



**NOVEMBER 2013**  
**NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMANCE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS**

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The 2014 session of [Alamance County's Beginning Beekeeping Class](#) is the 23<sup>rd</sup> consecutively offered!

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*Alamance County Beekeepers*

## **November meeting:**

Our next meeting is November 21<sup>st</sup> at the Ag Extension Bldg, 7:00 pm. Three of our first year beekeepers, including Mary McGinty and Steve Cole, will be sharing their (mis)adventures in setting up and maintaining their hives.

## **NC State Fair 2013**

The Alamance County Beekeepers exhibited at this year's State Fair. We were able to put some items together at the last minute to have an exhibit of which we could be proud. We learned from this experience and should bring home some ribbons next year! Randy Stinson has agreed to coordinate next year's exhibit with the help of this year's crew. Thanks to Paul Jollay, Toni Murray, Sophia Dill, Geoff Leister, Don Moore and Ira Poston for helping put together this year's display.



## Honey Gathering

In the good old days, the housewife was not only responsible for making the cake, but she had to take the honey from the hive as well. Here, then, is "Method of Taking Honey From Bee Hives Without Killing the Bees," from McCall's *Home Cook Book and General Guide*, compiled by Mrs. Jennie Harlan (New York: The McCall Company, 1890):

"Pour two teaspoonsful of chloroform into a piece of rag, double it twice, and place it on the floor-board of the hive, which must be lifted for the purpose, the entrance-hole being carefully secured. In about two minutes and a half there will be a loud humming which will soon cease. Let the hive remain in this state for six or seven minutes, making about ten minutes in all. Remove the hive and the greater number of bees will be found lying senseless on the board; there will still be a few clinging to the combs, some of which may be brushed out with a feather. They return to animation in from half an hour to one hour after the operation. This plan possesses a great superiority over the usual mode of brimstoning, the bees being preserved alive; and over the more modern plan of fumigation by puff-ball; it is far less trouble, and the honey does not become tainted with the fumes.

Source: Mom's Best Deserts Andrea Chesman & Fran Raboff

## Sore Throat Soother

Mug-full of Boiling Water  
3 Tbsp Fresh Lemon Juice  
1 ½-2 Tbsp Honey

Dash of Cayenne Pepper (Opt)

Stir lemon juice and honey into boiling water. Add pepper if desired, stir frequently.

Source: Covered in Honey Mani Niall

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY ESA!

### The Endangered Species Act Remains Relevant and Strong After 40 Years

Next month sees the 40th anniversary of one of the most significant pieces of legislation for wildlife in the United States. The Endangered Species Act, passed by Congress in 1973 and signed by President Nixon on December 28 of that year, gave protection to all plants and animals, marking the first time that insects received specific federal protection in the United States. In his signing statement President Nixon underscored the fact that all species are equally deserving of protection, declaring: "Nothing is more priceless and more worthy of preservation than the rich array of animal life with which our country has been blessed. It is a many-faceted treasure, of value to scholars, scientists, and nature lovers alike, and it forms a vital part of the heritage we all share as Americans."

This inclusive view has not been shared by everyone, and over the last four decades the reach and strength of the ESA has regularly been under assault and the Act has been amended in ways that weaken protections of insects or allowed destruction of habitat. A frequent complaint is that the ESA is a failure because so few species have been successfully recovered. However, species are placed on the endangered list because they are at the brink of extinction, and because they have been declining for decades, it can take decades to fully recover.

The Endangered Species Act is a valuable and necessary tool in our efforts to conserve biodiversity and the fact that many highly imperiled plants and animals have not gone extinct is a testament to its success. It remains the only national law in the United States that specifically protects imperiled insects and their habitats, and -- particularly if it is adequately funded -- it can be an integral part of the effort to protect the country's immense biological richness. The Act has drawn attention to the crisis of extinction that confronts not only birds and mammals, but also the myriad animal species that, although less conspicuous or less aesthetically pleasing, are no less important. It remains the best insurance program that endangered invertebrates have.

To learn more about the disappearing species that Xerces has been working to protect, visit the [Endangered Species Program web pages](#). You'll also find information on how to be directly involved with citizen science projects studying rare [bumble bees](#) and [monarch butterflies](#).

Source:  
Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

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## Honey bees demonstrate decision making process to avoid difficult choices

**—A new study on the metacognitive ability of honeybees suggests that they, like humans, avoid difficult decisions when they lack sufficient information to solve a problem.**

Researchers from Macquarie University tested honey [bees](#) with a series of trials involving visual discrimination between targets inside a two-chamber apparatus. The bees had to learn a rule to match a combination of shapes with nectar. A correct identification was rewarded with sweet nectar, but an incorrect decision resulted in a bitter tasting solution. Bees could also choose not to take the test at all and 'opt out'.

Researcher Dr Andrew Barron says the results showed that the more difficult the challenge, the more likely the bees were to 'opt out'.

"It's a highly debated topic, whether non-humans have the same abilities to gauge their level of certainty about a choice before taking action."

Co-author Dr Clint Perry says, "Similar metacognitive testing has been conducted with dolphins, dogs, and rats. However, this study is the first to demonstrate that even insects are capable of making complex and adaptive decisions.

"The honey bees' assessment of the certainty of a predicted outcome was comparable to that of primates in a similar paradigm."

The size, shape, colour and positions of the targets were constantly changed during training so the bees had to learn a geometric rule to solve the task correctly. The bees demonstrated a high level of learning ability to solve the tasks, but when the discrimination of the targets was made harder the bees' behavior changed.

"As we made it harder for the bees to assess the correct shape combination, the bees' uncertainty about the correct choice grew, and we observed an increase in the decision to exit the chamber and not take the test to avoid the chance of getting it wrong," said Dr Barron.

"This suggests that the bees were only taking the test when they were confident of getting it right."

The full study Honey bees selectively avoid difficult choices they lack the information to solve has been published in full by the National Academy of Sciences.

**More information:** Clint J Perry, Andrew B Barron Honey bees selectively avoid difficult choices. *PNAS*, [www.pnas.org/content/early/2013/10/30/1314571110.abstract](http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2013/10/30/1314571110.abstract)

Provided by Macquarie University

Source: Phys.org

<http://phys.org/news/2013-11-honey-bees-decision-difficult-choices.html>

### ALAMANCE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS 2013 OFFICERS

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**Alamance County Beekeepers**      \_\_\_New \_\_\_Renew

State I.D.# \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Pay Form for 2014**

(Dues expire December 31)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dues \$6.00, State Dues \$15.00      \$21.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Dues \$6.00, State Dues \$15.00      \$21.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* Name of second member for two-member family.      Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ \* \*Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT ^

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here if address change

\*\* Newsletter will be delivered via e-mail  
If applicable

Please make checks payable to Alamance County Beekeepers.

Mail Completed forms to: Michael Alexandre      \_\_\_\_\_  
2381 Lacy Holt Road      (County – if other than Alamance)  
Graham NC 27253

If renewing and have no changes to address, telephone #, or E-mail, just enter your name and amount.