

Clinch Valley Beekeepers Association Newsletter

Next Meeting: September 15, 2022
Treadway Fire Hall
189 Hwy 131
Treadway, TN 37881

Food Theme is Soup and Sandwiches

CVBA Newsletter
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Speaker:

Wade GeFellers with Heritage & Habitat, LLC will be our speaker for the September meeting. He will be talking about how to create habitat for pollinators.

Upcoming Events:

Board Meeting:

September 8 at 6:30 PM : The CVBA Board will meet at the fire station in the bee building. As always, any member may attend, however only board members can vote. If you have a topic for discussion, please call Jr. Snelson (President) whose number is on the last page of the Newsletter prior to the meeting.

Festivals:

It is time to volunteer to participate with the club for the festivals upcoming in October. Can you help us with our booth? We usually attend 3 festivals: Sneedville (begins first Saturday in October), Rogersville (begins 2nd Saturday in October), and Morristown (begins the last Saturday in October).

Officer Elections:

Officer election is in October. Officers of the club for the October election will be President, Vice-President, Secretary (Candy is not able to take it back.) Treasurer, 3 Board Members, and a Librarian. If you have a nominee, please fill out the Nomination form or let a current officer know so they can fill one out for you. Nomination forms and a nomination box are at the table near the door (unless something changes) for the September meeting. All single memberships have 1 vote. Family memberships have 1 vote. Youth members do not have a vote. Voting parties must have paid for 2022 year before July 31, 2022.

Notes from the last meeting:

If you missed the August meeting, you missed a real treat. Tim Andrews was the speaker. He discussed his favorite bee equipment. He also told some stories that I would like to see put in a Clinch Mountain Bee Club Book someday. Between Jr Snelson, Tim Andrews, and David Sams the whole lot of us were laughing and having a wonderful time. You never know what is going to happen in a club meeting. Hope to see you in September. Thank you to everyone who came, enjoyed, and cleaned up!

Beekeeper's Calendar:

September-Brood production restarts in early September – usually there are some small but unreliable nectar flows which end by late month even in a good year.



Evaluate all hives early in the month, and combine, shake out or requeen any which are lagging. Cut your losses now before you have fed and babied lackluster hives for months only to have them fail over the winter – or fail to be productive in the spring.

Start feeding light hives 2-1 heavy syrup until they put on sufficient weight to overwinter on.

Bee Funny: (answer on last page) Queen bee says, “Who messed up this cell?”

Club News:

Support:

T-shirts are available Small, Medium, Large, XL sizes \$10 and XXL and larger sizes are \$12

Hats are \$8

Cookbooks are \$10.

These can be purchased at any regular bee meeting; they are in the building onsite.

Membership:

CVBA dues: Renewal Dues become payable January 1st of each year. Dues are not pro-rated.

Single membership \$10; Family (one vote per family) \$15; Youth Single (No vote) \$5.

Please see the club Secretary, to pay your dues at any meeting. Checks should be made payable to CVBA. Please let us know if any of your information has changed. You can mail checks to the Secretary and address on the last page.

Bee Insights:

(adapted from: carolinahoneybees.com April 8, 2022)

How to Store Honey Supers – {Protect Comb}

As the honey harvesting season draws to a close, beekeepers face the issue of how to store honey supers over winter. Drawn comb, spare boxes and other pieces associated with honey production need a place to stay when not on the hive. These are valuable pieces of beekeeping equipment. Taking good care of them will help the colonies get off to a better start next Spring.

How to Store Drawn Comb Frames Over Winter

In a successful apiary, each hive will need several bee boxes for honey production. And not all of them will be in use throughout the year. In most regions, bees produce excess honey during the warm months. This is the time when the boxes called “honey supers” will be on the hive to collect honey for the beekeeper.

After harvest time, those boxes are removed from the hives. Now, the beekeeper is faced with needing a safe place to store honey supers with draw comb over the cold months of the year.



Can You Leave a Honey Super on Over Winter?

Yes, you can leave a honey super or several on the hive over Winter. In fact, most beekeepers do have a super or two designated for use by the bees. The size of the box designated as the “food super” for the bees varies from one beekeeper to another and from one region to another.

Preparing beehives for Winter or winterizing hives involves checking their food reserves. Honey bees survive Winter by consuming stored honey. In any region with cold weather, the amount of honey stored in just a single brood box would not be enough.

Bees Can Have Too Much Space to Guard

However, leaving too much space on the hive during the long Winter months has risks as well. Especially during late Fall and early Spring, when colony populations are low – the bees may not be able to protect all that comb. Therefore, it is best to remove any boxes beyond what the bees need for Winter survival. This should leave the colony with ample space but not too much territory to defend.

When to Remove Honey Supers for Winter

Knowing when to remove honey supers for Winter can be a bit tricky. No exact calendar date can be given – it depends greatly on your location. Some regions experience cold temps much sooner than others. And, in addition to cold weather, it also depends on your local nectar flows.

In upstate South Carolina, I know that my bees will not make any excess honey for me after the Sourwood Bloom in June-July. There is no need to put honey supers back on the hive after that time. However, if you live in a region with a long, mild Fall and plenty of nectar rich Fall flowers – your boxes can stay on longer.

Before true cold weather arrives, it is time to remove those honey supers. Complete any needed varroa mite treatments and get those hives ready for Winter.

Storing Empty Comb Frames Over Winter

The most difficult task facing a beekeeper is storing empty wax frames over Winter. This refers to any frames that are filled with honeycomb but no longer have honey inside. Frames filled with “drawn comb” are very valuable. The honey bee colony must invest a lot of time and energy into building comb.

Because empty frames of honey comb can be reused next season, finding a proper storage place for your wax comb is a priority. However, you cannot store honey supers with drawn comb just anywhere. Many beekeepers are dismayed each Spring to find their beautiful frames of wax comb destroyed. Even the beekeeper using plastic foundation should practice care with comb storage.

Protecting Stored Honey Supers From Wax Moths

Two types of wax moths frustrate the efforts of beekeepers to protect beeswax comb: the Greater Wax Moth and the Lesser Wax Moth. They both cause the same destruction. And the warmer your climate,



the more issues you are likely to face. But even areas with cold Winters are not safe from moth damage.

Adult moths fly into the box and lay eggs on the comb surface. Moth larva hatch and tunnel through the comb in search of pollen, bee bread and bee pupal cocoons. Comb that has only held honey is not as desirable to the moth. However, even honey frames will have some pollen from time to time so it is best to provide protection.

Wax moths can completely destroy comb in a few weeks. Beekeepers want to keep moths out and destroy any moth eggs that might already be on the comb.

There are several strategies used by beekeepers for moth protection:

- freeze prior to storage (or keep frozen) outside storage in light airy location
- chemical protection

Freezing Frames for Storage

Once the honey supers are removed from the hive, the bees are not around to police the comb and remove moth eggs or larva. That job falls to you – the beekeeper. You cannot rely on “seeing” moth eggs. It is best to assume there are some in there and take action.

If you are storing honey supers of a small number, the freezer method can work well. Freeze your frames of comb for 2 or 3 days to kill any wax moth eggs. Remove the frames of comb from the freezer (let thaw & dry in a secure place (where moths can’t get) and then seal in plastic bags or bins. Prevent re-infestation by securing the bags tightly. Otherwise, you may be in for a big, nasty surprise when you open that bag in several months.

Admittedly, this method takes some time and space. Because beeswax is fragile, it is easiest to store honey frames in the wooden super to avoid breaking comb. So, you will probably be storing the whole box – gotta think about the space needed.

Freezing also works as a good storage method for raw honeycomb intended for human consumption. Just be sure to wrap it up tight first.

Honey Super Storage in Light and Air

Another option for those without freezer space for all those supers and frames. Storing your beekeeping supers in an open shed. Wax Moths do not like light. They desire the dark inside of a bee hive (or a garbage bag – or tightly stacked supers.) Beekeepers use this moth behavior to our advantage by storing bee boxes in a special stack method. If you have the space, it can work for you too. Stacking honey supers (with comb inside) in a crisscross fashion inside an open air shed is a favorite method.

More light and air will circulate through the bee boxes – deterring moth activity. No one can guarantee 0% moth damage, but this method of storage works for many. A roof over the top protects the stored



honey supers from rain. Adding wire sides lets light inside and prevents raccoons from eating your comb! (Trust me – I know.)

Cold weather is good for super storage. Once the temps turn cold – wax moth damage is not a threat.

Using BT for Moth Control

The form of BT known as bacillus thuringiensis is used by some beekeepers to protect comb frames.

In previous years, it was sold under the product label Certan and is back on the market in some places. It is labeled for use in bees and helped control wax moths in beehives and stored comb. This dry product is mixed with water and sprayed on new foundation or honeycomb. This would be done before placing boxes on the hive or after removing them. BT kills wax moth larvae. Certan has been brought back to the US and is available in some bee supplies. Xentari (the same form of BT) is also sold in the US but availability is limited and it may not be labeled for use around bees.

Protecting Stored Honey Supers with Paradichlorobenzene

PDB (Para Dichlorobenzene) is a chemical compound in a crystal form labeled for bees and approved by the FDA. The pack of crystals is placed near stored honey supers to control wax moths. This chemical is also a known carcinogen and has a very pungent odor.

Do not use regular moth balls – the chemical is often not the same and can be dangerous to you and the hive.

How to Protect Stored Honeycomb from Mice

In some regions of the country, mice can be a major Winter pest. They even sneak into live hives while the bees are clustered in the top keeping warm. Consider placing a mouse guard over the entrance to your hive if you live in a region where they are prevalent. This is a larger issue in areas with long cold Winters. Don't delay, have your mouse guards on before cold arrives or your mice tenants may already be in there! Even in mild regions, stored honey supers can attract mice. A lot of comb is destroyed as a result of the chewing and body wastes. Both wax and frames may be ruined.

Traps can be utilized if needed to large populations of mice. When stacking supers, using a queen excluder on the bottom and top of the stack can help too!

Every beekeeper wants to honor the hard work that the bees have invested in building comb. And, buying beekeeping equipment is not cheap either. Winter is a great time to inspect frames and comb, replace any honeycomb that has become very dark or black.

Finding a safe place to keep unused equipment or frames with only foundation is not too hard. However, anything involving comb requires a bit more thought.

Protect your investment in effort and money, develop a plan, learn how to store all beekeeping supplies until needed again next year. But storing valuable honey supers with drawn comb should be a top priority.



Recipe of the month:

Honey Turtle Candy

3 cups pecan halves 1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup honey 1/2 cup butter
7 ounces sweetened condensed milk
pinch salt
1/2 teaspoon vanilla flavoring
1 1/2 cup chocolate chips
1/2 teaspoon vegetable oil



Line cookie sheets with parchment paper and arrange pecan halves on paper. Use 6 halves per turtle. In a saucepan, gently heat the butter, brown sugar, honey, vanilla and a dash of salt until it is warm and combined.

Then add the condensed milk and pinch of salt - combine well.

Heat the mixture to a temperature of about 235° F – 245° F using a candy thermometer - or until it reaches the soft ball stage. Stir constantly.

You can check this by dropping a drip into a glass of cool water. If the mixture holds together in a pliable ball - it is ready.

Take care to not over-cook as this can happen quickly.

Once the caramel is ready, quickly spoon some over each pecan turtle - making sure that each piece of pecan is connected with caramel.

Set aside to cool as you prepare the chocolate.

Melt the chocolate chips and vegetable oil in a double boiler or in the microwave using short burst of time.

Once it is completely melted - spoon a coating of chocolate on each of the turtles.

Leave the turtle candy on the cookie sheet until thoroughly cooled. Perhaps an hour or more depending on room temperature.

NOTES

*Take special care when making candy products as the high temperatures can result in burns. Do NOT taste the spoon with hot caramel - You have been warned. :)

*Making honey turtles works better for me when it is not very humid outside.

*You can use any kind of honey but even though we are cooking - I always like to use raw honey for my recipes.



CVBA Board of Directors and Officers:

President: Lloyd “Jr” Snelson 432-626-5538 Cell 423-526-7742
Vice President: David Sams 423-693-6846
Board Members: Tim Andrews 423-272-5492
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Secretary: Candy Halford 865-310-0120
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Bee Inspectors for CVBA:

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Lloyd “Junior” Snelson 423-626-5538
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CVBA encourages each person to further their education by reading books, checking out various websites, and watching the videos that are available on bees and beekeeping. We also encourage everyone to have a mentor, especially if you are new to beekeeping. If you need a mentor, please let Jr. Snelson or David Sams know at the next meeting and they will try to find one.

Remember all apiaries must be registered with the State of TN. Forms are available at the meeting or they can be downloaded from the internet. <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/businesses/bees/forms.html>



Answer to Bee Funny- 30,000 sisters look at each other and buzz, “She did it.”

