



THE NORFOLK BEE

Norfolk County, Massachusetts • www.norfolkbees.org

Volume 7, Issue 2 February/March 2008

Spring's coming...

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The highlight of February has been another successful start for the Bee School. Over 40 new members have joined the sessions and we again have a good mix of individuals, couples and families from across the county. Our sincere thanks to everyone that helped spread news about the school and who is helping present the session topics. Remember that any dues-current member can come to individual classes for a refresher or to contribute their opinions and experiences.

And finally, a reminder to everyone that if you are ordering bee packages (ETA early April) or new wooden gear to get your orders in NOW.

Ed

PS. See Ed's recipe for Crisco Patties on page 7.

FROM THE EDITOR

Hello NCBA Club members! I apologize for the lateness of the February Newsletter. After not being sick all winter, the mother of all crud finally nailed me for the last week and I am only getting back to normal now.

That being said, here is your February Newsletter. I am again including Andy's Bee Package Order Form (see page 8) - as Ed says, if you have not ordered your bees yet, do so NOW! If you are in the Bee School and are as yet unsure if you want to start a hive this year, you might as well order a package anyway, as I am sure you will have no trouble getting rid of it to another club member if you decide not to start your hive this year.

Best,
Kate

FREE BEES!

What happens when a non-beekeeper encounters a swarm of bees? They panic, right? The bees which cause ordinary folks to quake in fear might be the basis of a great new hive for you!

Unfortunately, most people will call an exterminator to rid their home of a swarm, thus assuring destruction of valuable (and potentially genetically diverse) bees.

Increasingly, evidence shows that feral bees from your home region are the best adapted bees you can keep. The Feral Bee Project (<http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/FeralBeeProject/>) explores the "exciting potentials that exist for beekeeping in feral and untreated survivor honeybee colonies". Grant Gillard of Jackson, MO, a member of the Feral Bee Project List recommends the following methods for being the "go-to" person who gets called when a swarm of bees has occurred.

Every spring he puts his name and cell phone number
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on a stack of 3x5" index cards (you can get these from Staples (made by Avery) to fit your computer printer). The cards read "Honeybee swarms caught and retrieved." You can add some bee clip art if you want. Grant uses bright yellow card stock to attract attention. Then he mails the cards like notices to his local:

Police Department
Fire Department
Animal Control
Exterminators (check the yellow pages)
Ag Extension
State Conservation department
Humane Shelters
Garden Centers
Biology / entomology departments of the local colleges

Every year, he spend a few dollars on postage stamps and reminds these organizations with a nice post card which gets him to the top of their call lists. As a beekeeper, their problem calls might be your free bees! He also suggests that if you can take a picture of you capturing or removing a swarm, local news outlets love this type of "color". He did this once and sent the photos with an explanation he wrote via email to his local newspaper and they were immediately published. He recounts that "about half of my swarm callers that year commented, "Say, aren't you that guy who rescued the swarm from the football field?" To be prepared, Grant asks the following list of questions when he gets a swarm call:

1. How high is the swarm? (Anything over eight or ten feet is out of his range.)
2. Where are they located? If they are coming in and out of a hole, it isn't a swarm, it's a colony. If it looks grey like a football, it's a hornets' nest. If it's on the corner of a second story roof, it's probably too high. This question will also alert you as to what you might need to bring (ladder, stool, boxes, etc.)
3. What does the swarm look like? He's answered many calls only to find out it was just bees happily foraging a deeply scented shrub that terrified the homeowner. Make sure it's a SWARM. If they're coming out of a hole in the ground, they're probably hornets.

4. How long have they been there? Some people wait two days before they call; the longer it's been, the greater the chance the bees will have moved on by the time you get there. Grant usually keeps a hive body (with top and bottom boards) in his van at all times - you never know where you'll be when you get called.

5. How big is the swarm? Most swarms are about the size of a football or a gallon of milk. The caller usually thinks they are the size of a bath tub. Some swarms are nothing more than a small cluster of lost scout bees left behind after the swarm has moved on

6. Where is the swarm located? Get really good directions. Grant limits his swarm calls to his own county - if he can't get there in 30 minutes he usually declines the call.

7. Get a phone number for the caller. You'd be surprised how many homeowners are out in the yard watching the swarm cluster when you're trying to call them on their home phone. Take a good map with all street names listed on it with you.

8. Bring a jar of honey to sell them (They'll gladly buy it and pay you for it). The jar of honey also gives you a future referral.

Grant says people always ask if they owe him anything. Usually he declines - he has the bees as his compensation. In a few cases when he's driven more than 30 minutes, he suggests \$20 for gas.

Grant warns that you may get calls to remove existing colonies from the walls of buildings. He doesn't do this anymore as he feels it's too much work and takes too much time, and his success rate in getting the bees transferred to a hive body is low. Also, you have to be a pretty good carpenter to tear apart someone's wall in order to put it back together. He used to tell them he'd tear it apart but that they'd have to find someone to put it back.

Grant has found that some agencies (like the county ag extension or conservation dept) will directly refer their swarm calls to someone they think will help capture the honeybees. If they know you keep bees and want more bees, they will make every effort to reach you so they don't have to deal with them! Be clear with them,
(continued on pg. 7)

KNOW YOUR PESTS

PEST OF THE MOTH: WAX MOTH (*GALLERIA MELLONELLA*)

WAX MOTHS CAN BE A PROBLEM IF ALLOWED TO GET OUT OF HAND AND WILL DESTROY BROOD COMB IN A VERY SHORT TIME IF UNCHECKED. THE ADULT WAX MOTH ENTERS BEEHIVES TO LAY ITS EGGS IN CREVICES TOO SMALL FOR BEES TO ENTER. IF THE HIVE IS WEAK, THE MOTH LARVAE CAN BE VERY DESTRUCTIVE, EATING BROOD AND DESTROYING COMB. THE LARVAE SPIN WEBS ON THE FRAMES OR ON THE BOTTOM BOARD, TUNNELING THROUGH THE COMB AND DESTROYING HONEY, POLLEN AND BROOD.

WAX MOTH LARVAE ARE LIGHT GRAY OR TAN-COLORED GRUBS, APPROXIMATELY 3/4 INCH LONG. THESE LARVAE HAVE THE ABILITY TO CRAWL ON THEIR OWN OVER 10 FT, SO IF YOU REMOVE THEM FROM THE HIVE, STEP ON THEM TO MAKE SURE THEY DO NOT RE-ENTER. THE LARVAE FEED ON WAX AND HIVE DEBRIS, TUNNELING JUST UNDER THE CELL CAPS AND FEEDING ON THE DISCARDED COCOONS LEFT BY THE BEES, LEAVING BEHIND AN EXTREMELY STICKY WHITE WEB, SIMILAR TO SPIDER WEBS BUT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO PULL APART.



Adult wax moth and bee



Wax moth on hive



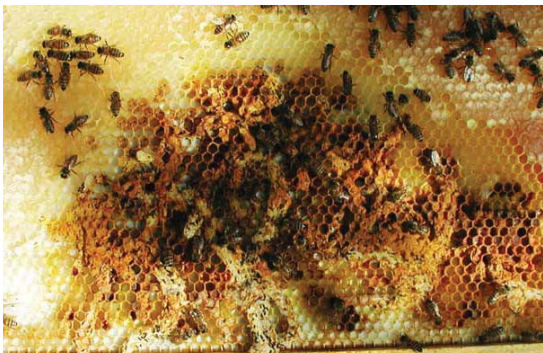
Wax moth larvae

A NORMAL HEALTHY HIVE WILL KEEP WAX MOTH UNDER CONTROL BY EJECTING THE LARVAE, BUT WEAKENED HIVES WITH SMALL POPULATIONS CAN BE OVERCOME BY WAX MOTH INFESTATIONS WHICH CAN ULTIMATELY DESTROY THE HIVE. IN CASES OF MINOR INFESTATIONS PULL OUT ANY LARVAE YOU SEE AND CLEAN OUT ALL WEBS. FREEZING IS A VERY GOOD WAY OF KILLING LARVAE AND EGGS, SO STORAGE IN AN OUTSIDE UNHEATED SHED DURING THE WINTER CAN BE USEFUL. BOXES SHOULD HAVE A SCREEN TOP AND BOTTOM TO PREVENT MOUSE DAMAGE AND ALLOW LIGHT TO ENTER AS WAX MOTH PREFER THE DARK. WHILE THERE ARE CHEMICAL TREATMENTS FOR WAX MOTH, A SIMPLER (AND HEALTHIER) SOLUTION IS TO PREVENT THEM BY TRAPPING THEM:

WAX MOTH TRAP

TAKE A CLEAN, CAPPED 2 LITER PLASTIC SODA BOTTLE AND CUT A 1.5" HOLE JUST BELOW THE SLOPE ON THE NECK, THEN ADD 1 CUP SUGAR, 1 CUP WHITE VINEGAR, 1 WHOLE BANANA (WITH PEEL – CUT IT UP TO GET IT IN BOTTLE) AND WATER TO ABOUT 2" BELOW THE HOLE YOU CUT.

PUNCH A WIRE OR STRONG STRING THROUGH THE BOTTLE ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE HOLE AND HANG IN A TREE NEAR YOUR HIVES. MAKE ONE TRAP FOR EVERY 4 – 5 HIVES. IN ABOUT 2 WEEKS THE MIXTURE WILL START TO FERMENT AND ATTRACT (AND SUBSEQUENTLY DROWN) MOTHS AS WELL AS WASPS AND HORNETS. YOU CAN ALSO HANG A TRAP NEAR YOUR STORED HIVES TO KEEP MOTHS AWAY.



Wax moth larvae damage



Wax moth mess removed from hive



What's left behind

NORFOLK COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

ADMINISTRATIVE PAGE

The Norfolk County Beekeeper's Association (NCBA), is dedicated to apiculture education and promotion of the art and science of beekeeping among beekeepers, agriculture and the general public. This is a "Non-profit" organization, meeting the first Monday of every month, at 7:30 PM (second Monday if the first Monday is a holiday). The meetings are held at the Norfolk Agricultural High School (Media Center Cafeteria) in Walpole, MA. Meetings in June-August will be held at members' bee yards as announced.

2008-2009 NCBA OFFICERS

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FAIR COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Position is open.

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SWAP N' SELL N' WANTED CLASSIFIEDS

Here's a column where you can sell, swap, or give away just about anything. If you are a paid member, advertising is free for as many issues as you wish. If you are not a member, the cost is \$8.00/ad/issue (so, it pays to become a member for just \$15!)



SUGAR

ANDY RESEKA HAS 80 LB. BOXES OF SUGAR FOR SALE FOR \$24. PLEASE CONTACT HIM DIRECTLY AT: (508) 429-6872

RAFFLE TABLE

WE GREATLY APPRECIATE ALL ITEMS BROUGHT IN FOR THE CLUB RAFFLE TABLE. WE WILL BE BEEFING UP THE RAFFLE WITH SOME NEW HIGH-QUALITY BEE-RELATED PRODUCTS, BUT PLEASE KEEP SUPPORTING THIS IMPORTANT CLUB FUND-RAISER.

THIS MONTH'S DOOR PRIZE WILL BE A CLUB HIVE.

HIVE LOCATION AVAILABLE

Donna Galipeau, an organic farmer, would like to know if anyone would like to put a hive at her farm in Bellingham. If you are interested, please contact her at 508-883-1344 or dgalipeau@comcast.net.

MEETING DISCUSSIONS

Since it has become part of our regular meetings to have a discussion about current beekeeping procedures and questions & answer sessions, we will be posting a writing of this on the web. As detailed notes are too lengthy to incorporate into the newsletter, we will list a. outline of what was discussed so that people can reference them when they go to the web.

LIST OF MEETING DISCUSSIONS

DECEMBER 2007

1. CHECKING HIVES NOW AND OVER THE WINTER
2. COMMENTS FROM THE NOVEMBER SNEBA MEETING

JANUARY 2008

1. SOLICITATION OF IDEAS FOR CLUB
2. REBRANDING UPDATE

3. BEE SCHOOL UPDATE

4. WINTER CARE AND FEEDING
5. SMALL-CELL PRESENTATION

FEBRUARY 2008

1. LIBRARY ISSUES
2. BEE SCHOOL UPDATE
3. BEE PACKAGES
4. HOUSE POSITIONING
5. MASTER BEEKEEPER

A TASTE OF HONEY



FOR PEOPLE



MOVIE NIGHT SNACKS

As winter draws to a close, cuddle up under a blanket and watch your favorite movie with a honey of a snack!

HONEY CARAMEL CORN

Ingredients

1/2 cup honey
1/2 cup butter or margarine
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
dash of salt
1/4 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. grated orange peel (optional)
3 quarts popped popcorn
(microwave, air-popped or whatever you prefer)

Directions

Preheat oven to 250°F.

Prepare popcorn and set aside to cool.

Melt butter or margarine in large saucepan over medium heat; stir in brown sugar, honey and salt. Turn heat to medium-high and stir thoroughly until it starts to boil.

Remove from heat and add baking soda (the caramel will bubble up). You can add the optional orange peel at this point if you want. (You can also add almonds or peanuts if you want.)

Place popcorn in large oven-safe bowl; slowly pour syrup over popcorn while stirring (it helps to spray your mixing spoon or spatula with a *Pam*-type spray first).

Turn onto ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 45 minutes; stirring every 15 minutes.

Cool. Eat!

HONEY CHAI TEA

Ingredients

2 cups water
2 black tea bags (any type - experiment!)
2 tsp. vanilla
1/2 tsp. ground ginger powder
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ground allspice
1/2 cup honey
2 cups milk
(you can also use soymilk or any milk substitute)

Directions

Make Chai Tea Base:

In medium saucepan, combine water, tea, vanilla, ginger, cinnamon, allspice and honey. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and allow to steep for 30 minutes. Remove tea bags. Cover and refrigerate.

To serve hot: combine equal parts of Chai Tea Base and milk. Heat on stovetop or in microwave.

To serve cold: combine equal parts of Chai Tea Base and milk over ice cubes.

Chai Tea Base may be stored in refrigerator for up to 1 week.

Note: Doctors recommend that you do not feed honey to any infant under the age of one year.

MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 2008 MEETINGS

Meeting started at 7:45 with 58 members in attendance.

Next Meeting: March 3.

Board members present: Ed Karle, Tony Lulek, Kate Notman, Sue Osgood, Sue Simmons, Tim Sullivan, Lesky Lescoe.

Door Prizes: The hive from last year was won by Fred Rapkin, a pollen trap was won by Lesky Lescoe.

Raffle: Items included honey buckets, canvas tote bags, soap, and honey.

Refreshments: Some very good home made items as well as other delicious items. Contributions at the next meeting will be welcomed.

Visitors: We had four engineering students from Olin College of Engineering in Needham who are in a design class. They have chosen beekeepers as their focus group and will be developing a tool or process to facilitate beekeeping. They will also be visiting Ed later in the week to look at equipment.

Discussed:

1. Tony gave the financial report.
2. Sue Osgood mentioned that about 15 books have been signed out for several months and a couple for almost a year. Those in attendance were asked to check the sign-out list for their names and to see if they can find and return them. All members are asked to check at home and bring back any books they are finished with. Sue also mentioned that book donations are welcome.
3. Tim mentioned that there are currently 34 signed up for bee school tomorrow.
(It turns out we had 38. We're off to a good start. Some of the students are already keeping bees and have had some experience. Welcome to our new 38 members.)
Members with a special area of expertise or interest who would like to make a presentation at one of the classes should contact Tim.
4. Tony and Kate have been working on new branding items and hope to have sample designs for members to pick from and vote on at the next meeting.
5. Dues are due.
6. Andy said that packages should be in around April 5. Although no problems are anticipated, he reminded everyone to order early as late orders may get bumped by the supplier if they cannot meet the whole order. Pickup will be at his place in Holliston. Order form is on our web site.
7. Tim's presentation was on Housel position of the Y at the bottom of each comb cell. Observing the "proper"

Housel position, Ys on the side of the foundation away from the center of the hive, inverted Ys toward the center, may be more natural and result in less stressed (and more peaceful) bees. The presentation will be on the web site or talk to Tim if you would like more information.

8. After the presentation the meeting continued with Ed mentioning club name tags. These will be purchased from the same person who made them last time. If you would like one, the club will pay for it but you must e-mail Ed and ask him to order it.

9. Ed is working on getting authoritative guest speakers for future meetings.

10. Members had previously asked about advanced training. Ed says he has done some checking and is looking into Master Beekeeper programs. He hasn't found any in this area. Will continue checking with Mass Bee Keeping Assn and other sources.

- Q&A: Discussions included American Foul Brood as well as the pros & cons of using Karo syrup in fondant; or whether or not fondant is needed. There was point and counter-point exchanged.
 - Varroa is still a concern. Don't forget, it's warm inside the hive; check your bottom boards. If it gets warm enough for the bees to break cluster, you might want to sugar dust. It's a good time - since there is no brood, there is no place for them to hide.
 - Also, if it's a warm day, you can move capped honey frames to the center of the hive moving the consumed ones to the outer edges. (As I found, wear your suit and gloves. The girls are grouchy this time of year)
 - Andy mentioned feeding pollen substitute when they start raising brood. Too early (late March) may stimulate brood production which might cause early swarming.
 - Once you start the 1x1 syrup feeding don't stop until nectar is available and they stop taking the syrup
 - Other discussions concerned mice in the hive. They apparently can get in holes as small as 1/2". You can put the small thin mouse bate in the hive - the kind exterminators use. It causes them to get thirsty, leave the hive and die.
 - If you find a dead hive, you should clean out the dead bees and brood so it doesn't decay and/or go moldy. The capped honey can be moved to other hives, stored for spring feeding or leave it and install a package in that hive.
- Meeting ended at 9:07*

(continued from pg. 2)

however, that you are only interested in honeybees and that you will not remove wasps, hornets or other insects. When Grant receives a call about a honeybee swarm, he always asks the caller where the referral came from, and in turn, he calls the referring agency to thank them and tell them how much he appreciates the referral.

He says he's heard lots of stories about how an anxious homeowner started out calling the garden center, who referred them to the humane shelter, who figured it was an extermination problem so the exterminator thought to call animal control, who happened to be across the hall from the dispatcher at the police department, who in turn gave them his number.

If they know you want the calls, you'll get them. The trick is just getting your information out there. Who knows, the swarm you capture may turn out to be your strongest hive!

**NCBA
2007-2008 MONTHLY
MEETING SCHEDULE**

MARCH 3

APRIL 7

MAY 5

JUNE SOCIAL TBA

MARCH MEETING AGENDA:

- 1) DOOR PRIZE - ONE CLUB HIVE**
- 2) FINANCES - TONY**
- 3) LIBRARY ITEMS - SUSAN**
- 4) BEESCHOOL - HOWARD**
- 5) BOARD MEETING SUMMARY - LESKY**
- 6) NCBA REBRANDING - KATE**
- 7) MA BEE ASSOCIATION FEBRUARY MEETING REPORT - ED**
- BREAK - REFRESHMENTS**
- 8) MEETING SPECIAL TOPIC - BEEKEEPING IN HAITI AS SEEN BY ED KARLE**
- 9) MONTHLY Q&A - ALL**
- 10) CURRENT PERIODICAL ARTICLES - ED & TONY**

FOR THE BEES

CRISCO PATTY RECIPE

Courtesy of Ed Karle

For about six 1/4" x 6" patties:

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb. Crisco (shortening)
- 1 1/2 lb. granulated sugar

Directions

Mix these well and then add in order, mixing well between each addition:

- 4 Tb. your own (or safe) honey
- 1 Tb. powdered red horse/farm salt if available
- 1 1/2 tsp. good quality mint extract

This only works against the tracheal mites, but it is effective. The mites hate the natural mint oil and Crisco grease the bees eat.

ONLINE RESOURCES

THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING OF A LIST OF ONLINE RESOURCES. PLEASE EMAIL KATE IF YOU HAVE ANY GOOD ONES TO ADD.

ONLINE RESOURCES

- 1. YOUTUBE.COM - GREAT BEEKEEPING VIDEOS**
- 2. WWW.BEESOURCE.COM**
- 3. WWW.BEEMASTER.COM**
- 4. WWW.WIKIPEDIA.COM**
- 5. WWW.GOBEEKEEPING.COM**
- 6. WWW.HONEY.COM**
- 7. WWW.NHB.COM**
- 8. WWW.BEEKEEPING.COM**
- 9. WWW.ABFNET.ORG**

ONLINE BEE EQUIPMENT SELLERS

- 1. WWW.DADANT.COM**
- 2. WWW.MANNLAKETD.COM**
- 3. WWW.BRUSHYMOUNTAINBEEFARM.COM**
- 4. WWW.BETTERBEE.COM**
- 5. WWW.HONEYSUPERCELL.COM**

MAGAZINES:

- 1. BEE CULTURE (ROOT PUBLICATIONS)
WWW.BEECULTURE.COM**
- 2. AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL (DADANT)
WWW.DADANT.COM/JOURNAL**

RESESKA APIARIES, INC.

PHONE: (508) 429-6872

E-MAIL: reeska-apiaries@verizon.net

2008 BEE PACKAGE ORDER FORM FOR NCBA MEMBERS

3 Lb. bee package from Wilbanks Apiaries with an Italian queen will be available for pick-up in Holliston on April 6th, 2007. **THIS IS THE "TENTATIVE DATE". DATE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS IN GEORGIA. You will be notified of any change of delivery date by e-mail, phone, website. This year the price is \$ 72.00 per package for members in good standing (dues paid).**

In order to reserve your bees, we need payment in full at the time you place your order. The pick up will be at our warehouse: 229 Lowland St., Holliston, MA. If ordering, please make sure you give a reliable phone number, and if possible, an email address. We try to deliver the bee packages as soon as they arrive to us. **REMEMBER: DATES MAY AND PROBABLY WILL CHANGE (IT DEPENDS ON WEATHER). IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER PLANS FROM 4/5/07 TO 4/20/07, OR THEREABOUTS, THINK BEFORE YOU SEND A CHECK, OR ARRANGE FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO PICK UP YOUR BEES. ALSO: KEEP IN MIND THAT SOMETIMES THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF PACKAGES ON SHIPMENT FROM THE SUPPLIER TO US. IN THAT CASE, WE FILL OUR ORDERS ON A FIRST ORDERED BASIS.**

Cancellation fee \$ 5.00

We Have Sugar for feeding bees, very clean in 80lb boxes for \$ 24.00 as well as drums 440lbs-500lbs for \$ 0.26 per lb.

2008 BEE PACKAGE ORDER FORM FOR NCBA MEMBERS:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

QUANTITY: _____ Price: (\$ 72.00 each)

_____ 3 lb Packages

_____ 80lb box of Sugar "sweepings" \$ 24.00

Total \$ _____

(Order must be paid in full)

* PLEASE, MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO RESESKA APIARIES, INC., AND MAIL IT TO: 148 ADAMS STREET, HOLLISTON, MA 01746

THE BUZZ



WINTER BLOOMERS

Wouldn't you like to see this next winter? A beautiful flowering shrub/small tree that the bees can find on those few winter days they can get out of the hive? Give your landscape a beautiful shot of midwinter color by planting witch hazel (*hamamelis*). This group of large shrubs produces spiderlike blossoms of narrow, delicate petals that open along the bare branches of the plant.

Colors range from yellow to red with the leaves turning shades of yellow, orange and red in autumn. Vernal witch hazel (*H. vernalis*) is a slow-growing shrub, reaching 10 to 15 feet in height; its small, fragrant yellow flowers are the first to open, from January through March. Plants are hardy to about -20°F. Blooming February through March, Chinese witch hazel (*H. mollis*) also has richly fragrant yellow flowers. Also look for showy *H. intermedia* hybrids. They bloom from late January to March, depending on variety and location (earlier in the south, later in the north). Fragrant flowers in shades of red, copper and yellow last for as long as one month.

These shrubs typically grow upright 15 to 20 feet high and wide, and are hardy to -20°F. Select named varieties, such as the widely recommended 'Arnold Promise,' with 1 1/2 inch canary-yellow flowers, and 'Diana,' with bright coppery-red flowers. Plant witch hazel this spring or wait until next fall. Grow plants in sun or partial shade and in neutral to slightly acid soil rich in organic matter. Established plants require little upkeep.



From: Kate Notman
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TO: