



nnjbees.org

December 2018



NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

A division of New Jersey Beekeepers Association

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| President | Frank Mortimer | 201-417-7309 | 3 rd V. Pres. | John Matarese | 201-481-5426 |
| V. President | John Gaut – Mentor Coordinator | 201-961-2330 | Historian | Karl Schoenknecht | 201-891-0947 |
| 2 nd V. Pres. | Jaimie Winters | 551-486-7479 | Treasurer | Bob Jenkins | 201-218-6537 |

Meeting on: **Friday, December 21st at 7:30 PM**

Location: **Ramapo College of NJ, 505 Ramapo Valley Rd., Mahwah, NJ 07430**

Bee Enthusiasts & Bee Curious Always Welcome! *Look for the Bee-u-tiful Yellow Signs*

Friday's Holiday Party is at the Pavilion.

Super-close to the parking lot, by the volleyball courts, and a building over from our regular monthly meetings.



Hap-BEE Holidays!!!





Message from the President:

Ho-Ho-Ho Northeast NJ Beekeepers!

I hope everyone is in a festive mood and ready for our annual holiday party! This year's party will again be held at the Pavilion, which is very close to the parking lot, just one building over from where we usually meet, and directly behind the volleyball courts.

Everyone and their families are invited to our party, and all you need to bring is a smile and lots of festive cheer. We'll have delicious hot appetizers, lots of snacks, and plenty of member-made deserts. Remember to also bring your wallet, because thanks to our very generous members, we'll have gift baskets and bee items for everyone to bid on. (Plus, club shirts, books, & calendars to purchase.)

I would like to personally thank everyone who donated something this year, as your donations are what enable our club to operate and continue to bring you so many great events, like a holiday party that's open to all!

I am happy to report that 2019 is already shaping up to be another fantastic year for our club! We have completed our 2019 Meeting Calendar, and a full slate of excellent speakers are scheduled to educate us on the world of BEE. You can find the 2019 calendar in this newsletter and also online at www.njbees.org. Next year will also mark a first for the Northeast NJ Beekeepers, as our branch will be hosting the NJ State Fall Meeting on November 9, 2019. Our esteemed speaker will be; Dr. Christina Grozinger, Distinguished Professor of Entomology, Pennsylvania State University. Hosting a state meeting is something that our branch has wanted to do for years, and thanks to how many of our members consistently volunteer, we finally have the help we'll need to pull it off. If you've never attended a state meeting, you're going to love it. Beekeepers from across the state will attend, affording you the opportunity to spend a day learning from others and hopefully making some new friends. There will be a lot more to come on the state meeting, so please mark your calendars and let's show the rest of the state why the Northeast is the best branch with the strongest membership.

2019 will also mark my 8th year as your president. I've been honored to serve you for so long, and I am thankful that our current line-up of club officers is so strong. The only way we've been able to do so much as a club is thanks to John Gaut, Jaimie Winters, John Matarese, Karl Schoenknecht, and our always-smiling moneyman, Bob Jenkins. I would like to thank each of you for making my job

easier with your continued help and support. But as good as our club is, there is still so much more we could be doing, which is why I would like to ask more members to step forward and volunteer. If you want to help or would like to do more, please reach out to John, Jaimie, John, Karl, Bob, or me and say you'd like to help. For instance, the club really needs someone with mad computer skills who could help with our website, email templates, and newsletter. There are lots of ways you can contribute and all it takes is a desire to help.

I look forward to seeing you on Friday at our holiday party, and to another great year of meetings in 2019!

Happy Holidays!!!!

Frank Mortimer
President, Northeast NJ Beekeepers

BEEKEEPERS



Beekeeping in December

**by John A. Gaut
EAS Master Beekeeper**

The bees are all snuggled in their hives, in nice warm clusters. I think most of my full-sized colonies are in good shape for the winter; they have good size populations, enough of honey and low mite counts. I recently completed Nosema analysis of most of my hives. I'm very glad to see very low levels of infected bees. Some of my nucs have smaller populations than ideal. The nucs were queen mating nucs from earlier in the year. When I take a mated queen out (for reassignment to another colony), I combine the remaining nuc colony with a queen right nuc colony and let the double nuc (5 frames over 5 frames) build for the winter. The later nucs often don't have a huge population and maybe not enough honey. I do equalize the nucs but am careful not to make two weak nucs from a strong nuc and a weak nuc. All are doing well so far. These nucs will be resources in the spring; queens for production colonies and brood and bees for queen rearing.

Even though the bees are chillin' there is still a lot of beekeeping we can do. This is a good time of year to learn more about beekeeping and plan for next year. There are plenty of great beekeeping books that will help you improve your beekeeping knowledge and skills. The club sells some of the best. Beekeeping courses are offered in winter and now is the time to sign-up for them. Sussex county is offering their course in January and Essex County is offering their classes in February. You can register here <https://njba38.wildapricot.org/events> Most importantly you should think about your beekeeping goals for 2019 and develop a plan to achieve those goals. Every beekeeper should have a goal to prevent colony loss due to mite parasitism. I have shared my mite management plan in a separate article.

January is the time to register your apiary(s). The most important reason for registering is to be notified if there is a disease outbreak. Registration is easy, especially if you have registered before. I do not know of any reason not to register! The information (including location) is confidential and is only used by the State Apiarist.

https://www24.state.nj.us/AG_Apiary/ApiaryApp

The Honey Show will be in early February. Now is a good time to think about what you are going to enter and to start preparing the entries. I will have more information about the show and the entry rules at the January meeting. Contact me if you have any questions before then.

Monitor the weigh of the hives during the winter; light hives may need to be fed in late winter. Be prepared with fondant or cane sugar for those light colonies. If a colony does die, try to diagnose the reason for the loss. If you are unsure, reach out to more experienced beekeepers and ask them to help with the diagnosis. If you are able to determine the cause of death, you can then learn how to prevent the recurrence. Here is a link to a very good resource that has a diagnostic procedure at the end. (Thanks Andy!)

<https://pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/sites/pollinator.cals.cornell.edu/files/shared/documents/Wintering%20Bees%20in%20Cold%20Climates.compressed.pdf>

I made some clear see through inner covers so I could monitor moisture condensation on the inner cover. One colony has two inches of insulation above the inner cover. The other does not; only the telescoping top cover. Otherwise the hives are the same; about the same population, both are insulated on the sides and both have a small top entrance.

Below are two pictures. The one on the left has insulation above the inner cover. The one on the right does not have any insulation. Even though the population is the same, the cluster below the insulated cover is larger (looser) and there is no condensation. The clear inner cover on the right is cold (without insulation) and there is some condensation! The condensation is on the underside next to the cluster. As the colony starts raising more brood, I expect to see more condensation over the cluster on the uninsulated inner cover.



Insulation on top of the inner cover keeps the inner cover warm. When the warm moist air from the cluster rises to the top of the hive, the moist air is vented out instead of condensing. An uninsulated cover will be cold and moist air will condense on the underside. 2 inches of insulation between the inner cover and top cover and a small opening for ventilation is much more effective than any moisture absorbing techniques.

In addition to setting some beekeeping goals, planning for the upcoming season, and getting equipment ready, I plan to attend the American Beekeeping Conference in early January. The New Jersey Honey Queen, Nicole Medina will be competing for the National Honey Queen or Princess during the conference. I and others from NJ will be attending and will be fully supporting our Honey Queen!

I hope you and your family (including the bees!) have a great Holiday!

2018 Holiday Party – THIS FRIDAY!!!



Northeast NJ
Beekeeper Christmas
Party
Dec. 21, 7:30 p.m.

2019 Northeast NJ Beekeepers Calendar

| Date | Topic | Speaker |
|--|---|---|
| January 18 th | Late Winter Mite Control & Hive Management | Club Bee Talk Series |
| February 15 th | Maximizing Honey Production | Grant Stiles Stiles Apiaries |
| March 15 th | Swarms: Steps to Stop Them & Early Prevention | Club Bee Talk Series |
| April 19 th | Installing & Caring for Your New Nucs | Club Bee Talk Series |
| May 17 th | Hive Inspections/Summer Management | Club Bee Talk Series |
| June 21 st | Mite Treatments | Tim Schuler , NJ State Apiarist |
| July 19 th | Pulling Your Honey Supers & Honey Extraction | Club Bee Talk Series |
| August 16 th | Feeding: Syrup (1:1 - 2:1 - 4:1,) Fondant, Candy, Feeders, & Pollen. The “Why’s, When’s & How-to’s for Feeding Bees | Club Bee Talk Series |
| September 14 th Saturday | Honey Cup | Everyone |
| September 20 th | Fall Management & Mite Treatments | Club Bee Talk Series |
| October 18 th | Cornell Bee Extension and NY Tech Team | Emma Mullen Department of Entomology Cornell University |
| November 9 th Saturday | State Meeting in Lieu of Branch Meeting | Christina M. Grozinger Distinguished Professor of Entomology Pennsylvania State University |
| December 20 th | Holiday Party | Everyone |

NORTHERN

NEW JERSEY



Hap-BEE
Holidays!
NNJBees

Bee Regulations – Here We Go Again

On December 3rd, the NJ Department of Agriculture published the Amended Apiary Regulations in the New Jersey Register for public comment. The good news is that the Dept. of Ag took the public's negative outcry to change the original regulations very seriously and the newly proposed regulations have been significantly retooled. The newly proposed regulations now refer to, and correspond with, the *New Jersey Department of Agriculture's Best Management Practices for Beekeepers in Populated Areas*, which is exactly what we want. Additionally, under the newly proposed regulations, the hive density has been increased, allowing for 3 hives per ¼ acre and 1 nuc per every 2 hives.

However, the newly proposed regulations contain a new sentence that could still undermine beekeeping for all of us. It states in part:

It shall be unlawful for any beekeeper to keep any hive or hives in such a manner or of such disposition as to pose a direct threat to Public health and safety.

This sentence is of significant concern as “public health and safety” is not defined and could thereby be used to keep many people from keeping bees in their backyards. For example, if someone in your town—and not even your next-door neighbor—takes issue with backyard beekeepers, he could claim that keeping bees are a threat to his family's safety and you would be forced to remove your hives.

There are countless examples how this language could be misused to keep people from keeping bees, and that is why it must be removed. Without defining what constitutes “public health and safety,” or how it will be determined, is setting up all beekeepers to constantly be on the defensive about having honeybees in our yards.

A few other points in the newly proposed regulations also need to be addressed, but they are no where near as dangerous as the aforementioned sentence. **After the holidays, please look for emails that will further detail the problems with the new regulations and what you should do about it.**

Last year, the Northeast NJ Beekeepers stepped up and a significant number of our members sent in their comments to the state. It will again be extremely important that each of you plan on sending in your objections to the newly proposed regulations during the public comment period, which ends on February 3rd. Additionally, you should also plan on again approaching your towns and asking them to formally oppose the new regulations.

We are close, and with **YOUR** help, I am sure we can get these latest changes incorporated the final regulations, so we can all just focus on peacefully keeping bees.

Mite Management: A Successful Beekeeper is a Successful Mite Manager

**by
John A. Gaut,
EAS Master Beekeeper**

Healthy colonies build worker populations quickly in the spring and produce large honey crops in the summer. Success in beekeeping (healthy colonies and honey production) depends on good mite management, an advanced beekeeping skill. Mite Management is more than just treating and hoping for the best.

Mite Management is:

- Understanding the biology of the varroa mite
- Understanding the population dynamics of the colony and mites
- Developing a Plan that includes testing and treatment
- Executing the Plan
- Assessing the Results and developing an improved plan, incorporating any new information

See the 2018 January-February NJBA State Newsletter for more extensive information about each of these components of Mite Management (pages 10 to 12).

http://www.njbeekeepers.org/Site_Docs/Newsletters/Volume32Issue1.pdf

I try to maintain less than 1 mite per 100 bees all year. I also plan to perform alcohol washes 6 times during the year on **all** my colonies. The timing of the alcohol washes is based the timing of the treatments (specifically verifying the treatment was effective) and monitoring for any mite buildup during the Summer. The first treatment is with ApiVar beginning in mid-January. Many beekeepers have found treating with ApiVar in winter is very cost effective; less ApiVar strips are needed (less frames of bees) and most of the mites are phoretic (on the bees and not in the brood). If the mite counts are low in April, the counts typically remain low for most of the summer. (The May alcohol wash verifies the low counts.)

But varroa mites are increasing; they are in the brood reproducing! Big strong hives produce large populations of mites!!! Treatment with MAQS in July kills most of the mites on the bees and in the brood. (I wait for a cool period to apply the MAQS.) Mite immigration is an issue in the fall so I apply ApiVar in September. The extended release of the miticide controls the

incoming mites thru mid-November. I rarely find high mite levels in November. If I do, I treat with Oxalic Acid Dribble. A colony with more than 3 mites per 100 bees in November will struggle all winter long, even if they are treated in November and/or December with Oxalic Acid or other treatment. The mites have already infected many of the winter bees with viruses and bacteria.

I perform alcohol washes on all my colonies. I have found colonies with high mite counts that I probably would have missed in spot checks. Often these are big strong colonies. In late summer and early fall, mite immigration from collapsing colonies and robbing is a chronic problem in this area. (The collapsing colonies could be feral swarms or colonies that do not benefit from good Mite Management.) A colony in my own yard could become my own mite bomb if not found by alcohol wash!

Below is my Mite Management Plan for 2019. Your plan may be different, using different treatments. The most important part of the plan is monitoring the mite levels in each colony and verifying the treatments were effective. If mite counts are not taken before and after the treatment, you will not know if the plan was successful until it is too late.

Mite Management Schedule

| Planned Date | Task |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Saturday, January 19, 2019 | Treat with ApiVar. Place strips on frames of brood. |
| Thursday, February 14, 2019 | Move ApiVar Strips After 4 weeks (if brood nest has moved) |
| Saturday, March 16, 2019 | Remove ApiVar Strips |
| Monday, April 01, 2019 | Alcohol Wash Mite Check |
| Monday, April 01, 2019 | Add Honey Supers |
| Wednesday, May 15, 2019 | Alcohol Wash Mite Check |
| Friday, July 05, 2019 | Alcohol Wash Mite Check |
| Friday, July 05, 2019 | Treat with MAQS |
| Friday, July 26, 2019 | Alcohol Wash Mite Check |
| Wednesday, September 18, 2019 | Remove Honey Supers |
| Wednesday, September 18, 2019 | Alcohol Wash Mite Check |
| Wednesday, September 18, 2019 | Treat with ApiVar. Place strips on frames of brood. |
| Wednesday, October 16, 2019 | Move ApiVar Strips After 4 weeks (if brood nest has moved) |
| Wednesday, November 13, 2019 | Remove ApiVar Strips |
| Wednesday, November 27, 2019 | Alcohol Wash Mite Check |
| Wednesday, November 27, 2019 | Treat with Oxalic Acid Dribble if needed |

Mite Management is much more than just treating the colony and hoping for the best. The successful beekeeper develops a solid understanding of varroa mite biology and the seasonal dynamics of the both the honey bee population and the mite population in the colony. Successful beekeepers anticipate the needs of the colony by planning to both test and treat during the year. Execution of the plan is adjusted based on the testing and any new information. Records of actual results can be used to improve the mite management plan.

Developing your Mite Management skills is one of the most important Beekeeping Skills. Good Mite Managers have strong colonies that survive the winter and are good honey producers the following season.

The Bee Informed Partnership, BIP had a recent blog post about varroa and varroosis.

<https://beeinformed.org/2018/09/26/the-signs-of-mite-damage-how-to-identify-progressed-varroosis/>



Need a Sweet Gift?

If you would like to make a gift of an annual membership for a friend or loved one, please contact Bob Jenkins at bobrita@usa.net. Bob can email you a certificate to be printed out and presented to the recipient.



BEEKEEPERS

**Give the Gift of an NNJ Membership:
The Buzz that Lasts for an Entire Year.**

Beekeeping Memories

Winter 2018 -- 2019

By

Karl Schoenknecht

Winter started early this year with an 8-inch snowstorm on November 15th. I had just completed merging my 2 hives on November 8th. Merging Hives was a first for me and I was hoping to spend more time in the hive after the merge settled in. I removed bad frames with distorted comb and reduced the weak hive to one deep 10-frame super (see photos). I merged the remaining weak hive frames with the super of bees and honey that I previously added to the strong hive to get the bees from each hive to accept each other.

After the snow I noticed my bees were flying on sunny days, landing on the snow and becoming immobile or flying quickly back into the hive or elsewhere. The cloudy, cool weather continued and the bees remained hive bound to conserve heat. On December 3rd the snow was gone, it was cloudy and 51 degrees, the sun came out briefly and my bees came out of the hive making an orientation flight. I was on my way to the dentist and when I returned the bees were back in the hive.

The next day I checked the tray under the screened bottom-board. I found some pollen, capping's wax debris, a few black beetles that were not seen before and no mites. I did not find any mites with the alcohol shake test (after the ApiVar treatment) in either hive before I merged them. There are a lot of dead bees in front of the hive since the snowmelt and I notice some new dead bees on the landing board nearly every day (see photos).

Today is December 15th and 45 degrees, the weather is colder, cloudy and damp but the sky brightened about noontime and 30 or more bees started flying out of the hive until the clouds darkened again. The hive is heavy and I hope my bees will last until spring.



11/2/2018



11/8/2018



12/3/2018



12/3/2018





Our Facebook Group has **over 1823 fans** from all over the world! It's a great place to connect to other beekeepers, so bee sure check out all the great bee pics, bee stories, and bee info.


Remember: <http://www.nnjbees.org> ***is your website!***

Check that site for everything Northeast New Jersey Beekeeping!

| ❖ Volunteers ❖ | |
|-------------------|--|
| Celia Miller | Refreshments – Cakes, cookies, brownies, tea, etc. |
| Jennifer Phillips | Refreshments – Cakes, cookies and other treats |
| Billy Neumann | Club photographer |
| Hugh Knowlton | Workshop/Event coordinator |
| Mike Miller | Club apparel |
| Bob Slanzi | Meadmaster |

NEXT MONTH

Late Winter Mite Control & Hive Management



The First Rule of Bee Club: Tell Everyone about Bee Club!