

Spilling the Honey

GBA Monthly Newsletter

Editors: Gina Gallucci and Linda Tillman

July 2014



Patriotic photo and honey by Gina Gallucci in honor of the 4th of July!

Presidents Message



Since I took office, I have been tooting the horn of Georgia Beekeepers Association and trying to make many understand why all Georgia beekeepers should be members. Well, now it's time to move up a notch or two. We need to support the American Beekeeping Federation. Why you ask....?

The American Beekeeping Federation continues to work for us in Washington, D.C. and around the country to further the legislative and regulatory related priorities important to the American beekeeper. ABF President Tim Tucker and Past President George Hansen have already made one legislative trip to Washington in conjunction with the Varroa Summit they recently attended.

The Legislative priorities of the ABF for 2014 include, but are not limited to:

- Funding for research into the many problems that negatively impact honey bee health.
- Maintaining USDA-ARS Lab Funding

- Protecting our honey market, including establishing a national standard for honey and stopping illegal imports of Chinese honey through intermediary countries.
- Pesticides
- Promoting and protecting the honey bee habitat
- Crop insurance, ELAP, and H2A labor programs
- Transportation issues



These issues have an impact on every beekeeper whether you are a hobbyist, sideliner or full time commercial mover and shaker of honey bees. I have spoken to a number of clubs about the ABF and the work that they are doing on our behalf and want everyone to know that those folks are just like you and me when it comes to caring for the honey bee. Our country and the government who runs it is so complex and with an issue like the “Plight of the Honey Bee” at hand, the bees need all the support they can get. You may not be the type to become an activist or want to join a committee, but by becoming a member of ABF you add to the ever growing number of people who are showing how much they really care and you help make our voices heard. Please give this your heartfelt consideration.

To Join ABF, simply go to info@abfnet.org or better yet, give Regina Robuck, the ABF Executive Director, a call at 404-760-2875 (in Atlanta) and tell her that Bear said to call!

Bear Kelley,
President, GBA

Child’s recipe from cookbook done by
kids in kindergarten and daycare:

Rabbit Cake

8 dinosaurs
1 lizard
1 bee

I imagine the bee is used to
"sweeten" the cake



New Beekeeper, Jeff Daniel's, first harvest - about to be that time again this year! photo by Linda Tillman

Promiscuous Queen Bees Have Better Colonies

by Gina Gallucci



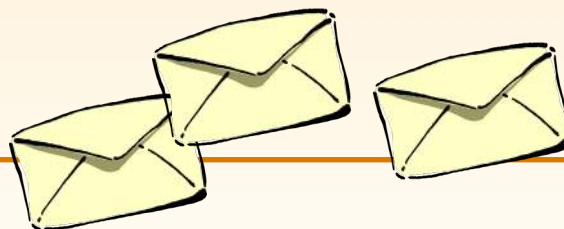
Dr. Heather Mattila came to speak at the Metro Atlanta Beekeepers Association in May. She is a researcher and Professor at Wellesley College in Boston. Dr. Matilla has been investigating the benefits of genetic diversity in Honey bees for years.

Honey bee queens have a behavior that is unusual for social insects. Queens of all bee species are highly promiscuous, meaning each queen mates with many males. The newest research shows that colonies filled with stepfamilies are healthier and more productive than colonies of full siblings.

"Colonies with high levels of genetic diversity have a greater likelihood of having more active foragers in their colonies, including dancers, recruiters, inspectors, and scouting foragers. So far, hygienic behavior has not been tested for diverse versus uniform colonies, but we do know that genetically diverse colonies are better at overcoming infection with AFB or chalkbrood than colonies that lack genetic diversity, and also better at keeping nest temperatures stable, which is critical for proper brood development."

"For Apis mellifera, extreme polyandry means that queens mate with an average of between 12-20 drones each, depending on the study. The record for A. mellifera is 49 mates for a single queen."

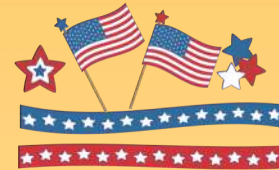
Jane Lu would like to know if anyone knows of any city or county restricting beekeeping in Georgia? Beekeepers Club of Gwinnett County is preparing a letter to the Gwinnett Director of Planning and Development so he can send it to the Board of Commissioners. In February, they restricted beekeeping to only RA-200 properties. The Director wants to know if other counties restrict beekeeping. If you have the answer to this, [contact Jane](#)



Ask Ten Beekeepers A Question.....

How Do I know When to Harvest?

Christine Fahrnbauer,
Cherokee Beekeepers



With the exception of last year, when my bees did not seem to cap much of their honey due to all the rain and humidity, I usually wait until 80-100% of the honey super is completely capped. If there are any uncapped cells I turn it upside down over the hive and tap it to make sure the honey is thick and doesn't run out.

I ended up learning a valuable lesson last year when I harvested uncapped honey (using the tapping method~ but in most cases only 20 percent of the honey was capped), only to discover it started to ferment, which is another whole article..... :) So a word of caution...If your honey is more uncapped than not, invest or borrow a refractometer that measures the moisture content of your honey, and make sure it is less than 18% before you harvest.






Bob Binnie,
NE Ga Mountain Beekeepers, Macon County Beekeepers in Franklin, NC

I harvest when the bees quit making white wax. I don't wait until it's 100% capped; I just wait until the bees quit bringing nectar in. If we leave the doors open at the honey house and no bees come in that means the nectar flow is still going; if bees come in, the nectar flow is over.

I harvest when the honey is over half capped and the honey flow is over. I put it in a warm dry room to continue drying the honey out. I leave it completely uncovered and keep the room below 50% humidity. I use a gauge to make sure it is below 50%. Anything over 60% will actually make the honey wetter. This year the sourwood has just started to bloom so I am not harvesting yet in the mountains.

Queen Markings by Bear Kelley,

Now that summer is upon us and we are making splits, getting nucs, packages and generally expanding our apiaries, marking of this year's queen should be a concern for you. This year's color for the queen marking is **Green**. The table below will help you through the years with queen marking.

- White.  year ending in 1 or 6
- Yellow.  year ending in 2 or 7
- Red. year ending in 3 or 8
- Green. year ending in 4 or 9
- Blue. year ending in 5 or 0

Marking her highness is essential in tracking her age. If you find an unmarked queen in your hive which had a marked queen, then the original queen has swarmed and they have replaced her. Most of the bee suppliers offer marking pens at reasonable rates.

Stings

Sylvia Plath

Bare-handed, I hand the combs.
The man in white smiles, bare-handed,
Our cheesecloth gauntlets neat and sweet,
The throats of our wrists brave lilies.
He and I

Have a thousand clean cells between us,
Eight combs of yellow cups,
And the hive itself a teacup,
White with pink flowers on it,
With excessive love I enamelled it

Thinking 'Sweetness, sweetness.'
Brood cells gray as the fossils of shells
Terrify me, they seem so old.
What am I buying, wormy mahogany?
Is there any queen at all in it?

If there is, she is old,
Her wings torn shawls, her long body
Rubbed of its plush—
Poor and bare and unqueenly and even
shameful.
I stand in a column

Of winged, unmiraculous women,
Honey-drudgers.
I am no drudge
Though for years I have eaten dust
And dried plates with my dense hair.

And seen my strangeness evaporate,
Blue dew from dangerous skin.
Will they hate me,
These women who only scurry,
Whose news is the open cherry, the open
clover?

It is almost over.
I am in control.
Here is my honey-machine,
It will work without thinking,
Opening, in spring, like an industrious
virgin

To scour the creaming crests
As the moon, for its ivory powders, scours
the sea.
A third person is watching.
He has nothing to do with the bee-seller or
with me.
Now he is gone

In eight great bounds, a great scapegoat
Here is his slipper, here is another,
And here the square of white linen
He wore instead of a hat.
He was sweet,

The sweat of his efforts a rain
Tugging the world to fruit.
The bees found him out,
Molding^o onto his lips like lies,
Complicating his features.

They thought death was worth it, but I
Have a self to recover, a queen.
Is she dead, is she sleeping?
Where has she been,
With her lion-red body, her wings of glass?

Now she is flying
More terrible than she ever was, red
Scar in the sky, red comet
Over the engine that killed her—
The mausoleum, the wax house.

6 October 1962
Plath, Sylvia. Collected Poems. New
York: HarperPerennial, 1992, pp. 214-5.

Editor's note: Sylvia Plath, noted poet and author, became a beekeeper in 1962. She wrote a number of bee poems as a result of her experiences. You can read about Sylvia Plath and [her relationship with bees here](#).

Bright Cheery Summer Salad

~~~~~  
*1 pint grape tomatoes*  
*1 ripe avocado*  
*2 ears fresh sweet corn*  
*2 tbsp. fresh cilantro, chopped*

*Honey Lime Dressing:*  
*3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil*  
*1 tbsp. local honey*  
*Juice of one lime*  
*1 clove fresh garlic minced*  
*Sea Salt & fresh cracked black pepper to taste*  
*pinch of cayenne pepper to taste*



*Remove husks from corn and grill over medium heat for 10 minutes. The corn should have some brown spots and be tender but not mushy. Cut the corn off the cob and then scrape the cob with the back of your knife to get all the juices. Set aside & let cool. Slice tomatoes in half. Dice the avocado and chop the cilantro. Add all dressing ingredients in small bowl, whisk and set aside. Combine all other ingredients and gently toss with dressing until evenly coated. Be careful not to mash avocados. Let stand 10- 15 minutes to let flavors mingle.*

~~~~~

Dear Aunt Bee,

I live in an intown neighborhood of Atlanta with at least five beekeepers living within one block of my house in every direction. The house next door to me is for sale and has been empty and unoccupied for most of the last year.

Today as I looked out of my window toward that house, I could see bees flying in and out of an entry just barely above the dryer vent on the second floor. Since the house has a basement and a first floor, this is pretty high up. It's clear that they have occupied the area inside the wall by the dryer.

When the house is finally sold, I feel scared that the new owners will look in my backyard, see my beehives and expect me to do something about the unwanted occupants. Any suggestions?

Thanks for any ideas you have short of running for the border,

Shaking in My Boots

Dear Shaking,

Assume the dual role of "good neighbor" and "honeybee expert."

Save the day by reaching out to the realtor now, pointing out that it was probably an oversight but might be a liability the current owner will want to remedy as soon as possible, prior to sale.

If the second floor site is too high for you to offer your removal services, canvas your vast beekeeper network and offer a few names to the realtor.

With the colony removed and repairs already performed, there are no surprises for the new owners and the Welcome Basket you give them can include a treat made with honey or a jar of honey from your beehives.

Your Aunt Bee



Contribution by Linda Tillman with help from Curt Barrett, Gina Gallucci and Julia Mahood

Bee Stings and EpiPens

By Ricky Moore



I am not a doctor, nor have I ever played one on TV (smile). I am not offering legal advice or medical advice, I am simply offering my opinion in hopes that it stirs your creative juices and stimulates thought about another little discussed beekeeping fact.

How many times have you been talking with someone about bees or honey and they blurted out "I'm allergic to bees!" Really? Are you, how do you know, have you been tested? Isn't it more probable that the person just doesn't like the pain of being stung? (There was a pun there on bee but I let it slide.) But seriously, a percentage of the populace IS allergic to bee stings to the point where it closes off their airway causing breathing difficulty and could result in death. Hopefully you and your family are not among the ranks of the bee sting allergic, but what about the neighbor who has no idea he is, gets stung and starts to swell up and experiences difficulty breathing? What do you do? Call 9-1-1 of course, but how long does it take emergency help to arrive to your location be it at home or worse, off in the woods at the bee field? If that neighbor is allergic and knows it, he will probably have an EpiPen.

Now this is where my opinion really kicks in and I offer these questions for you to answer to your satisfaction. What are your legal and medical responsibilities to someone who gets stung by your bees?

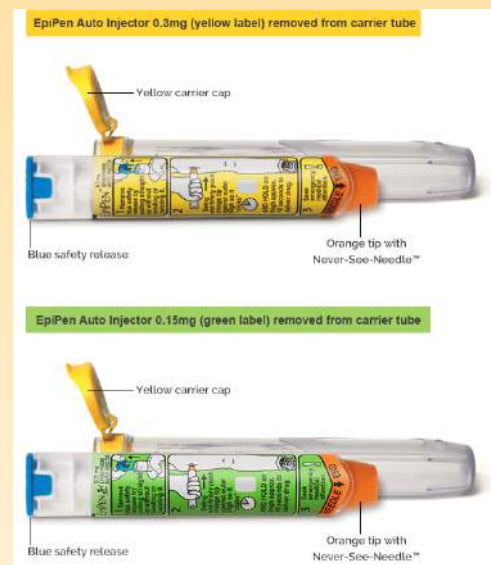
As a beekeeper you already know several bee sting remedies, right? After removing the stinger, apply ice, or toothpaste, or vinegar, or baking soda, or meat tenderizer, or calamine lotion or a host of other home remedies. Right? A quick search of Google will give you many, many more.

But do you know the signs of an allergic reaction?

- Difficulty breathing
- Hives that appear as a red, itchy rash and spread to areas beyond the sting
- Swelling of the face, throat or mouth tissue
- Wheezing or difficulty swallowing
- Restlessness and [anxiety](#)
- Rapid pulse
- [Dizziness](#) or a sharp drop in blood pressure
- If the symptoms are present, seek emergency medical attention. Take an antihistamine as soon as

possible and be ready to use the [epinephrine](#) part of an emergency allergy kit.

Epinephrine in the form of an EpiPen requires a doctor's prescription and without insurance they can be expensive. Here in Middle Georgia I sought the cash price for a two pack of EpiPens from a local drugstore and a national chain. Both sold the two pack for around \$350 cash. Your insurance may cover it and hopefully at a substantial discount. There are patient advocacy organizations which can assist you getting them for much, much less if you meet the income requirements. If you qualify, you probably already know the organizations to which I refer.



So, my question to you is, should you have an EpiPen available for the remote possibility that someone may need it? And if so, do you know when to and how to, and could you/would you use it properly?

I believe having an EpiPen is an important addition to your beekeeping first aid kit. I urge you to consider it, then speak to your doctor and lawyer to satisfy yourself about the medical and legal ramifications.

Our Survey for July

Our June survey asked if you participated in beekeeping as a child or teenager.

- Seventy percent of you who answered had no beekeeping experience in childhood
- Thirty percent of those who answered came from beekeeping families
- Six percent of those who answered either were occasionally around someone who kept bees or were exposed through 4-H

This month we are interested in how you label your honey jars! (Surprising since harvest is just now starting in the state.)

If you'd like to share with your fellow beekeepers how you go about labeling your honey, [click HERE](#).



Photo of bee hives in Ricky Moore's zinnias



You may notice that once again we are not featuring a club of the month. We have chased after several clubs over the last few months without getting a response. If you would like to feature your own bee club, please let us know. Send us an article about your club and we'd love to publish it.

If you are not a member of GBA, but would like to join, [click here to register for membership](#). We'd love to have you. Thanks for reading our newsletter. Dues: \$15/year

Street Cred

- Steve Page sent this link for Hidden Patterns: [How a Bee Sees the World of Flowers](#)
- Michael Hood sent [this link to some beautiful bee photos](#) from around the world.
- Rick Butler sent [this link to an unusual piece of music](#) that you may recognize as bee-related
- Ricky Moore sent us [this link to posters about plants for bees](#)
- Sam Alston sent [this link about the White House and bees](#)

To hear a wonderful podcast about colonial beekeeping from Williamsburg, [click here](#).

We love all of these submissions - keep it coming to help all of us explore the Internet resources about bees.

Susannah Austin, the 2014 American Honey Queen

She will be a guest speaker at the Georgia Beekeepers Association fall membership meeting in Milledgeville, GA.



Susannah is the 20-year-old daughter of Kris and Catherine Austin of Orlando, FL. She is a junior at the University of Central Florida, pursuing a degree in biology, with hopes of becoming a veterinarian. Susannah's family began beekeeping through a 4-H project over 10 years ago.

As the 2014 American Honey Queen, Susannah serves as a national spokesperson on behalf of the American Beekeeping Federation, a trade organization representing beekeepers and honey producers throughout the United States. The Honey Queen and Princess speak and promote in venues nationwide, and, as such, Queen Susannah will travel throughout the United States during her year-long reign. Prior to being selected as the American Honey Queen, Susannah served as the 2013 Florida Honey Queen. In this role, she promoted the honey industry at fairs, festivals, and farmers' markets, via television and radio interviews, and in schools.

The beekeeping industry touches the lives of every individual in our country. In fact, honeybees are responsible for nearly one-third of our entire diet, in regards to the pollination services that they provide for a large majority of fruits, vegetables, nuts and legumes. This amounts to nearly \$19 billion per year of direct value from honeybee pollination to United States agriculture.

For more information on Queen Susannah's Georgia visit and to schedule an interview, contact Clay "Bear" Kelley at 229.322.5025.



Passage from Tammy Horn's BEES IN AMERICA

Named in honor King George III, a new English colony was established in 1733 by Perceval, Oglethorpe, and Associates. Georgia has a twofold purpose, according to historian William Sachs: "The colony was to serve as an armed buffer zone against the Spanish in Florida and as a place where debtors could be given a fresh start." By the time the Moravians moved to Savannah, they found that bee trees were already there. By 1770, honey bees had spread to Natchez, Mississippi. According to historian Everett Oertel, wild honey bees were already established in Alabama by 1773."



Where's the Bear????

Photo sent in by Ricky Moore - any idea how he got this image?

Our newsletter is available to read online at
<http://www.spillingthehoney.blogspot.com/> Please share it with those
 without an email or not on our email list.

Upcoming Events

Tara Beekeepers Association is having its annual short course **September 6, 2014**. Cost is \$65 per person, and there is a family rate. The course will be held at the Kiwanis Building in Forest Park. If you would like to attend or know someone who would like to attend [please check our website](#) or give us a shout!

GBA Fall Meeting Sept 19 -20 at the Hampton Inn in Milledgeville, GA. To register for the fall meeting, [click here](#). Rooms are reserved with a discount at the Hampton and Comfort Suites. See the [GBA website](#) for more information.

Hahira Honeybee Festival, September 29 - October 4 in downtown Hahira. For more information, visit [the website](#)

Palm Beach County Beekeepers Association is hosting the Florida State Beekeepers Association Conference in West Palm Beach, Florida at the Embassy Suites. Dates: **Oct. 2, 3, 4, 2014**. [Updated information here](#).



The Final Buzz

We wish ya'll a very Happy Fourth of July and Happy Birthday to the beautiful USA!

Thank you to all of you who sent us a link, a recipe or their responses to our "Ask 10 Beekeepers a Question..." We would love to continue to develop sharing beekeeping knowledge across the state of Georgia.

We are looking for whatever your contribution is and we are especially happy to get your photos. Please send us what you thoughts and suggestions and all your clubs' upcoming events.



Linda & Gina
gbanewsletters@gmail.com

HOTELS FOR SEPTEMBER 18-20 MEETING

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hampton and Comfort Suites. Rooms are guaranteed 30 days prior to the meeting. Reservations made after August 18 will be based on availability. All GBA sponsored activities will be held at Central GA Technical College.

Hampton Inn
 2461 N. Columbia Street
 Milledgeville, GA 31061
[478-451-0050](tel:478-451-0050)
 \$89 + tax /night includes breakfast

Other area hotels:

Fairfield Inn
 2631- A N. Columbia Street
 Milledgeville, GA 31061
[855-297-1428](tel:855-297-1428)

Days Inn
 2551 N Columbia Street
 Milledgeville, GA 31061
[478-453-8471](tel:478-453-8471)

Comfort Suites
 2621 N Columbia St
 Milledgeville, GA 31061
 478-453-2212

Submission Guidelines:

*Keep your articles to about 500 words and send them **as an attached Word document**. Don't do anything funny to the margins - just makes it difficult for us.*

*Send photos as **attachments to the email**. If they are in the body of the article, we can't use them. Please tell us who took the photo, where and when. Use this email address:
gbanewsletters@gmail.com*