

The Bee Line

Beekeepers Guild of Southeast Virginia

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Article submissions are always welcome! Email the editor, Jennifer Bell, at: jenniferburdock@gmail.com

Virginia State Pollinator

Good news! HB 517, adding the *Apis mellifera* to Virginia's list of special designations as its State Pollinator, was unanimously accepted by the House and Senate of Virginia! Next step, the Governor's office for signature.

Now is the time to thank our House and Senate members for their support of the bill. It might seem like a small gesture, but it will benefit Virginia Beekeepers as we consider support of legislation in the future that may be more difficult to get through. So please take a moment to thank your legislators.



Swarm Bucket Workshop

February 12, 2024



Western Branch Primary STEAM Day



A special thanks to Von, Jay, and John who represented the Guild at Western Branch Primary STEAM Day on February 23rd from 8am-2pm. The group taught 8 first grade classes about the World of Bees, Pollination and their importance to the environment.

CREEDS RURITAN CLUB BBQ AND SPRING CRAFT FAIR



Guild members Donnie Norrell, John Hathaway, and Don Ross volunteering at the BBQ and Craft Fair which was held Saturday, March 18.



Girl Scout Presentation



Guild members Bea Hovey and Von Gilbreath led a program for the Girl Scout Troop 256 on March 19th. Fifteen Daisy scouts attended the presentation which covered three badge segments: bugs, shapes and designs in nature. Bea and Von talked about the difference in bugs vs. all insects, unique houses, and how some insects are food for others. They discussed pollinators and how bees are masters. They also touched on how bees gather pollen with static electricity and how they travel plant-to-plant and leave a bit of pollen to activate the next plant. Finally, they talked about shapes and designs in nature – specifically how honeycomb is a perfect example of tessellation.

Great job inspiring our future Beekeepers of Virginia!





Calling All 2024 Nuc Sellers!

With our introductory course wrapping up, we have a lot interest from new-bees looking to buy nucs! Making a split is a great tool for swarm prevention, and if you don't have the room to expand it into another hive, please consider selling those bees to a fellow member! Our guild is one of the few clubs in Virginia that produce local nucs for members, rather than importing bees from outside the area. As a seller you are able to set the terms of the sale including the price and how you want to handle equipment (trading frames, including the price of equipment in your sale, loaning equipment, etc.) We take pride in this program and would like to keep it going! There are a few guidelines that the guild requires our sellers to adhere to:

1. Nucs provided by suppliers, enrolled in the guild nuc program, must be state-inspected and be accompanied with a health certificate as proof of state inspection.
2. Nucs shall have fully drawn frames, a queen who is the mother of the brood in the nuc, brood in all stages of development, including capped brood in a solid pattern and stored honey and pollen.

If you have questions on how to put together a nuc, reach out to a mentor or our other experienced beekeepers.

If you are interested in selling nucs this spring - to be ready by May/June timeframe - please reach out to the nuc coordinator, Bailey Bunn, with the following information:

1. Name
2. Email address
3. Phone number
4. Brood chamber size (medium or deep)
5. Approximately how many nucs you anticipate to sell. It is okay if this number changes.

Bailey Bunn – Nuc Coordinator
bunnbailey13@gmail.com
303-815-2821





Mentors Wanted!

With the success of the Beekeeping Short Course, our guild is buzzing with new members in need of mentors to guide them through their first year. Please consider becoming a mentor, even if you are a second-year beekeeper. Most questions start off centered around obtaining the correct equipment, installing a nuc/package and discussing those first-year observations the new beekeepers are seeing as the bees start to expand their hive. You do not need to know all the answers to every question and several of our senior folks are here to support you with any issues that may present a challenge.

This is an extremely rewarding opportunity for both the mentor and mentee. If you are interested or have additional questions, please contact our mentor coordinator, Kevin Du Bois, at kevinduboisphoto@gmail.com. Thank you for your consideration and support of the new beekeepers and the Guild.

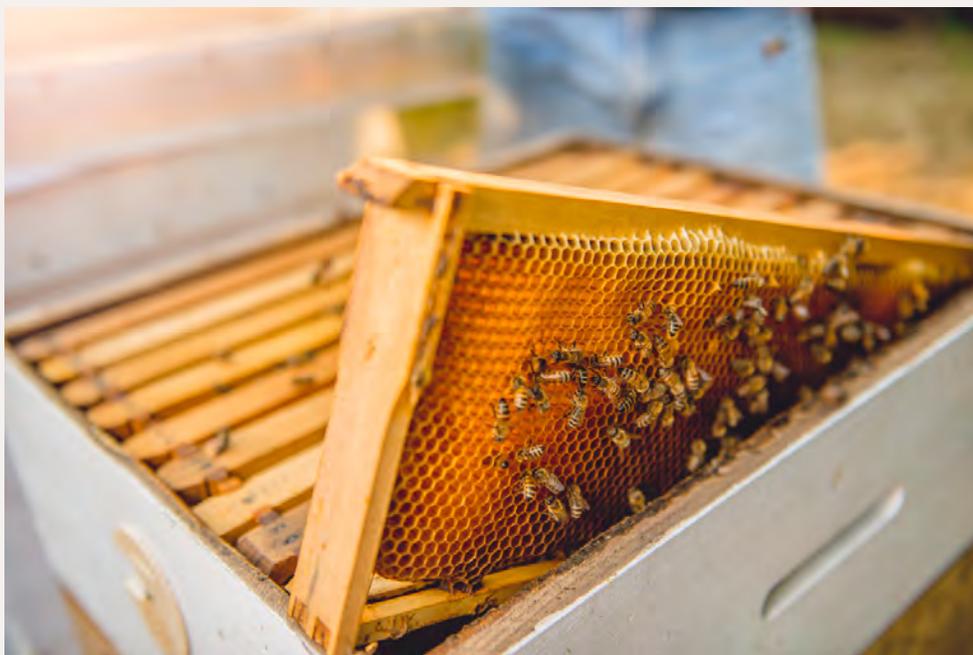
Winter Honey Bee Colony Loss Survey

The following is a message from Keith Tignor, our Virginia State Apiarist:

Over the past decade, Virginia's beekeepers strongly supported the national colony loss and management surveys through the Bee Informed Partnership (BIP). Prior to this, beekeepers supported a statewide survey. Together the surveys provide over 20 years of annual data on winter honey bee colony losses. The surveys also provided valuable information regarding beekeepers' management practices and factors that affected their colony health and survival. BIP is reducing their services and is not expected to conduct a colony loss-management survey this year. We will again rely on a statewide survey to gather information on winter colony losses and management practices. Access to an online survey is provided below. It should require only 3 to 5 minutes to complete.

Please take a few minutes to let us know how many honey bee colonies you had at the beginning and end of winter. If you have more than one apiary, complete a separate survey for each of your apiaries. Apiaries within 1/2 mile distance of each other should be combined as a single apiary for your responses.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=qeUKYsFOoE-GQV2fOGxzCQRMmfE92mBPnStZV7RxBonUNFYwRU05WDIRU0NKOVdZMEZGQUFIMzYwUS4u>



A bit of honeybee history from Virginia State
Beekeepers Association:

“Varroa mites hitchhiked their way to Virginia in April 1990 by way of a shipment of bees from Georgia. They first appeared in the U.S. in 1987. Infestation was widespread in Florida before officials discovered the mite. Per Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 2, 1990.”



The Coastal VA Beekeeper's Calendar

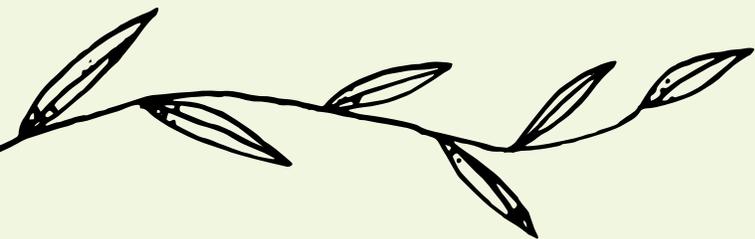


April

- Remove entrance reducers and mouse guards.
- Feed any new splits, new swarms, and light hives, especially if weather inhibits foraging. Make sugar syrup in a 1:1 ratio (5 lbs. sugar to 10 cups water).
- Replace 2 of 10 frames of old dark comb each year with new foundation to reduce disease and pesticide loads in the hive.
- You should have your honey supers on already! A queen excluder may be placed under the first honey super.
- Do NOT use medications in a colony with honey supers for human consumption in place. The only exceptions are formic acid, a naturally occurring component of honey, and HopGuard.
- Keep new nucs well fed and monitor closely for overcrowding until able to transfer to full size hives. If installing package bees, DO NOT open the hive for at least five days. After one week, check queen cage & release the queen if the bees have not done so already. Disturb the hive as little as possible during the first two weeks while they settle into their new home with the queen.
- Make splits when you see drones in the bee yard to expand your operation or replace winter losses. Queen cells can be used to make a split and prevent swarming.
- Install a bait hive with one frame of treated drawn comb in a nearby tree to catch swarms.

May

- Do NOT use medications in a colony with honey supers for human consumption in place. The only exceptions are formic acid, a naturally occurring component of honey, and HopGuard.
- Comb honey supers should be added on top of another honey super, not over the brood chamber, to reduce the amount of pollen in the comb honey.
- It is time to add another super when the previous super on a colony is one-half to two-thirds filled (6-7 frames in a 10-frame box). Raise the partially filled super and place the empty super under it.
- Keep empty comb as storage space in the supers on all colonies until the honey flow has ended.
- Remove and extract capped supers from your colonies if you need additional supers.
- Continue to check for queen cells every seven days. Remove all queen cells from the colony to reduce swarming; you can use them to make summer splits and increase your colony numbers.
- If planning to sell nucleus colonies, make sure the apiary is inspected by the local apiary inspector prior to sale.
- Prop up the outer cover to improve airflow during hot weather. Good air circulation improves both honey production and hive health.
- Order queens if you plan to requeen in the fall.



Glenwood Elementary Spring Festival

The Beekeepers Guild has been invited to participate in the Glenwood Elementary Spring Festival in Virginia Beach to be held on Sunday afternoon, April 28th , from 3 to 6 pm. The festival is a fun day of carnival games, concessions, school garden tours, a low-cost plant sale, local craft vendors and environmental awareness learning stations. Glenwood has a student body of 1,000 children and events are usually attended by about 400 to 500 people. Guild members are invited to participate at our booth by educating the public about beekeeping and the impact of honey bees in the environment as well as good gardening practices to protect pollinators. We may sell our own properly labeled honey and hive products. To sign up for this event, please visit:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0549AFA92AA1FE3-48454462-glenwood#/>

Hope you'll bee there!





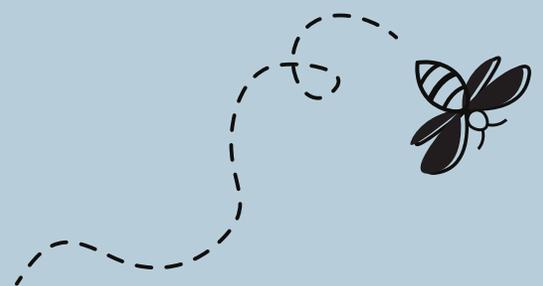
VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO SUPPORT THESE EVENTS -
PLEASE BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR SIGN-UP SHEETS.

GLENWOOD SPRING FESTIVAL - APRIL 28TH
(3PM-6PM)

"EXTRACTAGANZA" - JULY 13TH

NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN BUTTERFLY
FESTIVAL - JULY 20TH (10AM-4PM)

VIRGINIA HONEY BEE FESTIVAL - AUGUST 17TH
(10AM-4PM)



Event Coordinator Position Open

Do you have an aptitude for planning? Do you appreciate the time spent with fellow beekeepers at guild events getting to know one another and talking bees? Perhaps you simply enjoy attending the many fun local festivals? If so, please consider volunteering for the Beekeepers Guild's Event Coordinator position. The event coordinator is the face of the Beekeepers Guild to outside organizations. The event coordinator receives requests for educational exhibits and then interacts with the guild's board of directors and guild members to assemble an exhibit tailored to the request. Examples are requests for STEAM Day or Career Day presentations at schools, lessons for scout troops, and educational booth exhibits at festivals.

The event coordinator is an appointed board position which consists of monthly board meetings via Zoom, in-person attendance at monthly membership meetings, and a signed conflict of interest disclosure to protect the guild's nonprofit status.

The event coordinator is not expected to work every event; their responsibility is to help develop the scope of the event with input from the guild's board of directors and then recruit volunteers from the guild's members both in-person and electronically. The position involves planning, recruiting and communicating in about equal proportions. The amount of time devoted to event coordination varies monthly but generally takes about 4 to 6 hours per month.

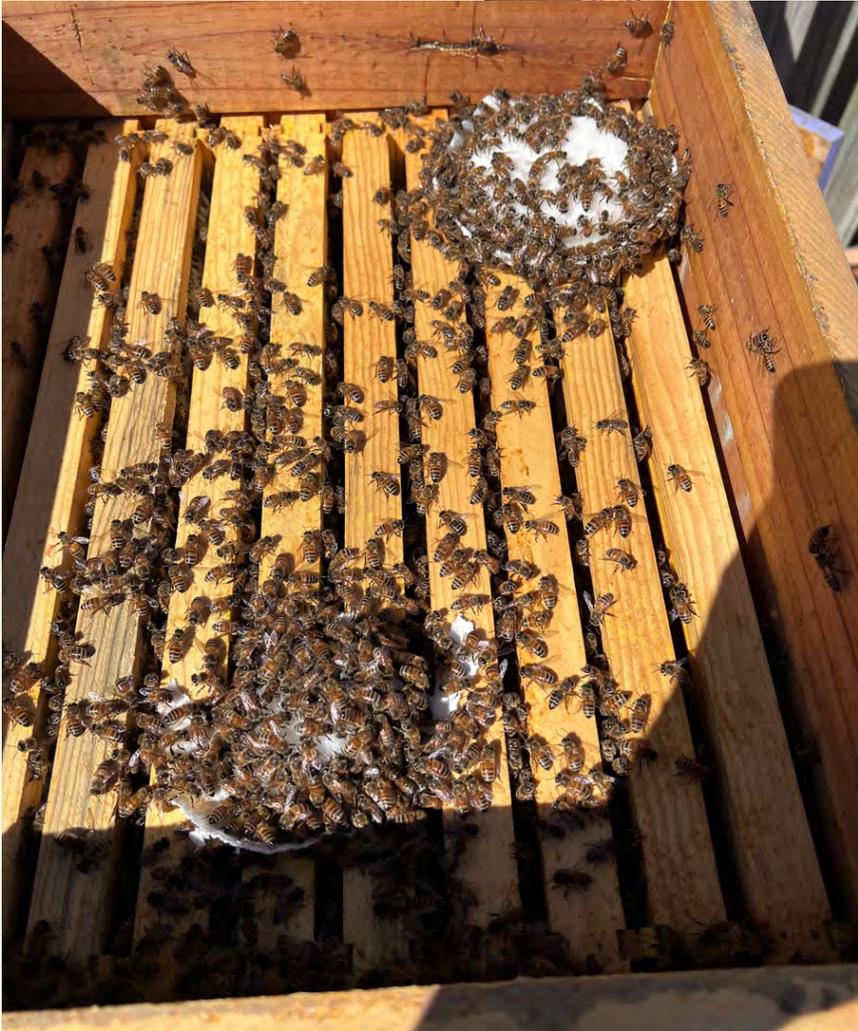
Pam Fisher is our current event coordinator; she is willing to train a new event coordinator and has offered to work as a team until the new event coordinator is comfortable. If this is a volunteer position that intrigues you, please contact Pam at BeesKneesApiaries@gmail.com or 757-620-0945 with any questions or to volunteer. Thank you for your consideration.



Preparing for Spring

Photos submitted by BGSV Member, Kevin Du Bois







“The painting method shown above came from an article in the Bee Journal (“Why didn’t I think of that?”) section. I picked up the free copy of the Bee Journal at the short course. Very informative and the tip made the painting very easy and efficient!”



Honey Scones

PREP TIME: 10 MIN

COOKING TIME: 15 MIN

MAKES: 12 SCONES

Ingredients

1 3/4 cups self-rising flour
Pinch of salt
4 Tbsp unsalted butter,
softened
1 egg
2 Tbsp sugar
2 Tbsp honey
1/4 cup whole milk

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, sift the flour with the salt, then add the butter and lightly combine until the mixture resembles breadcrumbs.
3. Using a fork, beat together the egg, sugar, and honey. Then gradually add the milk until you have a stiff dough.
4. Roll out the dough on a floured surface, into a 1-inch-thick circle. Cut scones into triangles, or alternatively you can stamp out the scones using a 2 1/2 inch a cookie cutter.
5. Place the scones onto the prepared baking sheet and bake 12-15 mins, until risen and golden. Once cooked, place on a wire rack and cover with a clean tea towel.
6. Scones are best served warm with extra honey & butter, or your favorite jam!



Guild clothing is
now available for
purchase!

[Click HERE to order](#)

Future Meeting Dates

April 8th

May 13th

Guild meetings will continue to be offered both virtually via Zoom and in-person at Towne Bank 137 Mt. Pleasant Rd., Chesapeake, VA 23322 at 7:00 pm.

