

# October 2023



## The Miami Valley Beekeepers Association Newsletter

**In-Person Speaker**

***Barb Bloetscher***

*recently retired State Apiarist/  
Entomologist from Ohio Dept of  
Agriculture (state inspector)*

**Topic**

**What to expect when  
your hives are  
inspected**

*Zoom link provided in email*



**Next Meeting:**

**October 2 (Mon)**

**6:30 PM at the**

**Tipp City Public Library**

**or Zoom**

As beekeepers, it's very easy to focus on the tasks and chores that come with managing our bees. There is always something else to be done between mite management, preventing swarms, hive maintenance, feeding, adding supers, pulling supers, extracting honey, selling honey, and winter prep — the time quickly goes by. I love bottling up the honey and admiring the beautiful, golden colors. It's my second favorite aspect of beekeeping. My favorite part? Educating people about honey bees, beekeeping, and pollinators in general.

On Tuesday, Sept 26, I will be presenting at the Tipp City Public Library's Family Night program on the topic "Honey" to families with children up to grade 5. I have not done a program like this before and decided this should be a good intro with a very friendly audience, especially if I bring some fun visual aids. Here are some of the topics I hope to cover in my 15-minute time allocation:

- Parts of a honey bee (thanks to last month's speaker, Dr. Robyn Underwood, this will be easy!)
- Differentiate honey bees from yellow jackets, wasps, and bumblebees
- What do honey bees do? Explanation of pollinators and provide examples
- 3 types of honey bees in a hive and what they do
- Discuss honey bee stingers and what to do if you get stung
- Honey: how the bees make it, how beekeepers harvest it, and different uses for honey

At the end I plan to have a honey tasting of some of my honey and a store-bought clover honey so we can compare them and try to taste the differences. It should be fun and I anticipate some inquisitive questions!

When you are selling your honey, you have an excellent opportunity to educate your buyers (and really anyone passing by) about honey bees, your personal beekeeping practices, and how they can help pollinators in general. Folks sometimes come with some "interesting" ideas. Many were stung once as a kid and believe they are allergic to bee stings because there was swelling and itching. That presents a good time to explain the difference between a localized reaction and a potential life-threatening allergic response. People ask if the honey will help their seasonal allergies, so I explain that the honey *may* help, but it definitely can't hurt. I especially love passing out samples because some folks have never had simply filtered, fresh, local honey; they've only had the store-bought stuff. I love seeing and hearing their amazement at this tasty treat. *(It also nearly guarantees a sale...)*

So, my advice to you: take those opportunities to be a public educator about honey bees and beekeeping. It does not have to be a library program or talking to a beekeeping club or presenting at a workshop. Education happens one person at a time and we, as beekeepers, have some amazing knowledge to share with those around us.

***Happy Beekeeping!!***

## MVBA Meeting Minutes: September 11, 2023

by Erica and Jeff Adler

Meeting commenced at the Tipp City Library at 6:30 PM led by Jeff Adler, President. There were 14 people in person and 2 online via Zoom.

Jeff thanked those who helped with the extraction last month. There was a mix-up in dates with the library. The club made the best of it and shared the process with the general public. Well done!

Upcoming opportunities:

OSBA Fall Conference: Oct 27-28 in Wooster, OH. Registration is open now. This is a good opportunity to order from suppliers and pick up in-person to save shipping costs.

Sept 26: Jeff Adler will be doing a short presentation to the Tipp City Library's family night program about honeybees and where we get honey.

Club elections are coming right up. Great opportunity to ensure our club's future and get involved.

Treasurer's report by Brian Willis.

Discussion: Lots of folks claiming they have bees in their house siding or out buildings. Ask for a picture before you go -- most likely yellow jackets this time of year.

Updates & Info: If you use canning jars, keep an eye out for deals. Menards had a dozen Ball pint jars for \$7 a few weeks ago. Meijer was charging \$17 for the same.

Reminder as to what to do in your apiary:

Pull honey supers, extract summer honey

REMINDER: club extractor is available for member use

Watch for robbing -- it can start quickly and be very destructive

When supers are off, good time to treat for mites (depends on treatment)

REMINDER: club oxalic acid vaporizer is available for member use

Are we in the fall flow yet? Look for goldenrod and asters to bloom; "stinky sock" smell

Jeff is still seeing capped brood in his hives (winter bees), and some drones

Maybe start feeding 2:1 syrup

Winter prep: make sugar bricks, build quilt boxes for moisture management

Next meeting: Oct 2 (Mon), 6:30 PM. There will be an in-person speaker, Barb Bloetscher, the recently retired State Apiarist/Entomologist from Ohio Dept of Agriculture (state inspector).

Reminder: Nov 6 (last meeting) - no speaker, club elections, raffle

The meeting's speaker was Dr. Robyn Underwood. She is a Penn State Extension Educator and presented on "Honey Bee Anatomy".



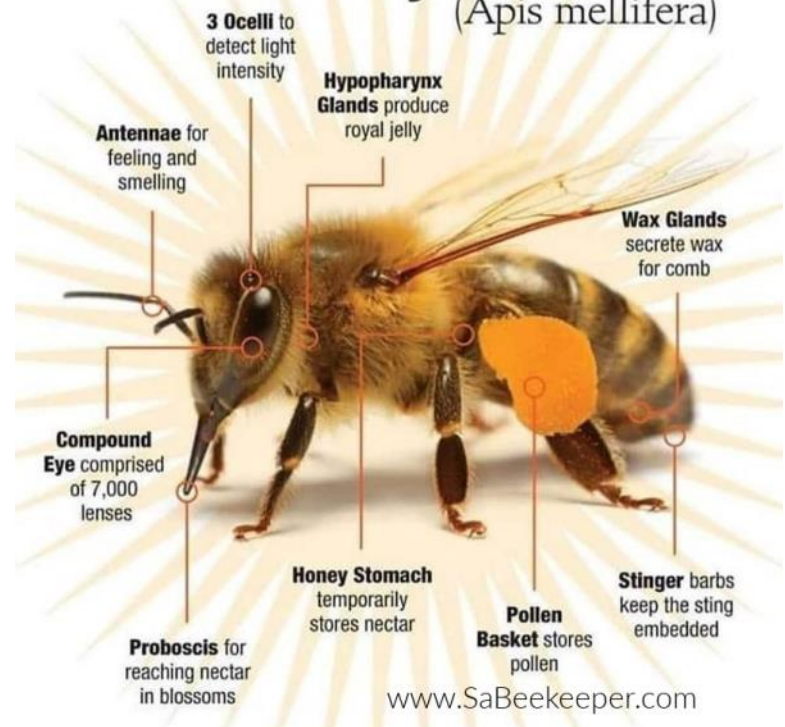
Dr. Underwood shared many fascinating facts and great pictures about honeybees. Here are just a few:

- Honey bees have 5 eyes
- Each set of legs has a different tool on it
- 4 wings: forewings and hind wings are folded back when not needed, rows of hooks (hamuli) allow them to hook together for flight
- Breathe through spiracles (holes) in abdomen
- Open circulatory system
- Glands and pheromones

Some discussion about mite control and treatment strategies.

# Honey Bee

(Apis mellifera)



Checking Account		Total Holdings		Cash On Hand
Beginning Balance Checking Acct Sept 2023	\$ 5,965.06	\$ 6,095.06	\$ 130.00	Beginning Balance Sept 2023
Income				Income during Meeting
Member dues transfer from Paypal	\$ 225.72		\$ -	Cash donation and member dues
	\$ -			
Total Income	Total for Deposit \$ 225.72	\$ 225.72	\$ -	Total meeting income (cash/checks received)
Expenses				
Check 146 May Speaker Fee	\$ (100.00)		\$ -	
	\$ -		\$ -	
	\$ -			
Total Check Withdrawals/Debits	\$ (100.00)		\$ -	Total Cashbox Withdrawals
Total Expenses		\$ (100.00)		
Cash xfer (Deposit from Cashbox)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Cash Xfer to lessen Cashbox contents
Ending Checking Balance Sept 15 2023	\$ 6,090.78		\$ 130.00	Ending Cash Balance Sept 15 2023
Monthly total Net change		\$ 125.72		
Previous month Net funds		\$ 6,095.06		
Sum balance should equal total holdings (Bank activity +/- Cash Activity)		\$ 6,220.78		This acts as a check to ensure activity = actual balances
⌘A Total Holdings 15 Sept 2023 (Checking balance + Cash Balance)		\$ 6,220.78		

We have two checks that haven't cleared for the last two speakers. There were a couple new members added to the roster as well.

## The History of Honey

The humans to first encounter honey over 10,000 years ago would have found it inside of a wild bee's nest and, for some reason, decided to taste the sweet spoils.

In a time when fruit was the sweetest thing they had ever tasted, honey seemed like a revelation from the gods. In the earliest centuries, nearly every culture had a myth explaining the immortal sweetness of honey.

For thousands of years, the only foolproof method of gathering honey was to find a wild hive -- the locations of which were fiercely guarded. The first "domesticated" beehive likely traces back to the Egyptians. The earliest apiarists made hives from old logs or tree trunks to mimic the homes of wild swarms.

It wasn't until the mid-nineteenth century, when a clergyman and apiarist named Lorenzo Langstroth designed the "collateral hive", that the honey harvest became just a simple tax on bees. It revolutionized domestic beekeeping by allowing individual combs to be lifted out; finally, you could get honey without replacing your entire colony. His invention was based on the idea of "bee space": an observed distance between each comb that was large enough to keep each comb from sticking together, but small enough that bees didn't attempt to seal it themselves. After centuries of living with bees, humans had finally discovered something useful to our relationship with them instead of simply destroying them.

We've slowly come to recognize honey as something more important than a sweetener. 80% of the food we eat relies on pollination. Whether or not bees were created for human enjoyment, without them and without honey we'd live in a world where plants could not grow and fruit could not ripen.



Written by: Tove K. Danovich

<https://food52.com/blog/9010-the-history-of-honey>

# 10-Point Pre-Winter Hive Checklist [www.betterbee.com](http://www.betterbee.com)

Winterizing bee hives improves outcomes for overwintering colonies, but how to prepare your hives for cold winter weather depends on the severity of the season in your area. There are many steps to squaring away your hives for winter, but checklists work to make sure you haven't missed any important details. Follow the processes and steps outlined in this hive inspection and winterization checklist as you prepare your bees for winter. If you go to BetterBee.com you can download this checklist.

- 1) **Feeders OFF** - Remove any feeders, including any boxes that surround them. You don't want to have any empty space on top of the hive. You can leave a frame feeder in place. If you think your hive might be short of honey, install a feeding shim or an extra deep inner cover to make space for supplemental feeding later in the winter, if needed.
- 2) **Entrance reducer installed** with the smaller notch facing upwards. Unlike in the summer, in cold weather undertaker bees don't remove bees that die in the hive. During a long cold spell, the corpses will accumulate in a thick layer that may completely block the entrance. Turning the entrance reducer so the opening faces upward will help keep the entrance open even if there are lots of dead bees on the floor of the hive.



- 3) **Mouse guard ON** - As the bees start to cluster together, they pull away from guarding the entrance, so mice can slip inside. The mice will make a mess, chewing on combs and relieving themselves wherever they please.

- 4) **Queen excluder OFF** - Leaving a queen excluder in place under a super that you're using for winter stores will trap the queen underneath it when the bee cluster needs to migrate upwards past the excluder to access the winter honey. This could lead to the loss of the hive.

5) **Make sure top box is full of honey (or syrup).** **Remove any empty boxes.** If you returned wet supers to get them cleaned out, take them off before winter. If you were feeding and the bees didn't put any stores in the top box, remove it. The only safe place for an empty box is in the lowest position, but it's better to remove it altogether.



6) **Provide some form of upper entrance.** Upper entrances allow moisture to exit the hive; a **feeding shim** or a **deep inner cover** both create excellent upper entrances, as well as providing room for supplemental feeding. Otherwise, just make sure the notch in the rim of your inner cover is not sealed up by the overhang on the telescoping cover. If you have a feeding shim on the hive and want to reduce the size of the entrance hole, consider installing a simple homemade **wind baffle**.

7) **Foam insulation panel tucked up inside the telescoping cover.** Putting a 1" thick piece of foam insulation up inside the cover will help keep the interior of the hive warmer and drier. Once installed, it can stay there year-round. Just like in your house, attic insulation keeps you both warmer in winter and cooler in the summer.

8) **Hive strapped or weighted down** with a rock or bricks to make sure the cover can't be blown off in a storm. The consequences of this during winter are much more severe than in warmer weather – and you might not notice the problem in time to fix it!

9) **Insulation installed (if using).** Winter insulation is something that some beekeepers believe in, and some don't. It undoubtedly gives your bees an extra edge in cold regions, or during unseasonably cold weather. You can use a **winter hive wrap**, or make your own from foam insulation panels.

10) **Hive tipped slightly forward** to allow any free moisture to drain out. Just slide a couple of wood door shims under the back corners of your hives.

Finally, if your bee yard is exposed to fierce winter winds and drifting snow, **consider installing a windbreak upwind of the hives.** A windbreak creates a downwind sheltered area equal to about 30 times its height and provides protection from drifting snow as far out as three times its height. However, in areas just beyond these protected zones, there is increased wind turbulence and drifting. When designing a windbreak, make sure it extends well beyond the width of the area needing protection in order to get the most benefit. Windbreaks can be made from temporary fencing, including snow fencing and landscape fabrics stapled to posts. They can also be made from shipping pallets anchored with metal fence posts. Some beekeepers use stacked hay bales. If using hay, however, make sure the hay is at least several

feet away from the hives. This protects the hives from excess moisture and it also prevents the hay from becoming a haven for field mice and shrews which may invade your hives.



### **An idea to keep your front entrance area dry:**

Once Election Day is past, leftover political signs make great awnings for your hives. Set one on top of the hive sticking out in front about 6" to keep snow and sleet off the entrance area.

## **The Basic Buzz in the Apiary**

### **October**

- Prepare colonies for winter
- Begin fall feeding with heavy syrup (2 parts sugar to 1 part water), if needed
- Unite weak colonies with stronger colonies
- Put on entrance reducers to keep out vermin

### **November**

- Develop & implement your honey marketing program, especially for the holiday season
- Begin late-fall feeding

## **The flowers of fall: What's in bloom?**

### **SUNFLOWERS**



### **GOLDENROD**



### **SUMAC**



### **ASTERS**



### **THISTLE**



<https://www.metroparks.net/blog/ behold-flowers-fall/>



## Honey Cookies

★★★★★

Learn how to make these simple but oh-so-good **Honey Cookies!** With their sugared tops, slightly crisp edges and super soft, honey-sweetened interiors, these are absolutely irresistible!

Recipe includes a how-to **video!**



## SUGAR SPUN RUN

<https://sugarspunrun.com/honey-cookies/#recipe>

<b>Prep Time</b>	20 minutes
<b>Cook Time</b>	10 minutes
<b>Chilling Time</b>	30 minutes
<b>Servings</b>	30 cookies
<b>Calories</b>	147kcal
<b>Author</b>	<a href="#">Sam Merritt</a>

## Ingredients

- 1 cup (226 g) [unsalted butter](#) softened
- 1 cup (200 g) granulated sugar
- ¼ cup (50 g) light brown sugar firmly packed
- ⅓ cup honey
- 1 teaspoon [vanilla extract](#)
- 1 large egg room temperature preferred
- 3 cups (375 g) [all-purpose flour](#)
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon table salt
- ½ cup (100 g) coarse granulated sugar for rolling



## Instructions

1. In a large bowl, combine butter, sugars, honey, and vanilla extract and use an electric mixer to beat until creamy and well-combined.  
1 cup unsalted butter, 1 cup granulated sugar, ¼ cup light brown sugar, ⅓ cup honey,  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2. Add egg and stir well.  
1 large egg
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.  
3 cups all-purpose flour, 2 teaspoons cornstarch, 1 teaspoon baking powder,  
½ teaspoon baking soda, ¾ teaspoon table salt
4. With mixer on low speed, gradually add the flour mixture to butter/honey mixture. Stir until completely combined and all of the flour mixture has been absorbed (scrape the sides and bottom of the bowl to ensure all ingredients are well-combined).
5. Cover dough with plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for 30-60 minutes and up to 5 days
6. Once dough has nearly finished chilling, preheat your oven to 375F (190C) and line a baking sheet with parchment paper (alternatively you can bake cookies directly on an ungreased cookie sheet).
7. Remove cookie dough from the refrigerator and scoop by 1 ½ Tablespoon-sized scoops. Roll into a smooth ball between your palms and then roll through coarse granulated sugar.  
½ cup coarse granulated sugar
8. Place cookies at least 2" apart on prepared baking sheet and transfer to 375F (190C) oven. Bake for 10-11 minutes or until edges of cookies are beginning to turn a light golden brown.
9. Allow cookies to cool for at least 5-10 minutes on baking sheet before removing to a cooling rack to cool completely.

## Notes

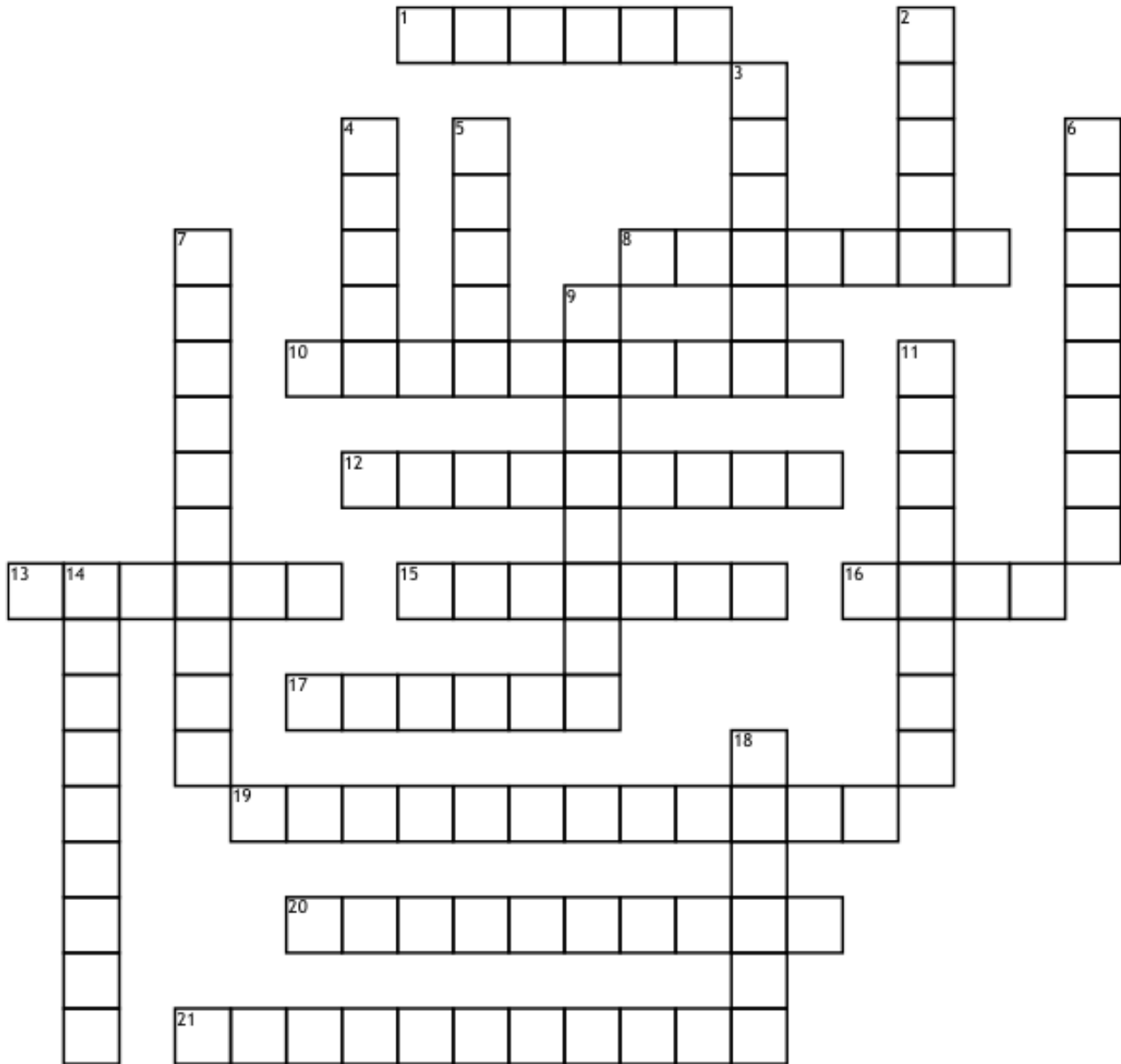
### Storing

Store cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week.

### Nutrition

Serving: 1 cookie | Calories: 147kcal | Carbohydrates: 21g | Protein: 2g | Fat: 6g | Saturated Fat: 4g | Polyunsaturated Fat: 1g | Monounsaturated Fat: 2g | Trans Fat: 1g | Cholesterol: 22mg | Sodium: 91mg | Potassium: 22mg | Fiber: 1g | Sugar: 12g | Vitamin A: 197IU | Vitamin C: 1mg | Calcium: 16mg | Iron: 1mg

# Beekeeping Crossword



## Across

1. Appliance for calming bees.

8. A method purchasing both wax and honey.

10. The first word in the acronym IPM.

12. The first action before processing honey.

13. Source of carbohydrate.

15. A beginner's first contact with bees

16. No, not for keeping your hair tidy

17. Unwelcome aspect of beekeeping.

19. Smaller than varroa.

20. A natural occurring defence against varroa.

21. Bees' main function.

## Down

2. Natural form of reproduction.

3. This could be a problem in small hives.

4. Can you spot this one?

5. Structure for keeping things in order

6. The act of separating bees from honey

7. Basis of the comb.

9. Often found alongside wax

11. Popular piece of equipment

14. Method of dealing with honey.

18. Not the job for a worker