



May 2020

BCBA
P.O. Box10371
Green Bay, WI 54307-
0371

*New Facebook
Interactive Group in
the works*

More to come!!

**Join us
for a Virtual
Coffee & Bee
Chat Tuesday
5/5/2020 8AM
Via ZOOM MEETING
Details Below**



Varroa Mite Monitoring
Resource

[https://pollinators.msu.edu/
resources/beekeepers/varroa-mite-monitoring1/varroa-mite-monitoring/](https://pollinators.msu.edu/resources/beekeepers/varroa-mite-monitoring1/varroa-mite-monitoring/)

Brown County Beekeepers Association Newsletter

www.browncountybeekeepers.com

BCBA Mission Statement: We are dedicated to promoting sustainable, responsible, and healthy beekeeping practices in Northeast Wisconsin for both experienced and first-time beekeepers. We strive to create a fun environment where learning opportunities exist for association members and the general public.

ZOOM MEETINGS

Thanks everyone for making the virtual club meetings and education so engaging!



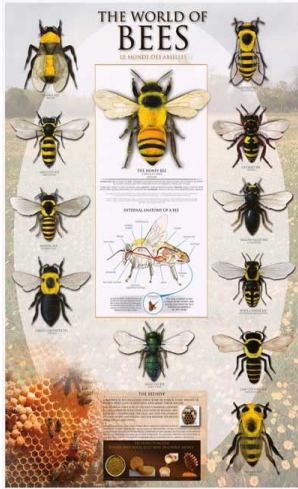
Month of May is an exciting and key time for the beekeepers as the bees are acclimating to their surroundings and setting up their colonies.

It is important to make sure they are getting enough to eat in the form of protein; incoming pollen and pollen substitute are needed for healthy brood production. Carbohydrates; nectar and 1:1 sugar syrup stimulates wax production and fuels activities inside and outside the hive.

Don't let the bees lose the momentum. They need resources and Wisconsin weather sometimes inhibits them from bringing in the natural resources. They need your support in order to build up a strong hive.

It is a good time to check your mite count and treat if indicated. Many experts use a threshold of 1-2% infestation depending on brood level (More info will be shared on this at the May Meeting)

2020 Club Calendar

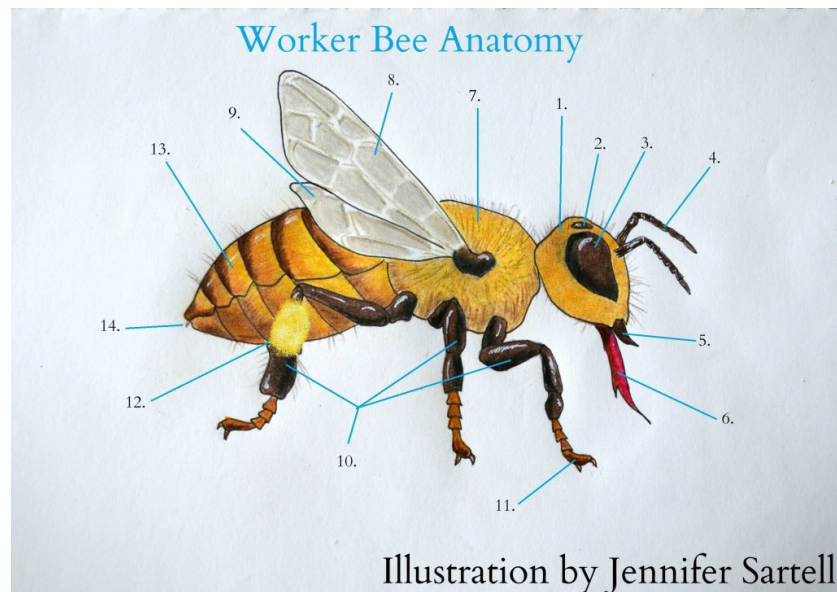


Date	Topic
May 20 May 27	Mite Treatments Virtual Mite Check
June 17	Hive Inspection
July TBD	Picnic??
August 19	Honey Extraction – MB4M Open Topic
September 16	Prep Bees for Winter – Capitol Bees
October 21	Master Beekeeper
November 18	Raising Queens
December 17	Christmas Party?????

Apis Melifera

A honey bee is approximately a half of an inch long and made up of many specific parts

Can you correctly identify them? Answers found below.



BCBA Leadership

President: Dave Elsen
president@browncountybeekeepers.com

Vice President:
Julie Mazzoleni
vicepresident@browncountybeekeepers.com

Secretary:
Sarah Mueller
secretary@browncountybeekeepers.com

Treasurer:
Tom Cashman
treasurer@browncountybeekeepers.com

Social Media Chair:
Carl Fisher
Carlfisher22@gmail.com

Membership Chair:
OPEN

Education Chair:
OPEN

From the Brown County Beekeepers Leadership Team

May Happenings

Hello Fellow Brown County Beekeepers,

We are certainly going through some challenging times and believe the way we interact with each other is forever changed. As beekeepers, you know or will soon know that the world of beekeeping is in constant motion. There is always new information and advances put out so it is important to keep educating yourselves with reliable resources. Based on this, each of us needs to assess these resources and adapt our practices to put ourselves and apiaries in the best position for success. With that as a backdrop, we are not surprised at the awesome response from our members being open to trying the new meeting and information formats. We currently have 108 members and continue to grow. As a Leadership Team, we appreciate the response and continue to explore additional ways to engage with you.

Here is a summary of the Virtual Meetings for May.

- **May 5th Virtual Coffee and Bee Talk - 8am** –Last month we had 11 participants. Good conversation and information sharing. Think about throwing out a topic to spur interest.
- **May 20th Virtual BCBA May Meeting 6:30pm** - We are excited to have April Kustov, the Wisconsin State Apiary Inspector, present the most current practices in Varroa Mite Management and to answer any questions you have on the Varroa mite.
- **May 27th Virtual Hive Dive 5:30pm** We will dive into a hive to demonstrate a Mite Check using the Powdered Sugar Roll technique which correlates nicely with the May 20th education theme. Note the 5:30 start time. (We will reschedule if weather conditions are not favorable)
- Below is the meeting info and links:

May 5th Coffee and Bee Talk - Virtual Meeting

Time: May 5, 2020 08:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86902778564?pwd=YmhHYmlsczRUa1RmWG84SGJUeG8zdz09>

Meeting ID: 869 0277 8564

Password: 602449

May 20th BCBA May Virtual Meeting - Education Varroa Mite Management - Official Meeting starts at 6:30

Time: May 20, 2020 06:00 PM Central Time – Will open up early so everyone can get in and set up

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81600405760?pwd=OWUrdU8yS25rdWs2N2xVa1IKdWpCdZ09>

Meeting ID: 816 0040 5760

Password: 582798

May 27th BCBA Education: In the Hive - Virtual Mite Sugar Roll - Please note earlier start time

Topic: BCBA Hive Inspection - In the Hive. Virtual Session

Time: May 27, 2020 05:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86439733368?pwd=eFQvN3FwMkpDQTRSZzlobGpoNWNkUT09>

Meeting ID: 864 3973 3368

Password: 003942

Consider getting involved in the Club with a supporting role on the Leadership Team

We continue to look for a couple of fellow BEEKS to partner with the BCBA leadership team to enhance the club by collaborating in coordinating educational opportunities and supporting membership. Take a seat at the table and have a voice in ideas to create engagement within the club. This is a great way to build your beekeeping network and get involved.

Needed

Education Chair AND Membership Chair

Contact Dave Elsen

When we lead we also learn.

July BCBA Picnic 2020

Let's hope things get closer to normal one day soon.

We usually have a Summer Picnic in place of the July meeting.

In the case that we are able to carry on the summer picnic tradition, we are looking for some party planners to get this thing rollin'



Free Education Opportunity

Capitol Bee Supply

Check out the link below for some **FREE** e-learning topics by
<https://www.facebook.com/CapitalBeeSupply/posts/2890729754299781>

September 16 club presenter



American Bee Journal

Discount for club members

GREAT PUBLICATION

GET INFO FROM TOM CASHMAN

BCBA Equipment Rental

See Website for Details

Honey Extractor and Equipment

Infrared Camera

Green Bay Botanical Garden Fair 2020

CANCELLED



FarmHer Donna Yost - Summer Camp at Inspiration Acres, Howard Suamico School district.

BCBA has been invited to do a Honey Bee and pollinator presentation. The date and times for two sessions have been set, one Tuesday June 30th and the second Tuesday July 14th. There will be 190 kids, ages 11-13. *Anyone wanting to volunteer is welcome*, please contact Dave Elsen or Julie Mazzoleni. It will be great fun spending time with kids and talking to them about Honey Bees and pollination

Events in the Works

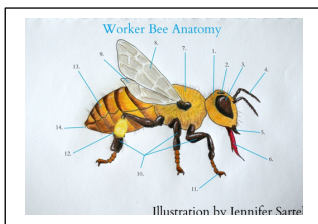
Cooking with Honey



Honey Extraction Event



ANATOMY ANSWERS



Anatomy Answers:

- 1. Head:** The head of the honey bee holds the brain which is only about a millimeter cubed in size. Though it has a small brain, it has over 950,000 neurons. "The bee brain is one of the most densely packed with neuropil tissue known of any animal." Coiled in the head above/behind the eye are the Hypopharyngeal Glands which only worker bees have. These glands make royal jelly.
- 2. Simple Eyes/ Ocelli** The bee has 5 eyes. The 3 smaller eyes or Ocelli perceive light. These eyes can also see UV light which helps in the detection of pollen in the vast landscape. Pollen appears as a black dot, which is easy to distinguish from other objects.
- 3. Compound Eye** The bee has 2 compound eyes which are covered in thousands of individual lenses called Ommatidia. These allow the bee to see "in front, to the side, above and below itself." A bee can also see all colors but red. Red appears black.
- 4. Antennae** The bee has 2 antennae which are divided into segments. Female bees have 13 segments where drones have 12. The antennae serve many purposes to the bee. It has over 170 scent receptors. And is used to determine "air speed and orientation during flight." It is also used to communicate with other bees. "Bees use only the right antennae to communicate."
- 5. Mandibles** the Mandibles on a bee are like the jaws. These powerful chewers are used to "fight, to mold and cut wax and to chew at flowers to get at the nectar."
- 6. Proboscis** The proboscis is like a tongue in that it is flexible and able to lap at things, but also like a straw, able to suck up nectar.
- 7. Thorax** the thorax is the second main body section of the bee. This section is all about transportation. It holds the wings and legs.
- 8 & 9. The Front and Rear Wings** The wings of a bee are divided in two sections. The front and rear wings. The wings can be held together by a small "row of hooks called hamuli" for flight. Or they can be detached and folded down. A bee can fly 15 miles per hour and can travel as much as 3 miles from the hive. The buzzing you hear when you're near a bee is the rapid flapping of its wings. "They can beat 11,400 times a minute."
- 10. Legs** A bee has 6 legs which of course it used to walk on. But the legs also serve other functions. The front legs are used to clean the antennae. The middle legs are used to push pollen into the pollen baskets on the back legs.
- 11. Tarsal Claws or Feet** "The foot of a bee has claws for gripping and a sticky pad for holding on to slippery surfaces." The bee also has taste receptors on its feet.
- 12. Corbicula or Pollen Basket** As the bee collects pollen on the hairs of its body, it presses them into the pollen basket on the back legs. It mixes the pollen with a bit of sticky nectar to form a yellow pillow to carry back to the hive.
- 13. The Abdomen** The last section of a bee's body is the abdomen. Within the exoskeleton of the abdomen is the bee's internal organs like the digestive system, the reproductive organs, the wax glands, the venom pouch and the honey crop, which is a pocket where the bee can hold up to 1/3 of its weight in nectar or honey.
- 14. Stinger** Only Female bees have a stinger. The worker bee's stinger is barbed, where the Queen bee is not. Because of this, the Queen can sting multiple times, where a worker bee is only able to sting once. The barbs prevent the bee from removing the stinger once inserted into the victim. A sting is fatal to a worker bee.

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD OF BEES IN MAY:

In the Hive

Egg laying and brood rearing are in high gear, with the brood area expanding rapidly. The bees are foraging for pollen and nectar to support this colony growth. They are likely to be less defensive than in fall, with less to protect and lots to do!

With the growing population and possible overcrowding, mid-May is the beginning of swarm season. Queen cups are being built along the lower edges of brood frames. If the hive is crowded, some cups will likely be laid in. The drone population is growing.

The *Varroa* mite population is also building.

Seasonal conditions

In Green Bay Wisconsin, in May, the average minimum and maximum temperatures are 45°F and 68°F, with 3.4" of precipitation. The last frost is in mid-May.

Dandelions, maples, deadnettle, wild strawberry, yellow rocket, oak, honey suckle, elderberry, elm trees, willow, and poplar trees are ongoing.

Fruits and fruit trees are blooming: wild and cultivated cherry, peach and plum trees (*Prunus* spp.), pear trees (*Pyrus* spp.), and apple and crabapple trees (*Malus* spp.), as well as blueberries (*Vaccinium* spp.), raspberries, and blackberries (*Rubus* spp.).

Other blooms include black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), mustard (*Brassica* spp.), hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), clovers (Dutch white: *Trifolium repens*, alsike: *Trifolium hybridum*,

red: *Trifolium pratense*), and autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*).

Beekeeping Activities

Inspection

Colony inspections should now take place every two weeks and include evaluating the brood pattern, confirming the presence of the queen and/or eggs, evaluating colony growth and available room, monitoring for pests and diseases, and other metrics. Recordkeeping is key to making these inspections useful and actionable.

If you cannot inspect every one of your colonies, inspect those that are not showing as much activity on the outside.

If the bottom hive body is empty, you might consider moving it above brood nest.

If you install a package or nuc, allow two weeks for the colony to establish before you inspect it.

Nutrition

The bees should be foraging for what they need, but they also need a lot at this time, so remain vigilant and prepared to feed sugar syrup or a pollen supplement if necessary.

Provide supers if the brood chambers are full and the population/stores are growing with the first honey flows of spring.

Feed package bees or nucs upon their arrival.

Pests, parasites, and diseases

Monthly inspections should include monitoring for a range of pests and diseases: look for problems on the outside of the colony, in the brood, and on the adult bees themselves.

Monitor *Varroa* mite levels. At this point in the year, if you find two or more mites (per 100 bees) from a sugar shake, ether roll, or alcohol wash, you will want to treat.

Treatment methods will depend on your management goals, the condition of the colony, and external conditions. Drone comb can be an effective cultural method at this time of year.

This may be a good time to break the brood cycle (and therefore the *Varroa* reproduction cycle) by caging the queen or making splits.

Monitor for *Nosema*. It is present all year, but regular monitoring will still help you understand your normal levels and when/if they peak, particularly if you are seeking to understand why a colony is struggling.

Replace with fresh foundation or newly drawn comb two of your oldest frames in each hive body to reduce the accumulation of *Nosema* spores, American foulbrood spores, and pesticides.

Population management

Install any new packages or nucs that arrive.

Swarm control: if you do not want your bees to swarm, provide them with plenty of room and check that the colony is not honey bound (meaning that there is honey in or around the brood nest effectively restricting the access of the queen from other areas where she would lay eggs). Move the honey combs out of the brood nest and into a super if needed.

Keep an eye out for swarm cells. You may consider splitting the strongest colonies, particularly if you are looking to grow your operation or keep nucs in reserve. Cutting out swarm cells can prevent swarming as well, but needs to be done thoroughly and often (every few days).

You may be able to catch swarms this month.

Combine weak and strong colonies or equalize them if you want, but only after you have checked for diseases in the weak colony.

If your inspection reveals that a queen is underperforming, if you want the vigor of a

young queen, or if you want to introduce new stock for *Varroa* resistance or other properties, you might consider requeening. This is a good month to do it, although local queens are probably in short supply this early in the year.

This is the best time (swarm season) to rear queens. To get from an egg to a mated and laying queen takes about one month takes about one month. Continue to build your cell builder colony while preventing it from swarming. Check regularly for swarm cells, and cut out any you find.

Equipment

Remove any remaining insulation, winter wraps, mouse guards, etc. Entrance reducers can be left on; many beekeepers use them year-round.

Consider adding a queen excluder to manage the honey supers more easily.

Set up bait hives if you want to catch a swarm.

Foundation will be more likely to be drawn out during a honey flow.

Hive products and services

Cut-outs tend to be easier this time of year, when populations are low.

You may be able to trap a small amount of pollen for later use or sale; this needs close monitoring to keep the pollen usable and frequent breaks to keep the bees adequately provisioned.

Blueberries and apples are commercially pollinated this month in the Northeast.

Yard maintenance

Mow the yard as necessary.

Adapted from the Cornell University
Beekeeping Calendar 2020

