

[Mid-State Beekeepers' Association](#)
February 2022 Newsletter

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**Our upcoming meeting will be
Tuesday, February 1st, 6:30-8:30pm**

February Speaker: Allen Johnson

**Topic: Veterans Beekeeping Program +
What is Happening in the Hives**



photo: Marie and Allen Johnson

Speaker Bio

Allen worked at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center in Augusta GA for over 30 years as a certified Recreation Therapist. His patient care was with veterans dealing with mental health difficulties primarily diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. He began beekeeping in 2006 to improve the yields of his gardening. Several years later, he began producing queens and nucs to sell. In 2012, the opportunity to start a farm and garden retail store allowed Marie to start selling beekeeping equipment and supplies. In 2017, we separated the beekeeping from the farm and garden store and started Johnson's Bees and Supplies. Allen's retirement on Sept 30, 2021 has allowed them to focus all of their attention on beekeeping. "We are continuing our involvement with the Charlie Norwood VAMC as a community partner to introduce veterans to all of the wonders of beekeeping."

Allen Johnson is owner and operator of Johnson's Bees and Supplies in Williston, South Carolina. If you would like to order bee supplies, he will deliver your order at the February meeting. His website is: www.johnsonsbeesandsupplies.com. Please be sure to tell him you are a Midstate member, and this is for February's meeting.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity,
Allen Johnson

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Midlands Beekeeping Calendar for February
by Red Maple



Join Us or Renew Your Membership



It's that time of year when we ask you to renew your membership in Mid-State Beekeepers Association. Current members can renew in the webstore by clicking on the bee. Your support is needed and appreciated.

To Join Us or Renew Your Membership [Click Here](#)

Making Splits Here's how and when in the Southeast

by David E. MacFawn



Splitting a colony is one way to control swarming. It is also a way to make increases to make up for lost colonies. When making a split, the new split should contain capped worker brood with some worker eggs and larvae, honey, and pollen. It takes workers consuming honey and pollen to produce worker jelly to feed worker larvae, to ensure worker brood are completely fed. During the Spring nectar flow in any places there is a tradeoff between making splits and obtaining a honey crop.

[Read the full article HERE or click on the photo above.](#)

David MacFawn is an Eastern Apiculture Society Master Beekeeper and a North Carolina Master Craftsman beekeeper living in the Columbia, South Carolina, area. His third book, [Applied Beekeeping in the United States](#) is available at Outskirts Press.

Bait Hive Placement Time

by E. Z. Beez



Swarm trapping can be fun. For beekeepers, it satisfies the same urge fishing does for fishermen. A lot of care goes into choosing and selecting the equipment and bait in hopes of finding the right combination which will most closely match the criteria the bees are looking for in a new home.

After several years of swarm trapping I think I have my preferred trap design down pat. A double 5 frame nuc, with one old propolised frame and four empty frames with starter strips in the upper box.



The bottom box is empty, and the bottom board has a small, screened drainage hole drilled into the bottom. A 1 1/4" entrance hole with bird excluder (nail) is drilled into the front of the lower box with closure disk for quickly closing the entrance (for moving). The usual excluder entrance is blocked (a screw used as handle if it needs to be removed). Finally, a ratchet strap holds it all together. It's not heavy and is easy to transport. I'll place this bait hive now baited with my homemade lemongrass-based scent attractant. Placement of traps are 75 to 200 yards away from the main bee yard and along tree lines. Research shows that 12 – 15 ft. height is best, but I'm not keen on lugging ladders so I keep bait hives at manageable heights. Scout bees will give the swarm trap a thorough inspection with points given for correct cavity size, correct entrance size, odor, dryness, height, and location. The more of these you satisfy the more points you earn and the greater the likelihood they will choose the trap.

If you missed it, also read: [Trapping Honey Bee Swarms](#)

New Beekeepers in 2022 Class Begin Their Journey





Top photo: Wes Bommer talks to students about selecting equipment; Middle photos: Class learning the basics of good beekeeping; Bottom photo: Susan Owen teaching Honey Bee Behavior module.

The first of three classes, the Mid-State Beginning Beekeeper class was held Saturday, January 15th. There were close to 30, eager to learn, students. Our member-instructors were Jill Van Horn, Todd Shealy, Larry Coble, Anne Runge, Susan Owen, and Wes Bommer. The next class is Saturday, February 19th, 9am to 5pm.

New Members,

Welcome to our Association! We hope you are excited about taking the Beginner Beekeepers class. Some new members have already started to attend our monthly Zoom meetings. We are excited to have all new beekeepers attend association gatherings. We try to offer an educational component at every monthly meeting to keep you up-to-date with what's happening locally in Midlands' bee yards and to prepare you for what to expect each month and each season. We hope you will begin to make attendance at monthly association meetings a part of your continuing education program over the coming year and beyond.

Deadline for NUC orders: February 19th



A member scraping propolis from an already established NUC.

Time is running out to order NUCS for the spring.

5-Frame NUC's \$165

You **must** be a MSBA member to order. Please order from our 'Event page' on our website:

<https://msb3sa.wildapricot.org/events>

Important Details...

Estimated Package delivery will be mid-March.

There will be 2 NUC deliveries: end of March and mid-April.

First to order, first to pick up!

Please allow a 2-week window for weather.

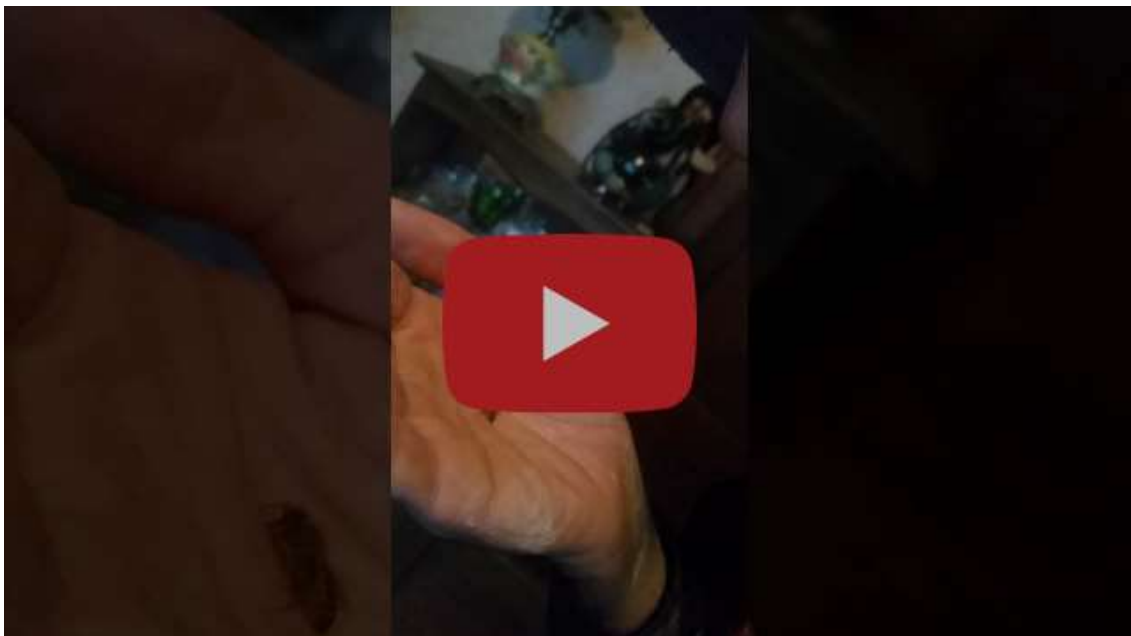
If you are unable to pick up your order, please make arrangements for someone else to pick up for you!

Caution: Live bees are perishable!

You will have 3 days to notify the supplier of any problems or issues with your order.

Checking on Them During Extreme Cold

by Chilled Brood



Video: Breathing life into a bee showing signs of torpor.

There is no good reason to open your hive during periods of extreme cold. None. Even if you suspect they have died, for whatever reason, opening the hive can typically wait.

Honey bees will form a protective spherical cluster, the outermost bees rotating with the inner bees, to warm themselves. The bees shiver to generate heat and the outer bees form an insulative layer. Being cold blooded, all bees exhibit some degree of slowing down when they are unable to warm themselves sufficiently. As the temperature continues to drop a protective physiological mechanism called torpor begins: a semi-hibernation, reaction to the cold, that reduces their metabolism and allows them to conserve energy and survive by significantly slowing down their physiological processes. Dependent on cluster size this may affect a larger percentage of the bees surrounding the core of the cluster. The role of the beekeeper is to allow the colony to conserve what heat is available by not opening the hive. In a case where it is known the colony is running out of food wait until the hive and bees have warmed enough to move about and only then briefly open the hive enough to insert frames of honey or other food. During extended periods of cold weather it may take a few days for the bees to warm up and begin to move about freely.

It's generally accepted that hive inspections should wait until temperatures are above 60F. Until then, be patient and limit yourself to peeking and listening with your ear against the hive or use a stethoscope to listen to them humming away inside.

photo credit: Mistress Beek
at: [Using a stethoscope to “hear” if your bee hive is alive](#)



For more information and science related to the physiological reasons why bees can withstand extreme temperatures, read more here: [No Good Reason to Check on Them](#)

Thoughts on Beeswax

by Frugal Keeper



Pictured above is a melting block of beeswax. From nectar or sugar the bees create wax which is used to build comb. The comb is used to rear brood or store honey. Wax cappings are removed and saved when honey is harvested. Even the brood frames are eventually removed, scraped, and the wax recovered.. The block in the picture above made the trip from bee to comb, to wax cappings, and eventually into a block of wax. Then to the SC State Fair and back to the barn. Now, it's being melted down for application to foundation for use by the bees this coming spring. The cycle is complete.

SC Beekeepers Association Spring Conference

Save the Dates!

2022 SC Beekeepers Association Spring Conference

February 25th & 26th

This year's theme: Flower to Fare

This is the state's spring conference: "Two full days of conference activities will focus on various aspects of honey bee nutrition and how it affects honey bee health and products of the hive."

Log on to SCBA website for registration and speaker information:

<https://scstatebeekeepers.com/>

We encourage every MSBA member to become a member of the state club as well.

Only \$10/year!

More Information & Resources

Since we started the Facebook Discussion Group, we've always maintained that members won't miss anything if they can't or don't want to join Facebook. That's still true. Facebook isn't our primary means of communicating with our membership. But if you want more bee talk and friendly advice from over one-thousand of your peers, it's available as another option to gather Midland's beekeeping information.

Facebook Discussion Groups:

[SC Mid-State Beekeepers](#): **For general Midlands beekeeping discussion.**

[SC Mid-State Beekeeping Buy, Sell, Trade](#): **Midlands For Sale Beekeeping items, including bees, queens, woodenware, nucs. etc.**

[SC Mid-State Beekeepers Public Announcements Page](#): **General Announcements to the Public Page.**

MSBA Monthly Newsletter

If you received this newsletter from a friend, you can sign up below to receive it directly to your email inbox. Already on our list? Forward this newsletter to a friend. They can use the link below to sign up to receive the newsletter.

[Click Here to Subscribe to the Mid-State Beekeepers Newsletter](#)

Warm Honey and Lemon Drink

One thing that I find enjoyable during these cold months while outside building frames and hive bodies is a hot cup of honey-lemon-ginger water.

Add grated ginger in hot water along with lemon juice and honey and your morning "tea" is ready! Once you get used to this morning routine it is hard to go back. This warm water not only helps in releasing congestion but the ginger in it also helps in digestion and honey soothes the throat.

Throw in a black tea bag in the liquid and you have a rich lemony black tea in less than five minutes.

See recipe below.

**Ingredients:**

(There are no accurate measurements for this recipe just add little or more as per your taste and preference.)

1 Tbsp Lemon Juice

2 Tbsp Honey

3/4 Cup hot water

1/2 Inch Ginger Root (grated)

Credit: [Warm Lemon Honey Drink – saltpaprika](#)

For Sale and Things You Need to Know**Extraction Services:**

Member, **Danny Cannon**, located at 1437 Jessamine Rd in Lexington will extract honey for beekeepers for \$5 per box with a \$20 minimum. Call Danny to schedule when to bring your boxes to be extracted. 803.600.4576.

A checklist for every Beekeeper... especially newcomers

- a 2 gallon feed pail/bucket. we need to start feeding sugar syrup \$8-\$10 + shipping (Betterbee has them). I would get 2 buckets. This is a better solution than internal frame feeders or boardman feeders that fit into the hive entrance, especially in the winter.

- a metal smoker box about \$35 + shipping to put your lighted smoker in after use. You also need to get a cork (Lowe's or Home Depot in their hardware drawers) or rag to plug the smoker so you will have charred pine straw that is easy to light (W.T. Kelley makes them)

- some folding veils (easy to store) with the long strings and helmets about \$25 for a veil + \$15 for the helmet. (Dadant carries them).

- some long sleeve bee gloves (Buck's has them for about \$12 a pair) of the correct size

- get a canvas/cloth large laundry bag (Wal-Mart or on-line Amazon) to put pine straw that has been mowed/run over to make soft for your smoker fuel. This should be stored in a very dry place so it lights easy.

- a paint brush (2" or 3") and a double boiler or crock pot to melt beeswax and coat the frames after scraping in that dead out. We will need the frames and extra equipment end of Feb/2021 when I give you a split of bees. You need a double boiler or crock pot since beeswax is very flammable.

- some beeswax. I use about 2/3 pound of wax for 8 medium frames. You have deep and medium frames. about \$8/pound at Dadant

- some high quality paint to put on the dead-out and active hive. You only paint the outside and leave the inside for the bees to coat with propolis.

- Make sure everyone wears light colored clothing. Blue jeans are ok. White socks preferable; no dark fuzzy socks. Long sleeve shirts. Do we have veils and gloves for everyone?

- If the beekeeper wears blue jeans and a tan/light long sleeve shirt with a collar, white socks with covered toe shoes/boots, you will only need the veils/gloves. This is cheaper than the bee suits with attached veils.

MSBA Extractor Rental

Harvesting Honey?


Mid-State Beekeepers Association has a powered extractor for use by members.

Rental is \$5 per day with a two-day minimum. A \$50 refundable cleaning and damage deposit is required on pickup. The additional honey this powered unit will extract from the comb more than pays its rental fee. A heated capping knife, and strainers are also available with the extractor if needed.

Members will need to obtain their own food grade buckets. We can direct you to these locally or you may be able to get them at local bakeries, food service establishments, etc. The quartermaster for the MSBA extractor is Jeannine and Neal Taylor-To reserve the extractor email the secretary: secretary_MSBA@hotmail.com, and she will pass along your information to Neal & Jeannine.

For more information or to reserve the extractor visit our webpage at:

MSBA Extractor Rental Information

 Visit us on Facebook

 On the Web: [Mid-State Beekeepers](#)

 Email Us

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