging for the girls living in 5 Langstroth and 3 Slovenian Honeybee hives.

The group was treated to a discussion led by WillBees President Patrick Schab on what to look for in a hive at this time of the year, how to inspect for mites and then what to do for treatment. Keith Meiser who has been a beekeeper for half a century commented that when he began there was no such thing as a mite inspection because there were no mites. A winter loss was expected to be no more than 5%.

TIME TO SUIT UP!

After the chalk talk, it was time to adorn the safety gear and begin the live inspections. Following a talk by Dennis about his Slovenian beehive and how bees are managed in these horizontal bee houses as opposed to vertical Langstroth bee hives, the group was treated to inspections of 2 of the 5 Langstroth's.

One of them was a holdover from the last 2 winters. Dennis did not treat that one because, "they were very numerous and looked very healthy and the boxes were SO heavy." The other was a package that was treated 4 weeks ago with Apivar. Dennis was anxious to find out if he had made the right decisions to treat and not to treat.

David Meyer did a totally complete inspection of both hives with helpful comments from James Conrad. The treated hive, which was this year's package, showed that it had really not started to multiply – not so good. But, good. There were zero mites.



The queen was remarked by David. She was his girl, and no doubt was happy to be in his able hands again. The hive was reassembled as it was.

The untreated hive which overwintered with 3 medium supers as the brood chamber and had already had 3 mediums honey supers added this year was absolutely teeming with thousands of girls and a few boys. The queen which likely was raised by the girls was not found. Neither were potential queen cells. Even with 3 supers added this year, the colony was struggling for brood space in the 3 brood supers. Cells were being filled with honey and pollen. Exactly 2 mites were seen on drone larvae. But, the inspection of half a cup of bees saw no mites. It was debated to add an empty super to the brood section of the hive. But, because the queen could not be found, it was decided to add two empty supers to the top of the hive and give the girls a chance to move stores from the brood boxes to the top of the hive. The decision could have been either way likely with the same result.

The conclusion from all of this. It is wonderful to have a successful over wintering hive. This year's dryness has resulted in packages being slow to develop, at least in this apiary. But, there is still time.



A TOAST TO SUCCESS!

Dennis was so happy about the results that he offered all to sample his mead made last winter from the honey from this apiary. All agreed that the afternoon and the mead were exceptional.

NEXT UP

Our second field days will be August 20th in Minooka at Fran Miller's apiary. Please look for our announcement email in late July.

Good Morning Beekeepers!

THIS MONTH'S BEE ADVOCATE
IS JAMES KONRAD

James Konrad describes himself as "A Student of the Natural Environment", has been keeping bees for 12 years and hosts a zoom broadcast 'live' every Saturday morning called "Breakfast with Bees". As a practicing landscape architect with over 45 years' experience specializing in estate garden design, James believes everything in the universe works together to sustain life. His beekeeping journey began with his love for flower gardening. Over the years, his horticultural design experience and plant knowledge have given him a unique understanding of the natural environment and how he approaches beekeeping which he shares with other hobby beekeepers.



We would love to feature you within BeeSpace! Please send us a photo and a couple paragraphs about you and your beekeeping experience.



BY SUSAN GREGORY

Building a Meadow for Pollinators – Part 2

In the last newsletter, I shared with you my attempt to build a “Flower Bed” filled with native plants, so as to attract pollinators.

My “meadow area” began with the area of a twin bed frame. This is hardly a meadow, but it is something to start with. Unfortunately, the area I chose does not receive the amount of sunlight I had hoped it would receive. Yet, there are some wildflower seeds (annuals) which germinated and are

growing, although rather slowly. I planted some shasta daisies (perennials) around the bed to provide some immediate satisfaction for the eye. The lack of rain has added to my struggle, forcing me to water the area every other day. Another concern regards managing the weeds that have found their way into the area.

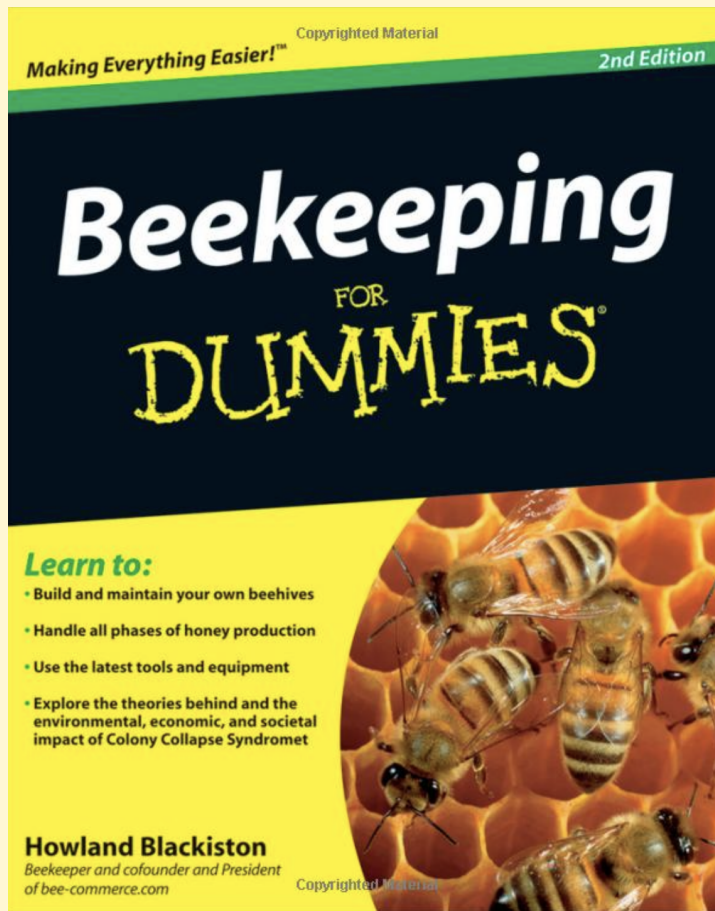
Moving forward, I believe I will convert the area into a shade tolerating perennial flower bed next year and create a wildflower pollinator garden in a sunnier location.



BEE BALM IS WORTH CONSIDERING

Bee Balm (Monarda) is a perennial plant (meaning it comes back every year in our area) with red, pink, white, or violet flowers. Bee Balm needs plenty of sun and well-drained soil. Bee Balm tends to become invasive (spreading easily) and also should be divided every 2 to 3 years. An interesting fact: Bee Balm was discovered by early settlers in North America where the Oswego Indians used the leaves and flowers to make a delicious soothing and relaxing tea. More information on Bee Balm, click [here](#).

Charlotte Anderson, Master Beekeeper, explains how Bee Balm may be used as a companion plant for annual vegetable plants as well as perennial flowers. It may be difficult to manage annual vegetable plants (tomatoes for example) with perennial plants (such as Bee Balm) but it may be a great experiment. Read her story [here](#).



BOOK NOOK

Beekeeping for Dummies

By Howland Blackiston

Publisher, Wiley 2020

Reviewed by Dennis E. Wisnosky

I believe that I started SCUBA diving and became a private pilot and a beekeeper older than most people. I needed all of the help that I could get. On my way to being a Professional Association of Diving Instructors (PADI) certified rescue diver the most useful information that I read was not the required, and tested on, PADI material. It was the book SCUBA Diving and Snorkeling for Dummies. There is no flying an airplane for dummies as far as I know. Seems to me that would not work out well.

There is a Beekeeping for Dummies book. Those who subscribe to the WillBees Newsletter, *the Bee Space*, know that I have done several book reviews. Yes, all of the information and disinformation that one could ever want to read is on the internet. However, most of it is not curated. It is not peer reviewed. One can find what one wants to believe on the internet of ephemeral 'knowledge'. Books are the other hand, including eBooks are physical things, or electronic manifestations of real things. Please read books.

I have *Beekeeping for Dummies* 4th edition published in 2017, the year I started beekeeping. The 5th edition is out now. I doubt that it has much new except for chemical and feeding fads.

Howard Blackiston, former president of the [Back Yard Beekeepers Association](#) is the author of the book that I own, and the latest version. The expression, "if you can read only one book on this subject, read this one" is overworn. Nevertheless, in this case, there is no doubt about it. I have been critical in my other book reviews. I can't be critical of this book. It would be nice to have more colored pictures and illustrations. The few color pictures that the book contains are exquisite.

SUBJECTS INCLUDE "TO BEE, OR NOT TO BEE?".

Part 1 – That is, do I really want to be a beekeeper?

Part 2 – Equipment and installing bees.

Part 3 – What is going on in there, by the season.

Part 4 – Something doesn't seem right. What do I do?

Part 5 – How to harvest the honey and what to do with it.

Part 6 – Interesting things about bees and honey.

There are 6 'parts' plus an appendix. I paraphrase the contents of the parts in the above.

All in all, if you want or can read only one book on SCUBA or one book on Beekeeping or one book on Ontologies which is out of print, go for it.

Our Will Bees lending library offers a vast selection of books and videos for you to enjoy. Be sure to check out a book at our next member meeting.

Time to expand your bee vocabulary.

Bring your answers to our next meeting to earn a tasty treat which will surely impress your fellow beekeepers!

Apiary

Chilled brood

Cluster

Adulterated honey

Decoy hive

Honey Stomach



UPCOMING EVENTS

JOIN US FOR OUR

Summer Picnic



Beer, Burgers, Bingo and Bees, What Could Be Better?

We are pleased to announce the WillBees picnic is returning for members and family members. Meyer Bees of Minooka, IL has kindly offered to host the event.

Please mark your calendars for July 22, 12 noon to 5pm

Please RSVP by July 12 to willbeesorg@gmail.com

ATTENTION: WILLBEES NEEDS YOU!

The Will County Beekeepers Association is working to spread the news about honey bees at several community events, and we need your help. We are looking for several volunteer members to join us at the events to share what you know! We are also looking for another member to join the awareness committee to help coordinate our events.

Please mark your calendar for our last summer event of the year, the Will County Fair. Bring your bee suit, veil, tools, and your knowledge, to speak with community members about honeybees. Join the fun by contacting Sue (listed below).

Will County Fair

Wednesday – Sunday, August 23-27, 2023

The Fair is located in Peotone, IL, just east of Route 57. The event will run in conjunction with the Will County Farm Bureau. [Click for more information](#)

There will be more information available about these events. Please sign up to help wherever you can. For more information or questions, contact Sue Gregory, WillBees Treasurer at susangregory418@gmail.com

WillBees Field Days: Fall Prep

Sunday, August 20, 2023 at 2 – 4pm

Fran Miller's, Minooka

Our second Field Day event will help to set our hives in good order going into fall. We'll talk about the summer dearth and what you should expect to see in your hive, mite treatments, pulling and adding supers for the last nectar flow, and feeding as we transition into the next season. *Note: All attendees are required to sign a waiver and wear protective gear. More details to come.*

ON-GOING ED

The SouthWestern Ohio Beekeepers Association (SWOBA) is pleased to be offering the following free lectures.

Sunday, July 23 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)

[Mrs. Rebecca Melton Masterman Ph.D.](#)

Sunday, August 27 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)

[Mr. Jim Masucci](#)

Sunday, September 24 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)

[Mr. Dewey Caron. Ph.D.](#)

Wednesday, October 25 (6:30 PM - 07:30 PM)

[Mrs. Michelle Flenniken, Ph.D.](#)

Illinois State Beekeepers Association's 2023 Summer Conference

July 14 –15, 2023, Quincy, Illinois

ISBA has a wonderful line-up of speakers including Kamon Reynolds, Randy McCaffrey, Adam Dolezal, Natalee Summers, Cory Stevens, Jeff Horchoff and Elsa Gallagher

[Click here for details](#)

Breakfast with the Bees hosted by James Konrad

The Fox Valley Beekeepers Association extends an open invitation to all beekeepers to join them via Zoom for a group chat every Saturday at 7:30am Central Time. Guests are encouraged to ask questions and contribute to various topics that relate to the season. Please email James at james@jamesgardenbees.com for more information.

Interesting Reads and Watches:

Bee and butterfly numbers are falling, even in undisturbed forests – [Click here](#)

Ohio researchers develop new breed of honeybees to fight parasites – [Click here](#)

Beekeeper easily removes swarm from Milwaukee home – [Click here](#)

ODDS & ENDS

The Golden Spoon Award

Did you harvest some really tasty honey? Then enter the Prestigious Golden Spoon Award honey competition which will be held during our member appreciation meeting in November. See our past winner on our brand new award plaque as you enter our member meetings.

The perfect gift!

As we head to the end of the year, it's never too early to think about the perfect holiday gift for your honey. How about some nice WillBees apparel? In September, we will be accepting orders and payments for t-shirts, sweatshirts and the very popular baseball cap for delivery at our November meeting. Please see our flier at the August and September meeting for details.



A big thank you to Jim Tew

Our June meeting featured an exciting presentation by Jim Tew on robbing behaviors. We'd like to thank Jim and his grandson for traveling from Michigan to present to our members.

Meyer Bees

The Meyer Bees beekeeping supply showroom in Minooka is open 6 days a week, Monday through Saturday. For details please contact WillBees member Dave Meyer: dave@meyerbees.com, or 815-521-9116 or visit their website at meyerbees.com

Don't forget to register your hives for free with the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Insects/Bees/Documents/beekeep.pdf>

Swap meet

Let's all start going through our existing equipment and think about donating it to new beekeepers. Items may be things you originally may have used and replaced or have more than you need. At a future meeting we will all bring these items and raffle things off. More details in the future. We could use a captain for this project. Please reach out to the board if you can help.

Share what you know

We are looking for people to help contribute to your monthly newsletter:

- Feature articles that you'd like to write
- Review of a book or article in a journal you read
- An educational opportunity that you are aware of
- Pictures that you'd like us to share

Please email willbees-board@willbees.org with anything you'd like to share today.

Update your calendar for our upcoming WillBees meetings:

Wednesdays at 7pm:

Aug 16, Sep 20, Oct 18, Nov 15

BOARD MEMBERS

Patrick Schab, President

Dennis Wisnosky, Vice President

Susan Gregory, Treasurer

Fran Miller, Secretary

DIRECTORS (years remaining on term):

Keith Meiser (3)

Dave Meyer (1)

Jim Moleski (2)