

Beezette

April 2020

Warren County Ohio Beekeepers
Meeting at Lebanon Presbyterian Church
123 East Street, Lebanon, OH 45036

<https://warren.ohiostatebeekeepers.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WarrenCountyBeekeepersAssociation>



NEXT MEETING

Sunday June 14h at 1:30 p.m. at Lebanon Presbyterian Church.

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

I just started reading a novel in which one of the characters, a smart, curious boy full of questions, asks if a bee knows it will die if it stings someone. I do not know the answer, but the level of consciousness required to consider such a question seems uniquely human. *Apis mellifera*, the honey bee, is a super organism in which many function as a collective. I doubt there is much thought, just genetically programmed behavior that has evolved over millennia.

Stimulus and response, this is the way of honey bees. Longer days and warmer temperatures cause workers to forage and bring in pollen. This causes the queen to lay and the brood expands. However, a late spring cold snap may happen; if so, the bees will not abandon the brood to move to another frame of honey. If the cold snap is extended, the colony may perish, despite adequate stores of honey nearby. Hopefully, we will be spared such a cold snap.

In my neighborhood, the maples are in bloom along with the pears and magnolias. Daffodils are up along with crocuses and other flowers I can't name. From my kitchen window I see my hive and the bees are active coming and going. If I squat next to it I see white and yellow pollen coming in aplenty. Spring cleaning is also underway, just under the entrance I see lots of dead bees that have been removed. All this activity is delightful, wonderous and part of nature's workings.

If you consider the size of any individual bee's brain, it is quite small. How are these creatures able to perform all the varied activities inside the hive? How do they communicate when to swarm, how to prepare and who goes and who stays? Answering these questions along with countless others is what the entymologist seeks to answer from his laboratory and apiary. We benefit from their work since it helps us all to become better beekeepers. This super organism, the colony, is primary - all three castes of bees are subordinate to it and none can survive independently without it.

As we confront a pandemic, I think we might learn from the bees. While we differ greatly from bees, we are similar in our division of labor, specialization, etc. If we focus on the common wealth, and our common purpose, we will prevail.

Stay healthy and safe.

Paul Dorger

CLUB NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES

If you haven't done, so please renew your WCOB membership for 2020. Member dues remain the same at \$20/individual and \$25/family. Registration is online this year. Please fill out the form at <https://warrencountybeekeepers.org/join-us-2/>. Payments are made via PayPal, but a PayPal account is not required.

I am optimistic that we will meet again in June! Will you provide light refreshments/snacks for our club meeting for June or another month after that? You can sign up at the meeting or we have quick and easy sign-ups on our website under the "Members" tab <https://warrencountybeekeepers.org/monthly-meeting-refreshments/>.

If you have a topic that you would like covered at our meetings, please let someone on the board know.

DID YOU KNOW?

Honey bee queens mate in flight, perhaps very close to their home or potentially several miles away as they pass near or through drone congregational areas (DCA). They do not mate with drones from their own colony. This is a natural built-in safeguard against inbreeding. She may mate with one or 50 drones. The more drones she mates with, the more attractive she is to her retinue.

Do you have a colony with great attributes – calm, early spring buildup, hygienic, high honey producer, high winter survival, etc? Help preserve the lineage of that colony and boost honey bee survival overall by allowing them to produce some drones while culling out the drones from weaker hives with undesirable characteristics.

WHAT TO DO DURING APRIL

- Register your apiary location/s with the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The fee is \$5 per location regardless of the number of hives and is due by June 1, 2020. You can find a link to the registration form at https://agri.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/oda/divisions/plant-health/forms/plnt_4201-002. If you are trying to find it without using the link, it is found under Plant Health, Apiary Program, Registration.
- We've had several days at 70+ degrees and hopefully you have been able to get into your hives for at least a first inspection. Is there a laying queen? Do they have their current home 70% full that they need another box added? It is early yet, but there have been swarms already and successful mating flights with the new queens.

- Although we have many trees in bloom, we may still have some extended cold snaps where our bees will not be able to get out to forage them. With spring buildup underway, it is still important to be sure they have access to food. Growing babies eat a lot!
- Connect with other beekeepers via social media until we can meet again. Our next meeting is scheduled for June 14th at 1:30 p.m. at Lebanon Presbyterian Church. We hope to see you there!

Do you have an announcement you want to include in the Beezette or a topic you'd like to hear covered at one of our meetings? Let us know! Contact Alice Craig at warrencountyohiobeekeepers@gmail.com or find us on FB.

