



# The Norfolk Bee

Norfolk County, Massachusetts • [www.norfolkbees.org](http://www.norfolkbees.org)

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## Letter from the Editor

It is hard to believe that Spring is almost here. I'm sitting here drinking hot chocolate as I write this. In about 3 weeks our packaged bees should be arriving. I just can't see it being warm enough. I was thinking of starting on sugar syrup, but I hesitated and contacted Tim Sullivan for some advice. (see Spring is Near). I'm glad I waited, what with this cold weather. I did see my bees out for a brisk stroll on Friday. I managed to check on them and slipped them a bit more candy, though there was still plenty there.

Once I get a chance to do a full inspection, I am going to be switching the boxes for the brood chambers with my new boxes, as I have installed the metal strips for the frames. I am then going to clean the older boxes and use them for my new hive. I imagine I will also be able to swap a couple of frames of honey, as I'm sure I have some. My bees were centered most of the winter and I know there were some solid frames of honey on the outside frames.

I also have to remember to use Fumigal-B for nosema as well. I did notice that on the slide-out plastic sheet on my SBB (which I thought I had taken out in the fall) that there were several mites. Not sure how I want to handle this. Any advice is greatly appreciated. I did mostly sugar dusting last year with my new hive and I only had 25 on a 24 hour drop at the end of the summer.

Every time I've sat down to do the newsletter, I always worry that I won't have enough stuff to fill the pages. Well once again, I've got too much information. Its hard to decided what to put in. This month, I've decided to attach a couple of additional things to the email that I thought were important. One is the Massachusetts Beekeepers Association Newsletter; there is a lot of good information there. As well I'll be including information and an application/contact info for the MassBee Spring Meeting on April 1st.

*Tony Lulek*

## SPRING IS NEAR

Nothing is quite so uplifting to beekeepers as seeing their bees bringing in loads of pollen on a warm late winter day. Not only has your hive made it through the winter thus far, but all that pollen means the queen is busy producing the workers who will be ready in six more weeks to take advantage of that first big nectar flow. That was the picture in my apiary 3/10 and 3/11, but one hive was so active I was afraid it might have been getting robbed out. I watched carefully at the entrance and noticed no fighting and about 20% of the returning bees were carrying pollen. So not only were my fears unfounded, but I think I may have found the hive from which I will be harvesting eggs for my foray into queen rearing. This hive last season was gentle, produced a fair crop and now shows good overwintering traits; what more could I ask from a donor queen?

Now that the temperatures have moderated, your bees have been able to break cluster and access honey stores not previously available to them. For those of us who had to feed fondant because hives were light in stores or (like me) feed fondant to all hives just in case it may be needed, the warmer temperatures and newly accessible honey give peace of mind. Still the question of switching to syrup comes up and one wonders how early to make the switch. I always thought April 1st was a safe date to begin feeding syrup but if I see a hive low on fondant at this date, I would probably not hesitate to feed syrup. Feeding syrup during extended cold spells stresses the hive due to the difficulty the bees will have in evaporating the water out of the syrup. This is one reason why fall feedings are made with *(cont. page 2)*

### LOOK FOR THE NEW SECTIONS IN THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER

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### Bee Packages

As of March 13, Reseska Apiaries is sold out of packaged bees. If you still have not ordered them, I would suggest Merrimack Valley Apiaries.

### Annual Club Social

Right now the date is up in the air. We will discuss this at the April meeting.

2 to 1 syrup instead of 1 to 1, but there is another reason. Light syrup (1 to 1) simulates a nectar flow, and among other effects it has on a hive, it will stimulate the queen to increase her rate of egg laying. A word of caution here-if you start feeding syrup this early to a hive which has overwintered in good shape, be prepared to deal with a strong swarming impulse. If you were paying attention during our queen rearing meetings, a strong swarming impulse can be to your advantage to raise new queens but you need to stay on top of hive conditions or you will surely lose a swarm.

Hmmmmmmmmmm, I wonder if a meeting about bait hives might be interesting?

*Tim Sullivan*

### Monthly Meeting Snack Table

Once again, Susan is asking for help with the sweets/treats. Thank you to those that contributed last month. If you are interested in baking something for the April meeting, please contact Susan at [rastasue30@hotmail.com](mailto:rastasue30@hotmail.com) If you did sign up, this is a reminder. There will be a sign-up sheet at the next meeting for additional months.

### Local Beekeeping Supplier in Ware .....

Lagrant's Honeybees and Supplies, located in Ware, Massachusetts, welcomes you to our on-line store. Here, you'll find background about our business, and information about our goods and services.

Whether you are a beginner or an experienced beekeeper, Lagrant's has something for you. From essential equipment like suits and smokers to advanced beekeeping supplies like commercial extractors - we have it all.

Be sure to check out our on-line catalog, or if you're in the area, please give us a call and stop by.

<http://www.lagrantshoneybees.com/index.html>

Raising honeybees for sale is a good portion of Lagrant's business.



### President's Perspective

Tim has put together a third presentation on queen rearing which he will present on April 3rd. It focuses on larval transfer systems and it is truly worth coming to the meeting just to see the effort he has put into the talk. In conjunction with the slide

show we have a Jenter Queen System as a door prize which has a \$75 value.

Speaking of value, rumor has it that there will be several significant items up for grabs at the Club Social. The tentative date is April 30th, but that has not been confirmed yet.

And a final note, it is not too early to submit ideas for the upcoming outdoor meetings.

**MASS BEE MEETING APRIL 1ST!**

Regards,

### NCBA COOK BOOK

I have been chatting with Susan Simmons about the possibility of doing a club cook book. I am sure that there are enough recipes out there that we could put something together. It would be a great way to share things within the club. We could possibly sell our cook-book at fairs too. If anyone would like to help on this project, just let Susan or me know. We will bring this up at the next club meeting.

### Finding the Queen

If I do not find the queen after my first inspection, I move the hive about six feet away and place an empty hive body and bottom board on the old location. Then I inspect two or three frames for the queen again. If I don't find her on these frames, I shake the bees off back into the hive and put the frames without bees in the empty hive body at the old location. Then I close both hives for an hour or so. The old bees will leave the old hive and return to the new hive at the old location. This reduces the number of bees to look through when searching again for the queen.

I feel that there is less stress on the bees using this method. This also separates the young bees from the older field bees, making the acceptance of a new queen easier with young bees. Just return the old queen to the old hive when located. (...from the BEE CULTURE mail box)

*(Courtesy of Norm Shaw)*



# Creative Comb

**Honey**  
by Robert Morgan

## Honey

Only calmness will reassure  
the bees to let you rob their hoard.  
Any sweat of fear provokes them.  
Approach with confidence, and from  
the side, not shading their entrance.  
And hush smoke gently from the spout  
of the pot of rags, for sparks will  
anger them. If you go near bees  
every day they will know you.  
And never jerk or turn so quick  
you excite them. If weeds are trimmed  
around the hive, they have access  
and feel free. When they taste your smoke  
they fill themselves with honey and  
are laden and lazy as you  
lift the lid to let in daylight.  
No bee full of sweetness wants to  
sting. Resist greed. With its top off  
you touch the fat gold frames, each cell  
a hex perfect as a snowflake,  
a sealed relic of sun and time  
and roots of many acres fixed  
in crystal-tight arrays, in rows  
and lattices of sweeter latin  
from scattered prose of meadows, woods.

*Poem: "Honey" by Robert Morgan from Wild Peavines. © Gnomon.*

*Courtesy of Jean Mudge*

**Thought for the day**

If a beekeeper tells you he knows what he's doing, be wary and keep a keen eye on this fellow. For he has already told one lie, and no doubt will tell you another.

- A couple of Bee facts .....**
- Honeybees fly 15 mph.
  - Their distinctive buzz comes from the flapping of their wings at the rate of 11,400 strokes per minute.
  - To produce a pound of honey, bees must hit 2 million flowers.
  - Honeybees collect 66 pounds of pollen a year per hive.
  - Honeybees originated in Europe. They were brought to North America by early settlers.
  - Beekeeping was practiced in Egypt as early as 2500 B.C.
  - A colony ranges from 20,000 to 80,000 bees and can consume as much as 1.2 pounds of honey a day.

**You know you're a beekeeper when . . .**

*By John Caldeira, with contributions from many others.*  
<http://outdoorplace.org/beekeeping/youknow.htm>

You know the bloom period of more local flowers than the state horticulturist.

You welcome a rainy weekend if it will stimulate nectar production.

# A Taste of Honey



## For People

### Honey-Baked Chicken

#### Ingredients

2 Small fryer chickens, quartered  
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, melted  
2/3 cup honey  
1/4 cup Dijon mustard  
1 teaspoon curry powder

#### Directions

Place chicken pieces in large slow cooker, skin side up and sprinkle a little salt over the chicken.

In a bowl, combine butter, honey, mustard, and curry powder. Mix well.

Pour butter-mustard mixture over chicken quarters.

Cover and cook on LOW for 6 to 8 hours. Baste chicken once during cooking.

*Thank you Susan Simmons for this great recipe.*

### Greek-Style Yogurt with Honey and Walnuts

#### Ingredients

2 to 3 cups plain yogurt (preferably Greek Style)  
3/4 to 1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 1/2 to 2 cups toasted walnuts  
1/2 to 3/4 cup honey

#### Directions

Stir together yogurt and vanilla, Layer alternately with remaining ingredients into 4 to 6 glasses, beginning with yogurt and ending with walnuts and honey.

*Thank you Susan Simmons for this great recipe.*

## For the Bees

### Sugar Syrup Spring Feeding

Spring will be here soon and with that will come feeding sugar syrup to your hive. This time of the year you should be feeding a mixture of 1 to 1, sugar to water. Don't confuse this with the fall syrup with is a 2 to 1.

The spring feed is meant to stimulate a nectar flow, where the fall feeding is thicker which helps the bees reduce the syrup quicker for honey stores.

#### Ingredients

Mix 5 pounds sugar, 11 cups water.

#### Directions

Boil water, turn off heat and stir in sugar. Continue to stir until all the sugar is dissolved. If it does not completely dissolve, turn the heat back on for a few minutes. After it is cooled, pour it into a gallon container and store in your fridge

**Note: Your first feeding of the spring should also include Fumilgin-B for Nosema. This is one gallon per hive.**

## Bits O' Honey

### Kitchen tips for using cooking, and baking with honey

- A 12-ounce jar of honey equals one cup.
- When working with honey, a coating of vegetable oil or nonstick cooking spray in your measuring cup or spoon will prevent sticking.
- Honey tastes sweeter than sugar, so use less (3/4 cup honey to 1 cup sugar) when substituting, and lower the oven temperature 25 degrees to prevent browning. Also, reduce the liquid in a recipe by 1/4 cup per 1 cup of honey used. For baked goods, start by substituting up to half other sugar in the recipe with honey, then experiment with more. Plus, add 1/2 teaspoon baking soda for every cup of honey used.

**Always looking for more recipes.  
Please submit by email or  
bring to the next meeting**

# 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 "Not-for-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.

### 2005-2007 NCBA Officers

#### President

Ray Hennessey  
50 Sheldon Road  
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#### Vice President

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whitfrost@rcn.com

### 2006 Monthly Meeting Schedule

April 3, 2006  
May 1, 2006  
June 5, 2006

### A special thanks to Al Needham from the Plymouth County Beekeepers Association.

He is a great source of bee information.

## 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!)

**FOR SALE:** Blueberry honey in pails and jars. Also, wildflower honey in pails. Please call Merrimack Valley Apiaries, (978) 667-5380 for prices. I spoke to Crystal at MVP and they have already started taking orders for NUCs. The price for 2006 is \$69, plus a refundable box deposit of \$15. She suggested that we combine our orders. There is a discount if we order over 100 NUCs. They have a web site, [www.mvabepunchers.com](http://www.mvabepunchers.com). There is a downloadable form, fill it out and send it along with a check. (That is unless we can combine orders and get the discount.) I have asked Irene to handle it again this year.

**FOR SALE:** I have 20 shallow honey supers with drawn foundation, about 4 deeps without frames, and 2 queen excluders. Please call Annie Birman at (401) 333-3251, or email: [akdab1@cox.net](mailto:akdab1@cox.net)

**BEEKEEPER IN CUMBERLAND SELLING ITEM:** Contact Annie Birman for more information. These items are not from Annie's farm but from someone who contacted her. Phone 401-333-3251 or [akdab1@cox.net](mailto:akdab1@cox.net)

#### Used Bee Equipment for sale-Great for a new bee student starting.

2 deeps-\$10.00 ea x2=\$20.00, 8 shallow supers-\$5.00 ea x 8=\$40.00, 2 bottom boards \$5.00ea x2=\$10.00, 2 covers \$10.00ea x2=\$20.00, 2 smokers \$20.00ea x2=\$40.00, 2 veils(older style w/helmet) \$10.00ea x2=\$20.00, 1-pr gloves(older style) \$10.00, assorted hive tools: 3 tools \$2.00 ea =\$6.00, 1 brush \$2.00, 1 frame lifter \$10.00, 2 bee escapes \$2.00. Total for the full package \$125.00

### Spring Meeting MassBEE - Saturday, April 1, 2006. Topsfield, MA

The Massachusetts Beekeepers Association will hold our spring meeting on Saturday, April 1, 2006 from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM in Topsfield, MA. Our speakers will be: Rollie Hannan, Connecticut Beekeepers Association, speaking on Splits and Nucs, Birgit deWeerd, Middlesex County Beekeepers Association, speaking on Beekeeping Presentations to Elementary Schools, and Dan Conlon, MassBee Director and Franklin County Beekeepers Association, speaking on The Growing Threat of Africanized Honey Bees. Breakout sessions will include: Hiving a Shook Swarm, Preparing Creams and Balms, Collecting, Preparing and Selling Pollen, Processing Creamed Honey, Producing Comb Honey, Cleaning and Processing Wax Cappings, and Preparing Your Honey for Competition.

We will again have a Silent Auction and your contributions (not necessarily bee-related) are greatly appreciated. Our local vendors will again be there for your buying pleasure. In an effort to keep registration costs low, we are asking for contributions of Honey-baked goods for the morning break. Thank you!

Please see form attached to email.

# Minutes from the March 6, 2006 Meeting

**Next Meeting: Monday April 3rd.**

**Attendance: 42, including 2 new members**

**The meeting raffle collected \$53**

**Raffle items included large plastic honey containers and other beekeeping supplies.**

**The door prize was a combination package: A frame puller and 2 hive tools.**

**1) The February News letter** sent by snail-mail had some missed deliveries. It was confirmed that all of the news letters were printed and mailed on the same day from the Norfolk PO as has always been done. The mailing of this newsletter will be monitored and a limited number of copies of both letters will be available at the April NCBA. The missed deliveries highlight the advantages to member of getting their newsletter by email if possible. Also the NCAB web site stores copies of past newsletters for anyone to view.

## **2) Bee School:**

There are now 22 active students and 2 new students joined this week. For the 2007 school we will plan on advertising earlier and broadly to the communities we have attracted students from. The lead time required by community papers to include Bee School or NCBA information is about at least two months so the contact process needs to start in September with ready-made notices.

## **3) Board of Directors Meeting**

The first meeting on February 28th was sparsely attended. Only Ray Hennessey, Whitley Frost and Tony Lulek attended so there was no quorum. The next meeting date (TBD) will be better broadcast and the Recording Secretary, Ed Karle, will be responsible for calling board members for the meeting.

## **4) Package Bees**

If you haven't ordered your bees from Andy Reseska by the time you are ready this you are too late to order them from him. Andy is still expecting to have packages from GA around April 8th, weather and conditions permitting, and Ray Hennessey will bulk-deliver the packages to the Walpole Aggie School that day. More information and updates will be shared at the April meeting.

Merrimack Valley is still taking Nuc package orders. For assistance contact Irene Gorczyca (ikgorczyca@comcast.net or 508-668-0547)

## **5) NCBA Library**

We are having continued success in getting free books and other materials and donations of materials to the library. A list of inventory will be posted on the club web site. Pickup and return of materials is best done at the regular NCBA meetings. Reserving materials is best done in advance of the meeting by calling or emailing the Librarian, Whitley Frost, so that specific materials can be brought rather than the whole inventory. The loan time is one month with returns at the next meeting.

## **New Business**

A motion to buy a small microphone and speaker system to be used at NCBA meetings to help amplify the speakers was discussed and seconded. A suitable portable solution will be investigated.

## **Topic for the meeting:**

A video, new to the NCBA Library, on the raising of queen bees in Germany was presented. The film is now available in the inventory.

### **Menthol Treatment for tracheal mites.**

This treatment helps control tracheal mites, and is effective whenever the outside temperature is above 45 degrees.

1) Into a glass jar put two standard packs of menthol crystals (3.4 oz. each) and add 8 oz. of canola oil. Gently heat on stovetop by placing jar into simmering water (double boiler style). Remove from heat when the menthol crystals are completely dissolved. Use a wooden spoon when stirring mixture.

2) Remove 30 paper towels from one roll; fold each in half and stack. Put stack of paper towels into a large zip-lock bag and add warm menthol-canola oil mixture. Zip the bag shut and make sure that all towels are evenly saturated. This recipe will treat 15 colonies. Towels can be stored at room temperature indefinitely if the bag is zipped closed.

3) Do not add to colonies while a honey flow is on or when you have honey supers on the colony. Place one paper towel over the top bars of each brood chamber. The best time to treat is September. (Tracheal mites are usually not a problem from May to September, so no menthol needs to be used until the time that mites begin to build up in late August or September). Colonies can be treated any time during the winter when temperatures rise above about 45 F. Additional treatments can be made in December, January and February. The bees will chew up the paper-towels and discard them at the entrance in 3-4 days (or longer in winter).

**I was looking around on the web and I found this interesting treatment for Varroa Mites. This is Canada's oxalic acid protocol. Canada has approved the use of OA to treat for varroa mite.**

This information is not based on any personal experience.

## **Oxalic Acid Treatment Protocol**

### **Trickle Method**

#### **Preparation:**

- \* Prepare 50% sugar syrup (eg. 1 kg of sugar in 1 L of water).
- \* Add 35 g of oxalic acid dehydrate crystals to 1 L of syrup.
- \* Agitate the solution by stirring vigorously or shaking.
- \* The crystals dissolve best if the sugar solution is warm. All of the crystals must be dissolved.
- \* Prepare the solution within days of treating the colonies and keep refrigerated until use.
- \* 1L of the oxalic acid solution will treat 20 colonies.

#### **Trickle Application:**

Oxalic acid should be applied late in the fall after brood rearing has ceased. Treat when the temperatures are cooler (in the morning or evening) to ensure that the bees are in the hive to receive the treatment. Using a 60 ml syringe or an oral drench gun (both available at farm supply stores), apply 50 ml of the solution directly onto the bees in the cluster. Trickle the solution between each frame containing bees. When treating doubles, split the boxes and treat the bees in both boxes (25 ml in the bottom box and 25 ml in the top box). After application, the colony may be wrapped for the winter the same day.

#### **Safety:**

When handling the oxalic acid crystals, always wear gloves and a dust mask. Gloves and protective clothing should be worn when treating colonies using the trickle method. If oxalic acid crystals or the treatment solution contact your skin, wash affected area with water.

#### **Storage:**

In all forms, oxalic acid is odorless. The crystalline powder should be stored at room temperature in an airtight container. This will prevent absorption of moisture, which causes the loose powder to solidify. Do not store leftover oxalic acid treatment solution. The oxalic acid changes in composition and becomes toxic to the bees.

#### **Vaporization Method**

There are different vaporizers available for use in the hive. Instructions for use are specific to the vaporizer purchased. Goggles, gloves and a respirator should be used when vaporizing oxalic acid crystals.

Applicator syringes (For horses) can be found at farm supply stores.

<http://www.ontariobee.com/>

## NCBA Library

BOOK	Author	Due
The ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture: An Encyclopedia of Beekeeping		
Beeing: Life, Motherhood and 180,000 Honeybees	Thomas, Rosanne Daryl	
Beekeeping: A Practical Guide for the Novice Beekeeper	Melzer, Werner	
The Monk and the Honeybee	video	Feb 7
The New Complete Guide to Beekeeping	Morse, Richard	Feb 7
Robbing the Bees	Bishop, Holley	Feb 7
The Hive and the Honey Bee (revised edition)	Dadant & Sons Publishing	
Monk's Bees	video	
Beekeeping: A Practical Guide	Richard Bonney	
Hive Management: A Seasonal Guide for Beekeepers	Richard Bonney	
* Honey Bee: Parasites, Pests, Predators and Diseases	Penn State	
* Honey in the Comb	Killion, Eugene E.	April 3
* Honey Bee Diseases and Pests	Canadian Assoc. Apiculturalists	
* Joy With Honey	Mech, Doris	April 3
* Covered In Honey	Niall, Mani	
* Rearing of Queen Bees (DVD) 1 hr. program	IMF Productions	

We have a copy of the video program we watched during the March meeting available on DVD for anyone to borrow. We will acquire more interesting programs on DVD by the same producer in the next few weeks.

A link will soon be available through the Club's website for the Library. The web page will show what books and videos are currently in the Library collection, as well as a small picture of each cover to help identify it. For those Club members without web access, we will send out a list of the Library books periodically. In order to reserve a book, just call or email Whitley Frost at (617) 364-6113 [whitfrost@rcn.com](mailto:whitfrost@rcn.com), and I will bring your request to the next Club meeting.

Also, if you haven't returned the book you borrowed to the library, please bring it with you to the next meeting. Thank you.

Donations and suggestions of books are gladly welcomed.



From: Tony Lulek  
35 Dalton Road  
Holliston, MA 01746

TO: