

BROWN COUNTY BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

August 2026



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

The end of the honey production season is fast approaching. Some beekeepers have already harvested their honey for the season. Remember to give the bees space after removing the honey supers, so a swarming impulse doesn't occur. Other beekeepers are holding out for some late season honey harvest. The dearth is starting as evidenced by hives starting to lose weight, so beekeepers need to start preparing for the fall.

As resources start running low, the bees are going into a robbing mode. Stronger hives raiding weaker ones. It is time for the beekeeper to start assessing a hive potential for being robbed and implementing preventive methods. First would be limiting the entrance size to what the hive can defend. Maybe installing robber screens. Patching up any holes or seams in the hive robber bees could use to gain access to the hive.

Second is to build up the weaker colonies. The best step to do this is mite control. When the honey is off, more mite control options are available to the beekeeper. The mite population in the hive is peaking and this is the best time for mite control before the winter bees are being raised.

Another build up method is to feed 1:1 sugar syrup to stimulate the queen into egg production. This comes with risk as it may stimulate robbing during the dearth. Beekeepers also need to monitor all the hives as bees use their stock piled honey during the dearth. Those strong hives you may want to feed 2:1 sugar syrup to build up their stores. Again, monitor for robbing.

Check to make sure the hive is queen right. The season is growing short for a hive to produce its own queen and for that queen to raise winter bees.

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That's what this month's buzz is about

Chris Groth - President
president@browncountybeekeepers.com





AUGUST MEETING EDUCATION

Featured Speakers: Dave Elsen & Jim Sharp



August Meeting — Fall & Winter Hive Management

Winter preparation starts long before winter arrives!

Join Dave Elsen and Jim Sharp for a practical discussion on getting your bees—and your equipment—ready for the months ahead. They'll share the methods, products, tips and tricks they've picked up through years of beekeeping, with plenty of opportunity for members to ask questions and share what works in their own apiaries.

Topics will include fall and winter feeding, Varroa mite management, pulling and cleaning up honey supers, preparing colonies for winter, wrapping and insulation, ventilation and moisture management, plus some of Dave and Jim's favorite products and techniques.

 **Member Show & Tell:** Have a favorite winter-prep product, homemade setup, feeder, insulation method or other trick that works for you? Bring it along! We'd love to have members share their own ideas and experience.

Image courtesy of Wayne Steigelman -September 2025

— **BCBA AUGUST MEETING** —

FALL & WINTER HIVE MANAGEMENT

**GET YOUR BEES READY
FOR A SUCCESSFUL WINTER!**

Join **Dave Elsen** and **Jim Sharp** for a practical discussion on preparing your colonies and equipment for the cold months ahead. Bring your questions and your experience!

 **MEMBER SHOW & TELL**
Bring a favorite product, setup, trick or tool to share!

WE'LL COVER:

-  Fall & winter feeding
-  Varroa mite management
-  Pulling & cleaning honey supers
-  Preparing colonies for winter
-  Wrapping & insulation
-  Ventilation & moisture management
-  Favorite products, tips & tricks

COME WITH QUESTIONS—LEAVE WITH A GAME PLAN FOR WINTER.

Topic: BCBA Zoom Meeting

Time: Aug 19, 2026 05:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85845491125?pwd=ejwsh3xwbRPuV7Ya4lVhgtPUqUIdGN.1>

Meeting chat link

<https://us06web.zoom.us/launch/jc/85845491125>

Meeting ID: 858 4549 1125

Passcode: 038467





BEEKEEPING ACROSS THE STATE



WHPA Fall Convention November 5-7, 2026

Chula Vista Hotel & Resort, Wisconsin Dells

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Scott McArt, assistant professor of pollinator health in the Department of Entomology at Cornell University

Dr. Dewey Caron, Author, Professor Emeritus, of Entomology & Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware, and an Affiliate Professor, Department of Horticulture, Oregon State University.

[Click here for more information](#)



Bring the Wisconsin Honey Queen to Your Next Event!

Did you know Wisconsin's 2026 Honey Queen is one of our own BCBA members? Emily Skala of Pulaski is a small-scale beekeeper, active Brown County Beekeepers Association member, former WHPA Youth Scholar, and student at UW-Oshkosh studying Medical Laboratory Science. As Wisconsin Honey Queen, Emily is traveling the state promoting honeybees, beekeeping, and Wisconsin honey—and she is available for appearances! Schools, civic and youth groups, fairs, festivals, farmers markets, agricultural events, and other organizations can invite Emily to speak or participate. Let's help keep our own Queen Emily busy sharing the story of Wisconsin's bees! To learn more or schedule an appearance, [visit the Wisconsin Honey Queen Program. \(wihoney.org\)](http://wihoney.org).



State of Wisconsin

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection

Take Advantage of a Free Apiary Inspection!



Whether you're a new beekeeper managing your first colony or an experienced beekeeper overseeing dozens of hives, regular colony assessments are an important part of maintaining healthy bees. That's why the Wisconsin Apiary Program offers free apiary inspections to beekeepers across the state.

During an inspection, trained apiary staff evaluate colony health, assess brood pattern, and look for signs of pests and diseases that may impact colony survival. Inspections can help identify issues such as Varroa mites, brood diseases, nutritional stress, queen problems, and other factors affecting colony performance.

To schedule a free apiary inspection or colony health assessment contact your local apiary inspector or [submit an Apiary Inspection Request](#). To contact us with general questions about pollinators or honey bees, or to report a suspected invasive like the Yellow Legged Hornet, email DATCPapiary@wisconsin.gov.

August

Beekeeping Tips – Northeast Wisconsin

HELPFUL
TIPS

Information Sourced: Bee Squad – Beekeeping in Northern Climates

The Pivot to Winter Survival

August is a critical transition month. Honey production may still be on your mind, but the colony is already preparing the bees that will carry it through winter. Based on recommendations from Bee Squad's Beekeeping in Northern Climates, keep these priorities on your August checklist:

- Harvest honey supers as your summer crop finishes and begin leaving incoming nectar for the bees' winter stores.
- Inspect every 10–14 days and confirm colonies remain queen-right by looking for worker eggs and young larvae.
- Manage Varroa mites now. Protecting the bees being raised in late summer is critical to producing healthy winter bees.
- Evaluate colony strength and space. Make sure colonies have the population and resources needed heading into fall.
- Assess winter food stores. The Bee Squad northern-climate system targets approximately 75 lbs. of stored honey; colonies that are light will need additional stores or fall feeding.
- Watch for robbing. As summer forage declines, reduce entrances when necessary and avoid leaving exposed honey or syrup around the apiary.

Start thinking winter now. Decisions made in August—especially Varroa control, nutrition, and colony strength—can have a major impact on winter survival.

August takeaway: The honey harvest may feel like the finish line, but for the bees, winter preparation has already begun.

Source: Bee Squad – Beekeeping in Northern Climates

August Beekeeping: The Pivot to Winter Survival

HARVEST AND HIVE MANAGEMENT

AUGUST
20TH



Remove honey supers by August 20th.

Allows bees to store remaining incoming nectar for their own winter food.



Perform inspections every 10–14 days.



Check for worker eggs and larvae to confirm colony remains "queen-right."



Ensure bees occupy three deep hive bodies.

Encourage bees to fill all three boxes before the weather turns cold.

HEALTH AND WINTER READINESS



MANAGE VARROA MITES IMMEDIATELY

Controlling mites in mid-to-late summer is essential to protect developing "winter bees."



75 LBS

Target 75 lbs of stored honey.

Assess weight now; feed heavy 2:1 sugar syrup if the colony is underweight.



Reduce entrance size to prevent robbing.

Switch to the smaller entrance hole as forage becomes scarce in late summer.

VARROA MITE THRESHOLDS		DANGER (Control Promptly)	
SUMMER PEAK		✓ < 2%	✗ > 3%
LATE SUMMER DECREASE		✓ < 2%	✗ > 2-3%



Source: Beekeeping in Northern Climates
by Bee Squad

2026 BCBA Meeting Education Calendar



Reg = Regular Meetings: 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30p
New Beekeeper Forum (5:30-6:30)

A one-hour forum for new beekeepers to connect, share questions and challenges, and learn from one another. An experienced beekeeper will join the discussion to offer guidance and support.

Dates	Topic	Edu Type	Presenter
Jan 21 '26	Wax Processing and Wax Products	Reg MBM	Rance Bennett, This Old Hive New Member Forum
Feb 18 '26	Splits, Understanding the Queen Calendar and buying queens or hive requeening math	Reg MBM	Dick Sturm Kevin Berry New Member Forum
Mar 18 '26	Development of his northern VSH queens and nucs. How to establish and maintain mite resistant genetics Research with Marquette University.	Reg MBM	Trevor Bawden of Lloyd Street Bees and Marquette University New Member Forum
Apr 15 '26	Spring Management Package and Nuc Install	Reg MBM	Round Table New Member Forum
May 20 '26	Mite Management - Testing, Treatments and Honey Bee Health Coalition	Reg MBM	Club Workshop New Member Forum
Jun 17 '26	Non-standard beehives, like Layens, AZ houses, Top Bars and native bee houses	Reg MBM	Charlie Koenen New Member Forum
Aug 19 '26	Dave Elsen & Jim Sharp Fall Management Honey Extraction	Reg MBM	Lucas & Liam Ford Honey Extraction
Sep 16 '26		Reg	New Member Forum
Oct 21 '26	Discussion Panel or Networking?	Reg MBM	New Member Forum
Nov 18 '26	Products of the Hive and Honey Judging Contest	Reg MBM	Club Judged Competition & Party New Member Forum

Brown County Beekeeping Association

Member Benefits

Club Sponsor – Hansen Honey Farm, Rhinelander, WI

- 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)

2026 Club Officers

President: Chris Groth

president@browncountybeekeepers.com

Vice President-Social Media-Newsletter

Wayne Steigelman

vicepresident@browncountybeekeepers.com

Treasurer: Chad Ford

treasurer@browncountybeekeepers.com

Secretary: Chris DeWolfe

secretary@browncountybeekeepers.com

Leadership Team

Board Member at Large: Dick Sturm

Historian — Edmund Poillion

Mentoring Committee - Shellie Milheiser

Webmaster: Carl Fisher

info@browncountybeekeepers.com

Education Outreach: Bob Michiels

Swarm Czar — Jesse Kallioinen

Club Education CoChairs: Mimi Gerner and Dave Elsen

