

October 2024

BROWN COUNTY BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER



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

www.browncountybeekeepers.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

October is the final push before winterizing the hives. First and foremost, get your mite levels as low as possible before the winterization of the hive. Try to obtain a mite level below 2% infestation. That means you still need to test and, if needed, treat. This will give your winter bees the best possible chance for survival.

Second, monitor the hives winter stores. You should have between 80 and 100 pounds of honey. Hopefully this amount will last the hive until spring. If the hive is not at that level, it's time to feed 2-to-1 sugar syrup. Continue the feeding until the desired weight is reached or the average temp is below 50 degrees. Remember the bees still need to dry down that sugar syrup and the bees start clustering at 50 degrees.

Third, realistically evaluate the populations of each hive. It may be more beneficial to combine two weak hives into a stronger single hive. This may also allow you to use extra honey stores to help out other hives.

While you are doing all this hive management, it is a good time to take note as to what equipment needs to be repaired or replaced. This list will also help you plan for your winter bee projects that you wish to accomplish.

Most importantly enjoy your fall season.

- That's what this month's buzz is about

Chris
president@browncountybeekeepers.com

October 2024 Association Meeting

Date/Time: Wednesday, October 16, 2024

Location: Green Bay Botanical Garden

Zoom Meeting: Meeting ID: 886 4979 7604 Passcode: 376949

No MBM: Feel free to arrive at 5:30p for Networking & Socializing

Mindful Fall Clean-up

As the season turns into fall, and we begin tidying our gardens and yards for winter, it's important to remember that as beekeepers, our responsibility extends beyond honeybees. We are stewards of all insects and invertebrates and play a vital role in their protection and care.

Today, it's more critical than ever to think twice before you cut, rake or blow your fall gardens or yards. Insects such as native bees, fireflies, caterpillars, butterflies, moths and other invertebrates rely on these areas for their winter hibernation and protection. By leaving the leaves, sticks, stalks and stems, you ensure that resources for nests and overwintering habitat are available.

If you need to rake leaves, try gently moving them to a spot where they can remain undisturbed through the winter. These leaves are rich in nutrients that benefit the soil, so instead of burning or removing them, let them naturally decompose and enrich your garden.

Another option is turning your yard waste into a dead hedge. It's an excellent way to repurpose woody prunings from trees, shrubs, and hedges, rather than discarding or burning them. Dead hedges create badly needed habitats for a variety of wildlife, including birds, insects, reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals. They're also great for the soil, as they break down.

By taking small steps like leaving parts of your garden undisturbed or creating a dead hedge, you are supporting the delicate balance of our ecosystem. These simple actions not only provide essential habitats for a wide range of creatures but also improve the health of your soil for seasons to come. Let's work together to ensure that our outdoor spaces remain havens for wildlife, even through the winter months.

Julie Mazzoleni - Education Outreach Chair



2024 BCBA Meeting Education Calendar

Reg = Regular Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30p

MBM = Meeting Before the Meeting: Same Wednesday, starts at 5:45p

Date	Education	Type	Presenter
January 17, 2024	Winter Management Panel	Reg	
February 21, 2024	Honey Judging and Working Bees in Texas	Reg	Stephanie Slater
March 20, 2024	Heritage Honey Bee, Queen Rearing, Nucs and Packages	Reg	Tim Wilbanks
April 17, 2024	Spring Management	Reg	
	Installing Bees	MBM	
May 15, 2024	Beekeeping with Nucs	Reg	James Arvey
	Swarm Recovery	MBM	Dave Elsen
June 19, 2024	Bees and Butterfly Habitat Fund & Native Pollinators	Reg	Mike Laes & Julie Mazzoleni
August 21, 2024	Fall Management	Reg	Nathan Frailey
	Honey Extraction	MBM	
September 18, 2024	Pollen Analysis	Reg	Angie Perrotti, Owner, Melliflora I Honey Pollen Solutions
	Honey Show Prep Q&A	MBM	Stephanie Slater, AHSTC
October 16, 2024	Discussion Panel	Reg	
November 13, 2024	Products of the Hive and Honey Judging Contest	Reg	Stephanie Slater and Club

October Management Info

Seasonal conditions

In Brown County, Wisconsin

Average Temperatures: High: 51F Low: 37F

Average Precipitation: 2.8 inches (0 inches of snow, 2.8 inches of rain)

Average Hours of Sunlight per Day: 10 hours 59 minutes

In the Hive

There is little to no egg laying in October. Drone populations dwindle and any drones that remain in the hive are kicked out by their sisters. Bees tend to form their winter cluster at around 50°F, usually starting in the middle of the month. On warm days, the bees venture out looking for food and may rob unprotected hives.

Inspection

The weather may be too cold for extended inspections. It will also be difficult to correct any problems this late in the season.

Nutrition

- A full-sized colony should have 80 to 100 pounds of honey to eat by the beginning of October, or more than one full deep. Nucs, of course, need less. Estimate the weight by slightly tipping and hefting the hive. If you extract honey, leave enough for the bees or feed them sugar syrup to make up for the difference.
- If you feed the bees sugar syrup, it should be a 2:1 (sugar to water) ratio, thicker than the spring feed; the bees can evaporate the excess moisture from the hive faster from this thicker syrup. Do not boil the solution – it changes the chemical makeup of the sugar that may be harmful to bees.
- The bees will need at least two double-sided frames of pollen/bee bread by late winter/early spring. It is better to feed protein earlier in the season, although you can do so in late winter/early spring if necessary.
- Do not feed pollen or pollen substitute for the remainder of autumn, as bees use the reduction in pollen flow as a cue to continue rearing winter bees.

October Management Info

Pests, parasites, and diseases

- At this point in the year, if you find three or more mites per 100 bee: 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.
- Treatments that are most effective when there is no brood present are good options now.
- Always remove chemical Varroa mite treatments according to label directions, but make sure none remain in the hives before you winterize them.
- Carefully check every brood frame in each colony for American foulbrood infection.

Equipment

- Winter preparation should continue: remove extra supers and queen excluders, secure the hive cover with a rock or straps, add a mouse guard (after confirming that a mouse has not yet moved in), or add an entrance reducer. Consider raising the hive up off the ground, if it is not already. Remove any supers that have not been filled.
- You may insulate the hive, but be sure foremost to avoid moisture build-up in the hives. Cold is less of a problem for bees than condensation. Since much of the heat escapes out of the top of the hive, some beekeepers add a super with an insulating, absorbent material (e.g., dry leaves, wood chips). Others wrap the hives in black tar paper or similar materials.
- Leave an upper entrance open for the exhaust of moisture.
- Tilt the hives forward a few degrees so that any moisture that does accumulate can drain out the bottom entrance.

Yard maintenance

- Consider moving your hives to sunny winter yards. They can be crowded in these yards, since they will not be foraging.
- Be sure that these yards and the spring/summer yards will be accessible in mud season (early spring).
- Consider setting up a wind break near the hives.

For more October management info, visit our month by month education on the [BCBA website](#).



**FACEBOOK SITES
MANAGED BY BCBA**

Brown County Beekeepers
updates on club happenings

Northeast WI Beekeepers
beekeepers helping beekeepers

Brown County Beekeeping Association

Member Benefits

Club Sponsor – Hansen Honey Farm, Rhinelander, WI

- \$5 off each package or nuc of bees until May 2024 (Min purchase required)
- 5% discount for all BCBA members for ongoing purchase
- For online discount code, contact secretary@browncountybeekeepers.com
- When purchasing in-store only, let them know you are a member of the BCBA.

Club Sponsor – Let It Bee, Inc., Greenville, WI

- 5% discount for all BCBA member purchases, except nucs. In-store only.
- When purchasing in-store only, let them know you are a member of the BCBA.

[Click here for the Club Sponsor Website Page](#)

Club Equipment Rental

Perks of being a member! [Click here for the full rental list.](#)

American Bee Journal Subscriptions

(Contact Club Treasurer for Discount form)

Club Education Reimbursement Opportunity

Club members are eligible for up to \$25/ calendar year for continuing education

Eligibility Guidelines:

- Must be a current member for at least 12 consecutive months.
- Member must submit their request to the Leadership Team prior to the event including details on how it aligns to the Club's Mission.
- Note: BCBA sponsored events, books or magazines not eligible for reimbursements.
- Club Expectations of Members Receiving Education Reimbursement
- Overview of the education to the club or an education session.
- Write-up with photos and/or video for club publication.

2024 Club Officers

President: Chris Groth

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Treasurer: Tom Cashman

Tcash99930@aol.com

Vice President: Nathan C. Frailey, Sr.

vicepresident@browncountybeekeepers.com

Secretary: Edmund Poillion

secretary@browncountybeekeepers.com

Website Chair: Carl Fisher

info@browncountybeekeepers.com

Education Outreach Chair: Julie Mazzoleni

Social Media: Wayne Steigelman

Board Member at Large: Dick Sturm

Club Education CoChairs: Emily Skala and Dave Elsen