



# Alamance County Beekeepers

February 2016 Newsletter

## Monthly Meeting

February 18th | 7:00 p.m.

### Fix it!

While bees are occupied with surviving the winter, beekeepers turn their sights to equipment maintenance.

Don Moore and John Chambers will lead a program on making repairs in the bee yard.

Come ready to learn from these experienced and handy beekeepers!



Elaine Trettel has volunteered to bring a snack for social time.  
Thanks, Elaine!

## Winter Bees

by Joyce Sidman

We are an ancient tribe,  
a hardy scrum.  
Born with eyelash legs  
and tinsel wings,  
we are nothing on our own.  
Together, we are One.

We scaled a million blooms  
to reap the summer's glow.  
Now, in the merciless cold,  
we share each morsel of heat,  
each honeyed crumb.  
We cram to a sizzling ball  
to warm our queen, our heart, our home.

Alone, we would falter and drop,  
a dot on the canvas of snow.  
Together, we boil, we teem, we hum.

Deep in the winter hive,  
we burn like a golden sun.



From the book WINTER BEES AND OTHER  
POEMS OF THE COLD, © 2014 Houghton Mifflin  
Harcourt. Printed with permission of the author.

Available at booksellers and Alamance County  
Public Libraries.

## Notes from January's Meeting

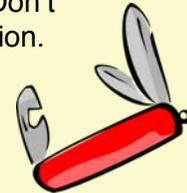
### Business

- Ira passed around several clipboards: swarm list for updating; sign-up sheet for volunteering at Homegrown in the Park, and sign-up sheet for bringing snacks to future meetings. Thank you all!
- Ira went over the year's events calendar.
- About thirty-five new students are signed up for the 2016 beekeeping class. Several experienced beeks are going for a refresher.



### Program - Gadgets

- Mike Ross showed us the box he built for 'vacuuming' up bees. Tips: Don't let your tube get knotted! And be sure you can adjust air-flow and suction.
- Don Moore showed us what he built to aid introduction of a new queen without causing too much disruption in the hive. He also showed us a 5-gallon bucket he rigged to hold wax cappings and to allow room for honey to drip from wax.
- Corey Gillespie showed the jig Paul Jollay made for production-building of frames. He also showed the tool kit he uses, and some of his must-have beekeeping supplies. Tip: Don't let your smoker catch your truck on fire.
- Wally Swain showed the quilt board Keith Elkes made for absorbing moisture in the winter hive. He also demonstrated a method of using heat to press wire into foundation.



### Quote of the Evening

"Hello. My name is Mike Ross. Ten years ago, I got the fever. Now it's an addiction."

### Check out the ACB Web Site

Geoff Leister has added great new content to the Web site. You can find the latest on neonicotinoids and honeybees, and links to Web-based training, beekeeping forums, and more.

<http://alamancebeekeepers.org/resources/>



### From the Department of Corrections

In last month's article about the November program, one of our first-year beekeepers was re-named in error. I should have typed **Kay Flack** instead of Kay Stark! My apologies, Kay! - CCP



## This Month in the Bee Yard

Nancy Ruppert \*

- Noticeable pollen flow under way, especially red maple. Brood build-up intensifying. Minimal, if any, nectar available---most hives need feeding (1:1 syrup in most cases, unless honey stores very low [i.e., <1/2 super left]).
- Combine hives if needed (see January).
- Repair/replace equipment if needed; move hives if needed; keep learning.
- During last half of February, consider adding super/hive body of wax foundation to allow bees to draw out more comb for spring. (Feeding or nectar is required for this.)
- Replace a few (<4) frames where comb is old or has excessive drone cells.
- Some hives may need treatment for Nosema disease, especially if too cold for cleansing flights.
- Do you want to be on the “swarm-catcher” list?
- Make plans to attend the annual NCSBA Spring Meeting February 25-27 in New Bern.



<https://growingsmallfarms.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/CALENDAR-FOR-BEEKEEPING-IN-CENTRAL-NORTH-CAROLINA-Final.pdf?fw=no> \* Some edits were made by C. Pierce.

## Bees in the News

**Could beer save the honeybees?** Katie Valentine, 10/21/2015, Think Progress.

“This week, the EPA approved the use of potassium salts of hops beta acids (HBAs) — a biochemical (or naturally-occurring) pesticide that’s derived from hops, the flowers of the plant *Humulus lupulus* — around honeycombs.

Research has shown that HBAs have potential for repelling varroa mites ...”

<http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2015/10/21/3714501/beer-for-bees/> The EPA announcement is here: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/epa-registers-new-biochemical-miticide-combat-varroa-mites-beehives>



**Humans have a hand in honey bee decline, say scientists. Is it too late?** Joseph Dussault, 2/5/2016, Christian Science Monitor. “The international shipment of non-native bee colonies has hastened the effects of colony collapse on a global scale.” <http://www.csmonitor.com/Science/2016/0205/Humans-have-a-hand-in-honey-bee-decline-say-scientists.-Is-it-too-late>

**Urban environments boost pathogen pressure on honey bees**, 11/4/2015, NC State News. “The research team found that colonies closer to urban areas and those managed by bee keepers had higher pathogen pressure.” <https://news.ncsu.edu/2015/11/tarpy-frank-2015/>

**Wild bee decline threatens U.S. crop production**, Joshua E. Brown, 12/21/2015, University of Vermont Communications. “A new UVM study of wild bees identifies 139 counties in key agricultural regions of California, the Pacific Northwest, the Midwest, west Texas and the Mississippi River valley that face a worrisome mismatch between falling wild bee supply and rising crop pollination demand.” <https://www.uvm.edu/~uvmpr/?Page=news&&storyID=22053>

## Blooming in the Piedmont

Photos and content generously  
provided by Geoff Leister

We await the opening of maple blooms  
this month. In the meantime, there is  
food in the landscape ...

*Camellia japonica* -  
pollen source



*Helleborus orientalis*  
[Lenten rose] - pollen and  
nectar source



*Alnus serrulata* [Hazel  
alder] - pollen source



### Officers for 2016

President : Ira Poston  
Vice President : Mike Ross  
Recording Secretary : Sheyenne Michelizzi  
Treasurer : Zivon Price  
Program Chair : Angela Schick  
One-year Director : Larry McCauley, Jr.  
Two-year Director : Wayne Foulks  
Three-year Director : Randy Stinson

### Appointments

Webmaster : Geoff Leister  
Newsletter : Cynthia Pierce