

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

WCABA AUGUST 2024 NEWSLETTER

www.wcaba.org

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president@wcaba.org

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vicepresident@wcaba.org

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membership@wcaba.org

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program@wcaba.org

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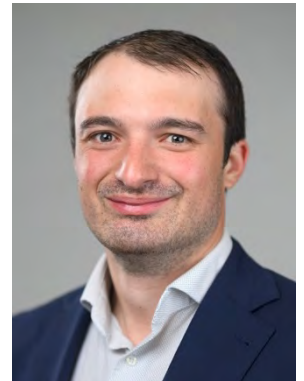
***DIFFERENT LOCATION* FOR THE AUGUST 27
MEETING: BIG @ 905 N Church Street, Georgetown***

Meet Dr. Garrett Slater, Honey Bee Extension Specialist for Texas

Come have cookies and coffee with Dr. Slater at Brookwood in Georgetown (BiG), 905 N Church St, Tuesday August 27 at 6:30 pm. After the meet and greet we will have our monthly meeting with the presentation: **Extension Service and Honey Bee Nutrition**

Dr. Slater will introduce us to his role in delivering extension services tailored to the evolving needs of beekeepers, promoting sustainable practices and economic advancement. He will discuss how the program will bridge the gap between Texas A&M's wealth of resources and the hands-on necessities of beekeepers, reflecting the core mission of land-grant institutions.

Dr. Slater will then explore the crucial role that the diet of the honey bee plays in maintaining healthy and productive honey bee colonies. He will delve into the various sources of nutrition for bees, including nectar, pollen, and supplemental feeds, and discuss how these elements contribute to colony growth, survival, and honey production. Key topics include the importance of balanced nutrition for hive health, the impact of poor diet on bee populations, and practical tips for beekeepers to ensure their colonies receive optimal nourishment.



Dr. Garrett Slater

ZOOM Notes:

We would certainly enjoy your presence at the next meeting on August 27th (***fourth*** Tuesday), but if you can't, then tune in to broadcast virtually via "Zoom".

If you are planning to join from an iPhone or iPad, be sure to download this application first: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/zoom-cloud-meetings/id546505307>

We look forward to seeing you there Tuesday night @ 7PM!

****BiG in Georgetown at 905 N Church Street - Georgetown 78626***

Topic: **WCABA Member Meeting (and Beekeeping 101)**

Time: This is a recurring meeting Meet anytime

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82475068933?pwd=aHRiRjc3bS9kYXJGS2g5THVpOEEx2UT09>

SPEAKER NOTES:

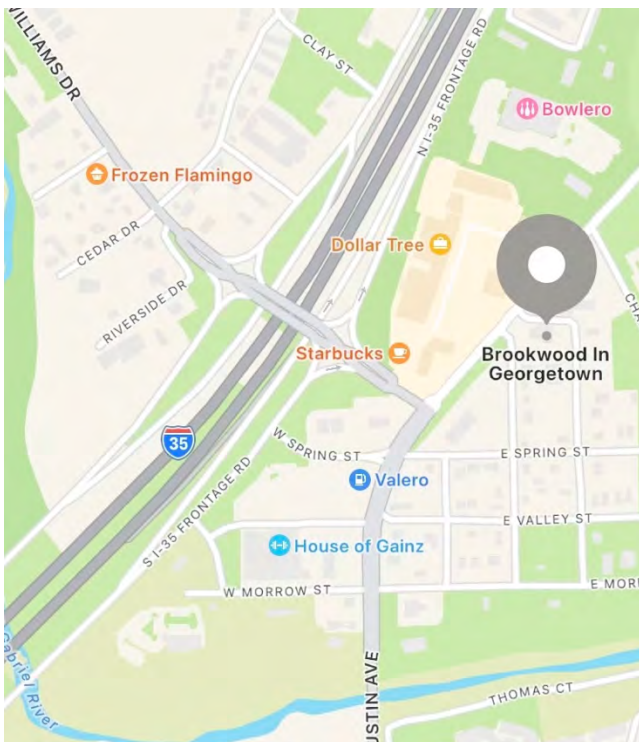
Professional Summary

Garrett Slater, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor and Apiculture Extension Entomologist at Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension in Overton, TX. He leads the statewide Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Apiary Program and supervises the activities of three honey bee program specialists in Dallas, Angleton, and San Antonio. As the Honey Bee Extension Specialist at Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, his primary role is to deliver extension services and applied research tailored to the needs of beekeepers, promoting sustainable practices and economic development of beekeepers. This includes communication and involvement with beekeepers via webinars and presentations, specialized courses, and articles. The topics of these communications ranged broadly, including fundamental scientific concepts and practical areas of interest. Additionally, he manages the Texas Master Beekeeper Program, which offers training modules for beekeepers across Texas. His one interest in extension and applied research focuses on honey bee breeding and genetics, which are key components of sustainable integrated pest management and honey bee population health. Presently, he is leading a study to develop modern breeding tools with the aim of helping breeders enhance the health and survival of honey bee colonies. This work is dependent on a collaborative group of Texas queen breeders, that produce 30% of US queens.

Garrett Slater

Assistant Professor and Honey Bee Extension Entomologist
Department of Entomology | Texas A&M AgriLife
1710 FM3053 | Overton, TX 75684
Ph: 701-928-0418 | garrett.slater@ag.tamu.edu

MEETING LOCATION:



*Because of the new carpet installation the Georgetown Public Library has closed the 2nd floor meeting rooms and the August meeting of WCABA will be held at Brookwood (BiG) in Georgetown at 905 N Church Street. This is 1.1 miles north on Austin Ave, north of the San Gabriel River where Williams Drives dead ends into Austin Avenue. The BiG campus complex is across from Republic Square (Starbucks & Dollar Tree). The meeting will be held in the Amazing Grace Building behind greenhouse. There is a statue of Grace Klitz in front. Parking is available between the Café / Store and the greenhouse. There is additional parking across N Myrtle street.

The Hobbyist Beekeeper . . .

a note from your President

Many of you have started beekeeping because . . . Fill in the blank. You wanted to help pollinate your garden; you're concerned about the bee population, and you wanted to do your part; you needed an ag exemption and beekeeping is easier than dodging cow patties in your driveway. These are all a variety of reasons why you might have decided to get into beekeeping and the next time you come to our meetings, you'll look around and see someone who fits each category. After a few years of beekeeping, you may find that you've started to accumulate excess items from your hive and aren't really sure how to use all of it.



Shannon Montez - President

The wax from extracting your honey; the propolis when cleaning your hive. Add in frames that have been ruined by wax moths or older comb frames and you have products that could all be excessed or if you were taught that each item has it's use, you may be searching for uses to clean up some of the clutter from your hives.

The propolis can be used for tincture. Add this to alcohol/glycerin oil and after a few weeks can be used to heal open cuts. The nasty mess that the was moths left on your comb can be scraped off, cooked in the oven and used for fire starter for your hubby's delicious Sunday bbq. If you've never tried this, once the wax takes, the fire will burn longer and save a bit of money on kindling.

Your excess wax can be used for a variety of purposes. If you do a quick search online, you can find some great tips on how to cook out the impurities in the wax and when you're done, you're left with a beautiful yellow wax.

I've found an easy way to melt the excess wax in the oven; I'm still trying to figure out how to bottle that smell that emanates through the house. I'm always looking for uses for the wax, hand cream, lip balm, etc. There're so many recipes out there on how to make your own unique product. If you've got some extra time, it's well worth the effort. I know it's a little early to talk about Christmas but many of these products make great gifts for teachers and friends. With 4 kiddos, and a husband who has several staff needing a Christmas gift, I always looked at the cheapest way to make a nice gift for everyone. And by everyone; that meant making about 40 goodie bags for everyone. Over the years, the gifting list got a little shorter, but I still have friends asking for more lip balm; a sister-in-law who's hoarding the last bit of hand cream till my next batch.

One of my favorite gifts is the small honey bear that I throw in for some of my friends who have been purchasing honey over the years. And for Christmas, I'll add some Christmas tea bags, a Christmas coffee cup along with the small honey bear when I make my delivery of honey. It doesn't take a lot of effort, but it sure does make a nice heartfelt gift.

If you have some neat ideas on what you make with your products, please feel free to send in your recipe for our newsletter and we look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Shannon

Honeybee Research Pearls

Compiled by Phil Ainslie

Bees Can Recognize Human Faces

Bees are good at learning. They will stick out their tongues expecting a bit of honey reward if they get a particular stimulus—in this case if they fly toward a specific face. So the researchers could see how well they learn and if they can learn different faces. And the answer is they can. Bees are good at learning. They will stick out their tongues expecting a bit of honey reward if they get a particular stimulus—if they fly toward a specific face. So, the researchers could see how well they learn and if they can learn different faces. And the answer is they can.



Phil Ainslie - Secretary

The real question is if bees do this in everyday practice, and the answer is probably not. There's no real need for them to distinguish one big mammal from another. But the fact is that they can, and it's fascinating how well they can learn and discriminate between different things in their environment.

It's also important to remember that bees don't have very good eyesight. Even though they can see human faces, their eyesight is not nearly as good as their sense of smell, which is the primary means of communication.

Cambridge study in 2004

Honey added to yogurt supports probiotic cultures for digestive health.

If you enjoy a bowl of plain yogurt in the morning, adding a spoonful of honey is a delicious way to sweeten your favorite breakfast food.

According to two new studies, Hannah Holscher, associate professor in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, part of the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at Illinois. She is a co-author of the two studies published in *The Journal of Nutrition*.

"Holscher found that one tablespoon of honey in a serving of yogurt helps support probiotic survival. However, we must remember that honey is an added sugar, and most Americans need to be cognizant of the amount of sugar in their diet to maintain a healthy body weight," she stated. "Adding a bit of honey to unsweetened yogurt is a nice culinary pairing to incorporate into your menu rotation."

You can add toppings to make a yogurt parfait and support gut health and the microbiome by getting more fiber in your diet. For example, you can add berries and seeds, or nuts, and drizzle a bit of honey on top, Holscher suggested.

August 5, 2024 - University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences

Honey bee life spans are 50 percent shorter today than they were 50 years ago

A drop in longevity for lab-kept honey bees could help explain colony losses and lower honey production in recent decades.

An entomologist study shows that the lifespan for individual honey bees kept in a controlled laboratory environment is 50% shorter than in the 1970s. As the first study to show an overall decline in honey bee lifespan potentially independent of environmental stressors, this work hints that genetics may influence the broader trends of higher colony turnover rates in the beekeeping industry.

The researchers' next step is to compare trends in honey bee lifespans across the U.S. and other countries. If they find differences in longevity, they can isolate and compare potential contributing factors such as genetics, pesticide use, and the presence of viruses in the local bee stocks.

November 14, 2022 - University of Maryland

Practical Experiences in the Bee Yard

AUGUST normally is a hot and dry month with “Dog Days” plaguing us most of the time. Much of East Texas has received an unusual amount of rain in June and July. It will be interesting to see if the rains persist into August or whether we move into the usual August dearth. If the rains stop, there will be little for the bees to work unless they find plants blooming in the woods and creek bottoms where some moisture and shade keeps some blossoms going.



Stanford Brantley

With extraction completed, you have to decide how to store your supers. Remember honey supers that have not had any brood reared in them and therefore do not have any honey bee cocoons present, are not really interesting to the wax moth. However, you still cannot store extracted supers off the hive without providing wax moth protection. If you have a few hives with two or three supers on each, you may decide to return the extracted supers to the hive for storage and to be protected by the bees from the ever present wax moth.

The approved “off-hive” storage method is to stack supers in a cool dry location under paramoth crystals. I prefer to start with a Telescoping Outer Cover upside-down on the floor. Line it with several thicknesses of newspaper. Stack supers two-or-three high on the newspaper. Place an approximately 8x8 inch sheet of paper on the top super and add ¼ cup of paramoth crystals. Make sure to use the ParaDicloroBenzene paramoth crystals – DO NOT USE NAPHTHA MOTH CRYSTALS.

You can add another stack of two or three supers, followed by another paper with paramoth crystals, if you wish, or start another stack. Cover the top of the stack with another Outer Cover. The paramoth crystals will vaporize and permeate the stack of supers from the top down, repelling wax moths. They vaporize faster in hotter weather. Periodically check the amount of crystals remaining and add more, as needed.

The beekeeper’s activities in the beeyard are now focused on helping the bees weather the hot dry summer dearth period. Be aware that your bees may be cranky and bad tempered during the summer dearth. Use caution when working in the apiary and wear protection to reduce stinging incidents. Make sure fresh water is readily available. Your bee’s water intake will increase as they use evaporation to help cool the hive. Ventilate the hive by sliding the Outer Cover back and resting it on the edge of the Inner Cover.

Make sure there are remaining stores in the hive, especially if you extracted most of the honey. There may be little or no honey in the brood chambers. Determine your hive’s condition by inspecting frames from the brood chambers. If you are pressed for time, you can feel the hive’s weight by lifting the back edge using the “two-fingered lift” technique. Just make sure the boxes are not stuck together when you try the lifting the edge. If the hive is light or you do not see much stores in the brood frames, consider feeding with 2:1 syrup.

It is also time to do a mite count. According to all published literature, mites must be controlled to prevent the hive from collapsing. To do a mite count, you will need a plastic dishpan, a ½ cup measuring cup, some powdered sugar and a wide-mouthed jar with 1/8-inch hardware cloth replacing the solid lid. Pull a frame containing open brood and shake the attending nurse bees into the dishpan. Scoop up ½ cup of bees and pour them in the jar and cover with the hardware cloth lid. Dump the rest of the bees back into the hive. Add a spoonful of powdered sugar through the hardware cloth lid. Roll or shake the jar in your hands for 90 seconds. Let the jar sit while you replace the frames back into the hive. Now, pour the powdered sugar through the hardware cloth into the bottom of the dishpan, shaking the jar to be sure all of the mites have been dislodged. Add some water to the pan to dissolve the sugar and count the mites. Since your ½ cup of bees was about 300 bees, divide your mite count by three to get the count per hundred bees. If there are three or more mites per hundred bees, consider treating your hive.

Stanford

Teaching Bee Yard Group Extracts with Scholarship Kids

by Jimmie Oakley

The group that has been meeting on the last Saturday of the month at the WCABA Teaching Bee Yard at the Heritage Garden met instead at the Bost Farm on Saturday, July 27th to observe the 2023 scholarship kids extract their honey. We turned the event into an extracting workshop for those who were interested in learning more about getting honey out of the comb. The scholarship kids were more than gracious to allow us to be part of the activity and process to see what their bees had done and what their honey crop was to be. To get the honey out, it starts with uncapping, proceeds with extracting, and on to straining and finally bottling. I'll let the pictures, and the people involved tell the story.



Annabelle Su uncapping



Justine Peterson uses serrated knife



Gigi Muniu starts at the top



Christie Parker-Wheeler tries her hand



Ray Harmon shows his expertise



Carla Harmon is not to be outdone



James Muniu (Gigi Dad) uncapping



Crystal Su (Annabelle Mom) uncapping



Jane Su (sister) uncapping too

Teaching Bee Yard Group Extracts (cont.)



Justine loads the extractor



Christie loads the extractor again



Justine says time to drain the extractor



Scott Peterson pours honey through strainer



Three girls say they can do that too



Christie Parker-Wheeler bottles her first bear



Gigi and Justine continue the bottling



Bottling done, the crop secured (40# each)



Scott & Justine Peterson leave with the loot (along w/ Ottis the Propolis?)

It has been my pleasure to report on these second-year (2023) scholarship recipients and highlight their determination and accomplishments. I hope they will continue on. Jimmie Oakley – Scholarship Chair

Honey Tasting & Judging at September Meeting

by Jimmie Oakley

It's not too early to be thinking about the Honey Judging and Tasters Choice Contest that is always held at the WCABA regular meeting in September when we celebrate National Honey Month.

In regard to that I would like to cover for our new members and remind our veterans of what we do and why and maybe offer some tips as you prepare for the September event.

As far back as I have been a member of WCABA we have had a "honey tasting" as a fun thing to do as the summer harvest season drew to a close.

Texas is blessed with some really fine flavored honey and many of them come from our area, so bring your baby food size jar of your honey to be placed with all the others as we once again do the "TASTING", just for the fun of it. There will be a first (blue), second (red) and third place (white) ribbon presented and the bragging rights for the next year that go with it if you are a winner.

The judging is all subjective based on the individual palate because everybody tastes, and everybody judges. As all of the small samples of honey are lined up on the table, all who participate in the tasting get three votes to mark by the ones they think deserve their vote, and the one getting the most marks is declared the "Tasters Choice" for 2024. That's easy enough, right? The hard part is that you only get three votes.

On the Honey Judging side, there are actually judges (3) that are tasked to judge the honey going to the State Fair of Texas held in Dallas in October. Any club member can submit a 2lb. container of their honey to be judged against the standard and then to be donated and sent to the Fair where it will be on display in the Texas Beekeepers Association Honey Booth while the Fair is in progress. The honey will then be donated to the Happy Hills Farm in Granbury, Texas in support of their work with children.

The judging is based on a 100-point system where credit is given for container appearance and fill level, the freedom for foreign material, and the flavor and brightness of the honey. Each entry will be presented with a ribbon based on how the honey stacks up against the standard.

I hope this may become one of your favorite parts of the beekeeping year.
JO



Honey Tasting had lots of entries to sample in 2023



Honey Judged and Going to the State Fair



Tasters Choice winners are presented with ribbons, Yea!



September is National Honey Month

Did You Know?: National Honey Month, initiated by The National Honey Board in 1989, marks an important time for honey producers and beekeepers across the nation. In the United States, honey collection typically concludes in September as bees begin to secure their hives and prepare for winter. Now You Know!



Ottis the Propolis

by Scott & Justine Peterson*

On a sunny July 27th at the bustling Bost Farm, a unique little sculpture named Ottis came to be. Born from the stickiest of bee propolis, Ottis was a 3-inch tall, dark brown bundle of joy. On a regular sunny day Ottis likes to watch over the bees from his sour-cream-container home, but when he's not there he's frolicking in the Bost Honey House with his fellow cat friends.

When it's time for business he is a protective guardian for the hive, sealing up cracks, keeping out invaders, and making sure everything stays clean and safe. When the bees need help, he steps in to support their health and defend against threats. But he doesn't just help bees, he also offers his services to humans. He has a healing touch, soothing sore throats, boosting their immune systems, and fighting off infections. Whether it's wounds, colds, or skin issues, His goal is to lend a hand, keeping everyone strong and resilient.

Scott & Justine



**Scott Peterson is the father of 2023 Scholarship Recipient Justine Peterson. Together they sculptured and gave Ottis a back story.*

Editor Classified: Justine & Scott are looking for a bee home for her hives closer to where they live. If you live near the intersection of Hwy 183 and Avery Ranch (where 183 becomes a toll) and are interested in hosting a location for her hives, please email at scottstuff@myyahoo.com



Hi Fellow Beekeepers,

I hope you have had a great 2024 honey harvest! If you would be so kind as to fill out the following on-line form, we would appreciate it!

I've added a few more questions for this year to include hive count, splits and extraction methods.

Thank you again!

MATT LUDLUM

<https://forms.gle/i63oNLWmZRQaoDxu6>

Sharing the Sweet

Honey Bars



Ann Bierschenk - Dir@Large

Once upon a time . . . ,

Ginny Stubblefield brought a delicious dessert made with her honey to one of our monthly WCABA meetings. I was so impressed by how good the little bitesize bars tasted that I hunted down the member who made them and requested the recipe. Ginny was very gracious to me and sent the recipe to me the next day. I have made Honey Bars multiple times for my family and they are always quickly gobbled up. Now that most have extracted the honey from their hives, I can highly recommend this dessert as a delicious way to enjoy their honey. Enjoy! (and, you cannot taste the mayonnaise)

Bar ingredients:

- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup **HONEY**
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 cup nuts (optional)



Combine oil, honey, sugar, and egg in a mixing bowl and stir well. Add flour, soda, salt, cinnamon and nuts (if desired). Press into a greased and flour 10 x 15 pan. Bake at 350 for 20-25 minutes.

Glaze:

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2 Tbsp water
- 2 Tbsp mayonnaise
- 1 tsp vanilla

To prepare glaze: Mix powdered sugar, water, mayonnaise, and vanilla and immediately spread on hot bars. Cool before cutting.

Ann

Membership Report: Shirley Doggett

August 2024

New Members: *

Julia Peterson
Daniel Huffstetler.

Austin
Thrall



Shirley Doggett - Membership

Renewing Members

***New members**- please remember that Texas Beekeepers Association still gives one-year free membership to those people that are new to beekeeping. Let me know if you are interested in this.

Best Wishes
Shirley

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

WILLIAMSON COUNTY AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Dues \$20.00 per year - individual or \$25.00 - family membership

New Member / Renewing Member

(circle one)

Date: _____

Name: _____ Amount: \$ _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ e-mail: _____ (please print)

To save postage cost may we send your Newsletter via e-mail? Yes [] No []

Instructions: print, fill out, and bring to club meeting , or mail with check to:

Mrs. Shirley Doggett - Membership - 400 C. R. 440 - Thrall, TX 76578

Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association
Treasurer's Report - As of August 19, 2024

Profit and Loss

ACCOUNTS	Year to Date
Income	
Program Income - Bee Procurement (2024)	\$56,830.00
Program Income - Membership Dues	\$3,525.00
Program Income - Scholarship Program	\$24.00
Total Income	\$60,379.00
Cost of Goods Sold	
Total Cost of Goods Sold	\$48,013.20
Gross Profit	\$12,365.80
Operating Expenses	
Donations and Gifts	\$2,100.00
Dues	\$50.00
Insurance	\$1,688.00
Library Resources	\$111.77
Meeting Supplies and Refreshments	\$61.62
Permits	\$257.76
Scholarship Program Expenses	\$837.31
Speaker Fees	\$500.00
Travel Expenses	\$735.00
Total Operating Expenses	\$6,341.46
Net Profit	\$6,024.34

Balance Sheet

ACCOUNTS	As of August 19, 2024
Assets	
Total Cash and Bank	\$53,697.26
Bee Procurement Downpayment	\$0.00
Undeposited Funds	\$0.00
Total Assets	\$53,697.26
Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	\$0.00
Assets & Liabilities	\$53,697.26
Equity	
Retained Earnings - Prior Years	\$47,672.92
Retained Earnings - Current Year	\$6,024.34
Total Equity	\$53,697.26

Bee Procurement Program - 2024

Income	
Program Income - Bee Procurement	\$56,830.00
Cost of Goods Sold	
Bees	\$48,013.20
Gross Profit	\$8,816.80
Expenses	
Permit	\$257.76
Travel Expenses	\$735.00
Total Expenses	\$992.76
Net Profit	\$7,824.04

Notes (as of March 21, 2024):

BeeWeaver Purchase 125 Queens - Complete	\$4,513.20
Merrimack Purchase 300 Nucs - Complete	\$43,500.00
• Merrimack Commitment = \$52,500	
• Less In-person pick-up discount = \$9,000	
• Net Merrimack Amount = \$43,500	