



# Meck Bees

Mecklenburg Beekeepers Association  
Meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7 pm  
2219 Tyvola Road  
Marion Diehl Park and Rec Building  
Mailing address: 121 Hermitage Rd Charlotte NC 28207  
704-358-8075  
Visit our website at  
[www.meckbees.org](http://www.meckbees.org)

January



*President -*  
Wayne Hansen

*Vice President -*  
Greg Clements

*Treasurer -*  
Libby Mack

*Chaplain -*  
Jimmy Odom



**This Month's Meeting/Program Jan 21**

**Our own Frank Clements will come and speak about the process of using the trap out methods to remove bees from structures. This is a rare technique to remove honey bees from inside walls and roofs. Come and learn about another aspect of the bees and beekeeping.**



**This months refreshments are provided by Jimmy Odom**

It is that time of year where the weather can bring lots of snow and ice. If for some reason the weather is so bad that we need to cancel or change the meeting time please check our club web site to get updates. The website can be updated to show the latest Park and Rec center closing that will effect our meeting times and places. Stay warm, keep the bees well feed, and check the website for inclement weather updates.



## Updates and Information

### *Beekeepers Yearly Management Calendar for January*

Feed pollen substitute 1 to 1 1/2 pounds per hive - three parts soybean meal, one part dried brewers yeast and one part powdered milk.

#### *Speakers for 2010*

**Jan 10-Frank Clements**  
**Trap outs**

**Feb 2010 Carol Buie Jackson**  
**Wildlife Habitats**

**March 2010—Jeff Drone**  
**Wing Haven**

**April 2010 –Rick Boon**  
**Stop the Sting**

#### **Ethiopia: Parliament Passes Honey Bee Bill**

Minassie Teshome  
14 December 2009

Parliament passed a bill Thursday, December 10, 2009, prohibiting the export of live honey bees except by those who have specifically been licensed and the importation of live bee species and used beekeeping and processing equipment.

"There is a need to regulate the practice of apiculture development in Ethiopia in order to protect indigenous honeybee species and protect them from communicable diseases and the effects of imported toxic materials," Gezahegn Tadesse, livestock extension expert at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD) told Fortune.

According to Gezahegn indigenous.



#### **Can Honey Bees Save The State Budget? Tax Exemptions Eyed**

Faced with a \$2.6 billion operating budget deficit, Gov. Chris Gregoire says just about everything is being considered. On Monday Gregoire was to meet with the Department of Revenue to review the dozens of tax exemptions the state offers businesses. The list makes for good reading.

Last year, for example, lawmakers adopted a series of tax breaks for bee keepers. Yes, bee keepers. They get business and occupation levy reductions on things like pollination services. And they get a sales tax break on the sale of bees themselves.

Boeing, the state's largest private employer, enjoys a series of tax breaks aimed at the aerospace industry - from reduced B&O taxes to a sales tax exemption for computer hardware and software. As of last summer the newspaper industry got a 40 percent cut in the B&O tax - the state's main business tax.

Almost all of these business tax breaks are scheduled to expire at some point in the future. Gregoire says considering the dire budget situation they should all be re-examined. Eliminating the tax breaks won't get the state close to \$2.6 billion, but every little bit helps.

However actually killing these things would be politically difficult, to say the least. Believe it or not axing the bee tax bonanza would be hard enough. And the bees' sting isn't as sharp as Boeing's.

## Australian Bees 'Mummify' Their Beetle Enemy Alive

By Matt Walker

Editor, Earth News



*The stingless bee takes a 'Pharaoh' approach. Once alive, now mummified*

A species of bee in Australia has found a gruesome way to deal with a parasitic interloper that can damage its hives. The stingless bee 'mummifies' any hive beetle that tries to enter its domain - wrapping the live parasite in resin, wax and mud until it can move no more. The mummified beetles eventually starve and shrivel on the spot, researchers report in the journal *Naturwissenschaften*. The strategy is so successful that it halts a beetle invasion within minutes. Entomologist Mark Greco made the discovery while investigating the behaviour of a species of Australian stingless bee.

Australia has around 2,000 bee species of which just 10 are stingless. These stingless bees are important pollinators of crops in the country, and some have a lifecycle very similar to that of honeybees, with a queen and her colony producing one to two kilograms of uniquely flavoured honey each year. Not a lot is known about the parasites or pathogens of Australian stingless bees. However, "occasionally one finds native beetles or other insects embedded in the wax structures of the nest while splitting or managing the hives," says Dr Greco, who is studying for a PhD at the University of Western Sydney, Australia and the

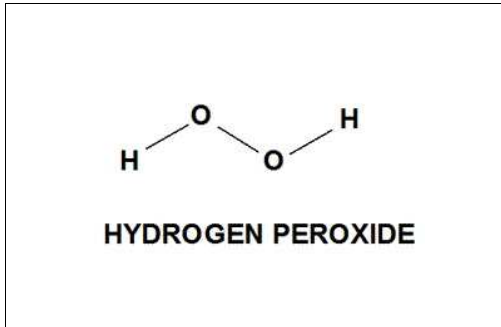
He and a team of colleagues, including honeybee expert Dr Peter Nuemann, investigated the response of the stingless bee (*Trigona carbonaria*) to adult small hive beetles (*Aethina tumida*). Using an innovative imaging technique, which involves taking pictures of the bee colony using a CT scanner, they could observe the insects' interactions, both at the hive entrance and also within the hive. Whenever a small hive beetle enters, it is set upon by worker bees that wrestle it and bite at its legs. The beetles respond by adopting what the scientists call a "turtle posture", tucking in their heads and legs. This gives the bees an opportunity to mummify their enemy, which they do by coating the invasive parasites in resin, wax and mud. "The beetles remain in position and eventually starve and shrivel on the spot," Mr Greco told BBC Earth News.

The small hive beetle is a newcomer to Australia, thought to have been imported into the country during the 2000 Olympics. Originally from Africa, it can devastate healthy honey bee colonies, and decimate struggling stingless bee colonies that become stressed by excessive heat. But it does not appear to be major threat to healthy stingless bee colonies, perhaps due to the bees' defensive strategy. The mummification process is so effective that once the bees go into action "it takes only 10 minutes for all beetle advancements to cease," says Mr Greco. "It prevents the beetles from feeding and reproducing, thus saving the colony."

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# The Hydrogen Peroxide Producing Capacity of Honey

Honey's ability to produce hydrogen peroxide is one of the main reasons for its antibacterial activity, making it ideal for treating



[PR Log \(Press Release\)](#) – Apr 29, 2009 – Hydrogen peroxide can kill bacteria on contact and has been widely used for that purpose. However, straight hydrogen peroxide is unstable and rapidly loses its effectiveness when exposed to air or light. Hydrogen peroxide in high concentrations can also damaged skin tissue. Therefore, the use of pure hydrogen peroxide has lost its popularity among doctors and other medical professionals.

What most people don't know is that honey has the necessary components to produce small amounts of hydrogen peroxide in a slow-release manner. This makes honey an ideal substance to use in the treatment of infected wounds and other bacterial disorders.

The slow-release mechanism in honey that produces hydrogen peroxide is a chemical reaction. Honey contains glucose and an enzyme added by honeybees called glucose oxidase. Under the right conditions, glucose oxidase has the ability to break down glucose into hydrogen peroxide.

Honey itself does not have the right conditions for this reaction to occur. To become active and begin breaking down the glucose in honey, the glucose oxidase requires a pH of 5.5 to 8.0. The pH of undiluted honey is between 3.2 and 4.5 which is far too low to activate the enzyme. Another condition is also required before the glucose oxidase becomes active. For the enzyme to break glucose down into hydrogen peroxide, a certain amount of sodium must be present.

Honey alone does not contain enough sodium to make this happen. However, skin and body fluids have relatively high pH and sodium levels. When honey comes in contact with skin or an open wound, the high pH and sodium levels activate the glucose oxidase and it begins to break down the glucose, releasing hydrogen peroxide.

"It would take a pharmaceutical company many years and billions of dollars to develop an antimicrobial product that could even come close to being as effective in treating wounds as honey," says Frank Buonanotte, CEO of Honeymark International which is a manufacturer of skin care products that contains Manuka Honey as a natural healing agent. "Even then, it is doubtful that they could create a product that is equally as effective in treating infection as honey."

Manuka Honey from New Zealand is now being used for medical purposes because it seems to contain the most amount of healing properties than any other type of honey. Manuka Honey has even been found to be effective in treating conditions such as MRSA Staph infections, where antibiotics have failed. Buonanotte says that in addition to Manuka Honey's ability to naturally produce low levels of hydrogen peroxide, it also contains unique floral nectar components that are not found in other types of honey.

Many people have lost sight of the fact that honey was used for medicinal purposes many years before modern-day medicine was invented. It is believed that honey will soon make a comeback in the medical industry as antibiotics and traditional forms of medicine become less effective against more resilient mutated bacterial strains. Unlike many pharmaceuticals, honey has been found to have no negative side effects when used for medical purposes. Medical-grade honey can also be used in addition to prescribed medication without causing any conflict.

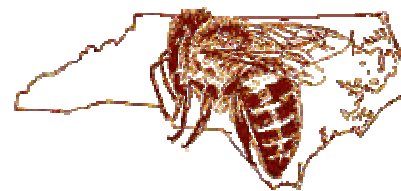
For more information or to purchase Manuka Honey products, call 1-866-427-7329 or visit <http://www.HoneymarkProducts.com>.

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## Born and Bred in NC

### Program description



The NC State Apiculture Program is pleased to announce a new state-wide training initiative. We have recently secured a grant through the [Golden LEAF Foundation](#) to hold numerous *workshops on queen rearing and clinics on bee breeding*.

Most beekeepers acquire new stock by purchasing newly mated queen bees from large commercial queen producers, mostly located in the Southeast (GA and FL) or the west coast (CA), and then introducing them to their hives. This large-scale, national queen production strategy has several inherent problems, most notably an unreliable supply of queens, difficulties in obtaining queens when they're needed, and a lack of local genetic adaptation. We believe that local, small-scale queen producers located across NC is a viable alternative model for obtaining queens, which will enable individual beekeepers to control the genetic destiny in their own hives. In doing so, we hope to elicit every beekeeper in North Carolina to implement their own queen-rearing program if they so choose.

We will hold numerous **queen-rearing workshops during the spring of 2010** in various locations all across the state. The purpose of the workshops will be to educate a large number of beekeepers in basic queen-rearing techniques (e.g., creating cell-builder colonies, grafting, establishing mating nucleus hives, etc...). Each workshop will be open to all beekeepers and the general public, capped at a maximum enrollment (roughly 50 participants, depending on the venue) on a first-come first-serve basis (concurrent sessions will be considered if demand warrants). In doing so, we will conduct separate workshops in each of the major geographic areas across the state to take advantage of the appropriate seasonality: roughly March for Eastern NC, April for Central NC, and May for Western NC. At each event, we will conduct hands-on training exercises that participants can implement immediately, and we will incorporate evaluations and surveys to collect information on each participant for subsequent follow up. *These trainings are geared towards all beekeepers at all levels* and aimed at helping to provide the tools and know-how in raising your own queens.

Once we establish an interested group of beekeepers specifically educated in basic queen-rearing protocols, we will then solicit participants for **advanced bee-breeding clinics in the fall of 2010**. Bee breeding is above and beyond basic queen rearing, since it involves a thorough understanding of genetics, selection, specialized techniques (such as instrumental insemination), data collection, and constant monitoring. We will conduct these trainings in the fall, again in each of the three areas identified above to enable us to concentrate on the unique aspects of the local climate. Unlike the queen-rearing workshops, we will select only those participants who have attended prior training on queen rearing and we will carefully vet the applicants to ensure that the participants are willing and capable of conducting a comprehensive breeding program. We will cap each short course at approximately 15 participants, and we will instruct each participant in basic pedigrees, genetic crosses, selection criteria, trait quantification, prevention of inbreeding, instrumental insemination techniques, and stock analysis. *These trainings are geared towards experienced beekeepers* with an expressed interest in not only queen rearing but stock selection and queen production.

We are currently coordinating the logistics of these workshops and clinics, and we will announce the dates and locations as they become available. As more details emerge, we will post them on our web site at: <http://entomology.ncsu.edu/apiculture/BornAndBred.html>

If you are interested in participating in any of these exciting opportunities, please fill out the [contact information form](#) and send it in to the NC Apiculture Program. We will contact you as offerings become available. Of course, information will be strictly confidential and used only for direct mailings and not further disseminated. We are very pleased to be given this opportunity to offer trainings in queen rearing and bee breeding, and we look forward to working with the beekeepers in North Carolina on this initiative.

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December 18, 2009, 5:20 pm

## City Moves to Lift Ban on Beekeeping

By [SEWELL CHAN](#)



Jessica Ebelhar for

The city's Board of Health on Thursday proposed lifting a ban on beekeeping, partly in response to the rising [popularity of urban bee colonies](#) and the efforts a group called [Just Food](#) that has sought to promote beekeeping as part of a sustainable-agriculture program.

The [proposed revisions](#) [pdf] to the city's health code come after a city councilman, David Yassky of Brooklyn, introduced a bill this year that would legalize beekeeping. The change has the support of environmental groups like the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#).

According to the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the city's health code historically listed bees as prohibited animals "because of their ability to sting people."

The department said in a statement: "After the Board of Health received a petition from a group wanting to promote honey-bee keeping as sustainable agriculture, the Health Department looked into urban beekeeping and found that responsible urban beekeeping does not pose a public health issue."

The public has until Feb. 3 to submit comments on the proposed rule change, which the Board of Health would then vote on in March

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This gets to be the Christmas edition since it was written on Christmas Day. I think my bees are all tucked away safe in their hives, and I think they have enough food to get them through the next month until the weather surprises us one day and it will be warm enough to check on them. In the meantime, I'm happy I don't have dogs or cats or cows or chickens that require almost daily maintenance. But I do enjoy petting the neighbors dogs when I see them out walking.

The December Potluck was fantastic. One person complained the plates were too small, and while that might have been true, my plate was still too full. I wish I'd asked which dishes contained honey since cooking with honey for a beekeeper meeting is always worth a little extra recognition. Boyd Falls spoke for a few minutes about rain barrels. Those are fantastic for collecting a little bit of rainwater to use in gardening or for azaleas or wetting the mulch pile or mixing some cement.

There was some extra recognition for Richard Flanagan at the potluck also. After many years of service as a club officer, Richard has stepped back from an elected position. He has been the club Vice-President as long as I've been a beekeeper, and he was the club president for a while before that. He's still going to be sending the email newflashes and distributing the newsletter. His award was very nicely framed.

Another award was presented at the December meeting. The vulcanization of rubber was discovered by accident, and I feel fairly certain that "the jimmy" was too. It's revolutionary impact on beekeeping will likely be felt by many Mecklenburg County Bee Schools to come. In honor of that achievement, a new club award was created this year called "the golden jimmy." Jimmy Odom was the proud, deserving first recipient. I can't wait to hear the story retold at some future beekeeping function.

Elections were held at the December meeting. Carl Albrecht did a fantastic job of getting that done. Although the club has four elected officers, there are quite a few people who do other extremely important functions.

-- Richard and Carolyn Flanagan - newsletter  
-- Carl Albrecht - coordinating monthly meeting refreshments  
-- Lecia Pearce - mentor program for bee school 2010  
-- John Byers - printed newsletter distribution (our preferred distribution method is email, and the newsletters are also available on our website)

This month, I'd like to highlight some of the best ways I've found to learn more about bees and beekeeping. All of these are optional, but as beekeepers, we understand that the honeybee is an extremely efficient creature, and some of these options can improve our efficiency as beekeepers as well.

1. Do bee activities with other beekeepers. Tops among this is when extracting time comes. It's way more fun and efficient for two or three or more beekeepers to extract honey all together rather than one at a time. The equipment only has to be cleaned once. But checking hives in the spring, summer, and fall together with other beekeepers is also helpful, especially if one only has one hive. One way to find beekeepers close to you is to volunteer to be a Bee School mentor. Another way is to look at the club membership roster and see who else is in the same ZIP code (not all members keep bees though).

2. Attend a local bee club meeting. The Mecklenburg Club gets some surprisingly good speakers who may have only a passing interest in bees, but who seem to always have something to talk about that either impacts the bee, or the bee impacts, or involves nature in some way. I am very happy that the Mecklenburg club had 6 of 11 speakers in 2009 who are also Mecklenburg club members. We might not quite make that number this coming year, but even though all the speakers are good, I really enjoy hearing club members the most.

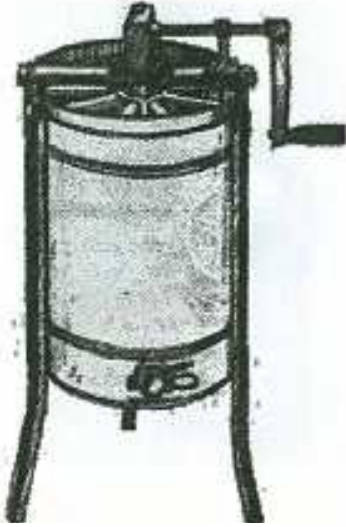
3. Subscribe to and read either (or both) the American Bee Journal (ABJ) and/or Bee Culture (BC). Again, some efficiency can be gained by having a beekeeping buddy who subscribes to one while you subscribe to the other, then trade issues once a month. I will admit that it's even more efficient to find another beekeeper who subscribes to one or the other who is willing to give you their issues after they've read them. Bee journals don't get any cheaper than that.

4. Join the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association (NCSBA). Some benefits are:  
-- a free calendar every year  
-- a quarterly newsletter (now available electronically)  
-- discounts on subscriptions to the ABJ or BC (these are available through the local club as well)  
-- opportunity to attend the Spring and Summer meetings of the NCSBA. I haven't made it to a summer meeting yet, but the Spring meeting is already on my schedule.  
-- the Yellow book - an annual publication of North Carolina beekeepers and contact information for bees and queen bees in North Carolina

5. Internet resources. Bee Culture is now available online as well, and between YouTube and Bee-L and a few other places, there is way more than enough to read on the internet. This is the one resource I've not really tapped, so I'm not nearly as helpful on this one. But people are always telling me to check out this or that on the internet somewhere.

Have a great bee year and I'll see you around the bee yard! Wayne

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# It's Harvest Time!

We have the following equipment available for extracting honey:

- Extractor (manual)
- Uncapping tank (use your own excluder)
- Bucket with valve
- Electric uncapping knife

**The charge is \$2 per day to borrow the extractor.**

You will want to use your own filters and food-grade plastic buckets.

To obtain the equipment:

- Call Jimmy Odom to arrange a time to pick it up.  
Phone: (704) 408-2726  
Address: 17026 McKee Rd Charlotte NC 28278
- When you pick up the equipment, take an envelope and card to mail in your payment
- Return the equipment **promptly, clean and dry**
- Mail your payment in the envelope provided

With the growth of the club, there is heavy demand for the extractor in the summer months. There will be a waiting list, so be prepared for a short wait, and when you get the equipment, please return it promptly so the next person on the list can get it. Please don't pass it on to someone else who isn't on the list. Thanks!

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## DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES DUES

Yes it's that time of year, time to renew your membership in our county association, and if you're not yet a member of the North Carolina State Association, consider joining up there too. Both organizations deliver great value for your membership dollars, so support your beekeeping associations.

Mail this form and your check made out to Mecklenburg County Beekeepers to  
**Mecklenburg County Beekeepers**

121 Hermitage Rd

Charlotte NC 28207

You can also get discounts of 20-25% on Bee Culture and American Bee Journal.

See Libby for a coupon or to pay directly for the subscription.

Mecklenburg County Beekeepers Association

Please Print Clearly

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send newsletter via \_\_\_\_\_ email (thanks!) \_\_\_\_\_ paper

Number of hives: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Year 2010

Bee School \$30 \_\_\_\_\_ I am registering for Bee School

Includes 1 year membership in County Association

I heard about the bee school from \_\_\_\_\_

County Association \$5 I am a \_\_\_\_\_ New Member

\_\_\_\_\_ Renewing Member

State Association \$15 I am a \_\_\_\_\_ New Member

\_\_\_\_\_ Renewing Member

**Total Payment**

