



Susquehanna Beekeepers



<http://susquehannabeekeepers.com>

Feb-Mar 2012 - Volume 35

In This Issue:

- SBA Contact Information Pg. 1***
- President's Message***
- Meetings and Events Pg. 2***
- Vice President's Message***
- Notes From The Apiary..... Pg. 3***
- Editor's Notes***
- Of Bees and Snow Pg. 4***
- Packages and Nucs Pg. 5***
- Membership Renewal Pg. 6***
- Claudia's Corner Pg. 7***
- Newsletter Contributors***

Susquehanna Beekeepers Association
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 Harry Dutcher - Vice President
 Claudia Hertzog, Secretary
 Bob Crouse, Treasurer
 Mike DeWald, Past President
 John Knapstein, Past President
 Jane Ports, Past Vice President

****Send newsletter and website
 inclusions to:
dhzog@verizon.net**

President's Message: It certainly has been a mild winter so far and yes, all of my hives are *still alive!* One hive is light on stores so I've been feeding heavy syrup during the warm stretches. The bees do become active on sunny days when daytime temperatures approach 50 or more.

We've also been regularly feeding four bluebirds this winter. Three males and one female are usually waiting for me to put out their mealworms before 8 AM (every morning) and are feasting on them as soon as I walk away. ...So who has who trained?

There are a number of positive club-related doings. With input from a few SBA members, John Knapstein submitted a new grant proposal to the Harford County Agricultural Marketing Co-Op. We are asking for three thousand dollars to purchase Basswood trees (an excellent summer bloomer) to be distributed to individuals and organizations that are interested in providing long-term nectar and pollen sources for honeybees. Basswoods get to be quite large so please give some thought to appropriate places to do some planting. We will need everyone's assistance if this one comes through.

Our February 8 meeting will feature an excellent speaker from south-central PA, Mike Thomas of [Bjorn Apiary](#). *continued on next page...*

****SBA Meeting****

Wednesday, February 8, at 7:00 PM
at the Forest Hill Extension Office
Speaker: Mike Thomas of [Bjorn Apiary](#)

Meetings and Events:

- Now through Apr 1 - SBA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL WINDOW - 2012 Membership Form is at: <http://susquehannabeekeepers.com/styled-6/index.html> or see page 6. Membership remains \$8... *the best deal in town!!*
- Feb 8 - General SBA Meeting - *Mike Thomas* from [Bjorn Apiary](#) will speak!
- Feb 15 - SBA Board Meeting
- Feb 24, Mar 2, 9, 16, 30, April 13, 14 - The SBA Short Course dates for 2012 *****The class location has changed from previous years and will now be at Harford Community College.** Registration will be through the college at a cost of \$50. Out-of-county residents will pay the same fee as Harford County residents. The course will be identified in the [Spring 2012 catalog](#) in the non-credit continuing education section. Instruction will be provided by *Cybil Preston*, Maryland State Apiary Inspector.
- Mar 14 - General SBA Meeting
- Mar 21 - SBA Board Meeting
- Apr 11 - General SBA Meeting
- Apr 18 - SBA Board Meeting
- May 2 - General SBA Meeting
- May 16 - SBA Board Meeting
- June 13 - General SBA Meeting
- June 20 - SBA Board Meeting



What????!! no bees?

Vice President's Message:

WANTED: SBA members to promote beekeeping. No experience needed. You don't need to be a beekeeping expert. Just have a willingness to talk bees, honey, and sometimes bee stings. In 2011 the SBA participated in local fairs and a fall festival. If you know of other events for 2012 let me know. We also need your ideas to improve and/or expand our message.

**Thank you,
Harry Dutcher
bspaboy@comcast.net**

President's Message continued... Mike regularly posts experiences, answers and opinion to <http://forum.beemaster.com/> His username is "BjornBee". Take a look if you have time.

Though we received a number of inquiries, no serious applications were submitted for the first offering for the SBA's "Young Beekeeper" club grant. We will continue sponsoring this program in the future.

Please do not forget to renew your SBA membership. The 2012 membership form is on pg. 6 and also at:

<http://susquehannabeekeepers.com/styled-6/index.html> Many thanks to John Kovak for putting together the Package and Nuc list on pg 5.

...Hope your bees are overwintering well!



**NOTES From The Apiary
January
- by Robert Crouse**

I went out to remove ice/snow from the entrances and took the time to wipe out any dead bees from the front of the entrance reducer. I reached in as far as possible as I could to clear the bottom board and placed two jars of syrup in the Boardman feeders on the only hive that seemed to need feeding. As the temperature is near 50 degrees and the bees are flying a little, hopefully they will feed (Jan, 24)). All is well with the other four hives for now.

I hope you have been feeding your bees. Fondant is a good emergency feed at this time of year but you must open the hive to get it in contact with the bees. Dennis has a fondant recipe on our website. Be sure to check it out. I

usually open the hives and look around in Jan. but after my check last month and all of the mild weather, I feel that all is well and decided not to check all of them this time.

As our central Maryland major nectar flow occurs in May and June, this means that responsible beekeeping begins in late January or early February. Now is the time to do your equipment inventory and order the foundation, etc. for the new season that will start in 4 months. By April you should be concentrating on cleaning out the hives, reversing brood boxes, feeding and doing early season medications as needed.

Check out the bee package and nuc sources and prices that are included in this newsletter. John Kovac did much of the leg work for us on this one.

Editor's Notes - I originally was not planning on publishing a separate Feb. newsletter but enough material was sent to make it worthwhile. So I've labeled this issue as Feb-Mar. If our membership continues to send me good stuff, I'll publish monthly. Thanks to those who continue to participate and support the SBA! Pics in this issue are (of course) winter bluebirds and a witch hazel bush that has been blooming in my back yard.



SBA member, David Papke is again offering his 'Hands-on' Beekeeping Classes this year. A link to info and dates is posted on the SBA's website at <http://susquehannabeekeepers.com/> under 'Meetings and Education'. His first class in March 24.



Of Bees and Snow *by Ed Yoder*

I am penning this a little after 4 in the morning, January 21. After waking up around 3, I couldn't wait to turn the backyard lights on to check the snowfall. The weather people were talking all yesterday about snow and a "wintry mix" after midnight. Well the ground all around looks like a blanket of cotton. There is no wind, so no drift, just a blanket of white.

I could not go back to sleep. My mind was full of thoughts of bees, and snow, and bees, and primary elections, and bees and so on. Why not get up and record some of those mental images. In checking last year's calendar, I see that on this day, the morning low was 21 degrees and by nightfall it was back to 8 degrees. I'm sure everyone remembers last winter when we had weeks of cold, cold and more cold. By this time a year ago, our bee losses were already over 50%. If beekeepers could order a perfect winter, this one so far is about perfect! Not so cold so far and occasionally warmer days when the bees could fly.

On January 7, 2012 the morning low was 37 degrees and by 1 pm the thermometer was sitting on 64 degrees. The bees were flying big time so I decided to check a couple of hives in the back yard. The one stand is a single deep that was a "powerhouse" in August. At that time it was a deep and an Illinois super. In mid-August it swarmed! The colony then was rather small. Knowing the genetics of that unit, I threw sugar syrup to them and removed the top super, which was empty. They built back up pretty well so when I looked in on January 7, they had many frames of food and a nice cluster of bees. I saw no eggs or larvae. The other hive that I checked is a story and a half. There were bees in the bottom box and the upper box. The colony looked as if it would break in early April. To my surprise, there were 3 frames that had a patch of capped brood, about the size of a teacup. It looked as though it was about to hatch! My conclusion is that the queen in that colony was active in early December and the brood I saw was a result of that fact, hence the large population in that hive.

Of course, we still have at least 8 more weeks of winter. However, at this point, I am very optimistic. As of this date, I have had just two dead-outs. One was a queen failure in late summer and the other was the result of my neglect and they ran out of feed in October and starved. According to a beekeeper friend of mine in Virginia, he had a 50% loss from lack of food. Another friend told me that in eastern Pa, they have a 30 percent loss so far. That is not good.

Think spring! -- The King Bee



Bee Suppliers 2012 - compiled by John Kovak (Packages - P Nucs - N)

Below are prices of **packages(P)** and **nucs (N)**. While I am certain I missed some suppliers, I think I included ones that are close by. I highly recommend that folks order early to ensure guaranteed delivery and the best delivery dates. Most require a deposit well before the order date. The delivery dates are subject to mother nature and can change at the last minute.

I have placed a nuc order into Busy B for pick up on or about after 1 Apr. The bees are winterized locally so should be more winter hardy than some Southern stock. Since a nuc consists of 4 or 5 frames of bees, an egg laying queen, honey and brood, it should begin to expand almost from day 1. If anyone in the club wants to order nuc(s) from Busy B, I will be willing to pick them up from the supplier. They in turn can stop by my house in Forest Hill to pick them up. Since I don't add any value in the order process it would be best if they could order them directly from Busy B. I am willing to pick up club member orders for the 1 Apr delivery date only.

In my humble opinion nucs are a better deal. With a package you have to wait around 3 days to release the queen, another 3 to 5 days for her to start laying and another 21 days before the bees hatch. The number of bees can dwindle to less than half. The quality of the queen is sometime questionably in some packages from the South too.

Lloyd Snyder never returned my call on special pricing for the club so I went with the prices on his web site. Busy B was not willing to give us a special deal. Maryland Honey will knock off \$5.00 for a group order on nucs. (I listed the regular price.) ...*John*

Business	Location	Italian	Russian		Pickup	LB	Order by	Comment	Phone
Miller Bee	Essex MD	\$77	\$80	P	Apr 16, 2012	3	Apr 14, 2012		(410) 335-3424
Miller Bee	Essex MD	\$89	\$92	P	Apr 16, 2012	4	Apr 15, 2012		(410) 335-3424
Snyders	Whitehall, MD	\$73	\$76	P	Apr 9, 2012	3	Mar 25, 2012		(410) 329-6671
Busy Bee	Martinsburg, WV	\$75 combo Italian		P	Apr 7, 14, 21, 28	3	Mar 1, 2012	Combo Italian	(304) 671-3562
MD Honey	Gaithersburg, MD	\$90		P	2nd wk in Apr	3	Mar 19, 2012	Carniolan available	(301) 518-9678
Bjorn Apiaries	Lewisberry, PA	\$90		P	Apr 6/7 & 23/24	3	Jan 12, 2012		(717) 938 0444
Snyders	Whitehall, MD	\$110	\$110	N	May				(410) 329-6671
Busy Bee	Martinsburg, WV		\$100	N	About Apr 1, 15, 30		Mar 1, 2012	local overwinter	(304) 671-3562
Md Honey	Gaithersburg, MD	\$130		N	mid Apr mid May		Mar 19, 2012	local and South, \$5 less group order. Carniolan queens also available	(301) 518-9678

**Susquehanna Beekeepers Association Membership Form for 2012
(Please print)**

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Street Address if your mailing address is a P.O. Box: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Partner's Name (optional): _____

Email Address (to receive newsletters): _____

****Help us save postage!! Newsletters will be sent via email (unless an email address is not provided).**

I am a new member.

Please list my information in the SBA membership directory.
(available to SBA members ONLY).

or

I do not want my information listed in the SBA membership directory.

1. How many colonies do you have? _____

2. How many years have you had bees? _____

3. Are you interested in helping a new beekeeper? _____

4. Are you interested in volunteering at a program or fair? _____

Comments/Suggestions:

****Membership for 2012 is \$8.00 payable to: Susquehanna Beekeepers Association**

Please return completed form to: Robert Crouse, SBA Treasurer
1606 Dogwood Lane
Bel Air, MD 21015-2502

Claudia's Corner

Honeybee couples soar on
matrimonial flights from
which only one partner
returns;

Carl Sagan 1934-1996
Astrophysicist, cosmologist

FEB. CONTRIBUTORS

- **Harry Dutcher:**
VP Message
- **Bob Crouse:**
Notes From The Apiary
- **Ed Yoder:**
Of Bees and Snow
- **John Kovak:**
Packages and Nucs
- **Claudia Hertzog:**
*Claudia's Corner, colors,
inspiration*
- **Dennis Hertzog:**
*Pres & Editor's Notes,
photos, etc., etc., etc.*

