

April 2024



**The Miami Valley
Beekeepers Association
Newsletter**

April Speaker (*in person*)

Mandy Duncan

from Bluebird Acres Apiary

Topic

**Gardening for
Pollinators**

Zoom link provided in email

Next Meeting:

April 1 (Mon)

6:30 PM at the

Tipp City Public Library

or Zoom

Editor: Erica Adler

Renew Your MVBA Membership Today!

Membership dues are \$20 per family / calendar year

Membership benefits include:

- **Monthly meetings (except Dec-Feb) with educational speakers**
- **Monthly newsletter with beekeeping articles and other features**
 - **Sponsoring public presentations and more!**

Make checks payable to:

Miami Valley Beekeepers Association

or PayPal link on MVBA website under “Join”

MVBA Swarm List

A Benefit of Being a MVBA Member

It pays to be an MVBA
member!

**The secretary, Donna, will
have forms at the
meeting.**

The list will be posted on
the MVBA website and
distributed to over 20+
county agencies including
fire departments, police
departments, parks,
townships, and nature
centers.



Our Official Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/miamivalleybeekeepers>

Backyard Gardening Tangents

As you prepare your apiary and/or your backyard for spring, it's an excellent time to think about **forage** for honeybees and other pollinators. A typical gardener will consider sunlight exposure, spacing between plants, moisture requirements, disease resistance, and soil chemistry. In addition to that, I recommend you consider pollinator-friendly plants with things like pollen & nectar sources, bloom times ranging from early spring into late fall, plant diversity, and a preference towards **native plants** to Ohio. You don't have to do this all at once: break it down into manageable parts and implement this over several seasons and years. By using native plants, you will soon be amazed at their drought-tolerance and ease of maintenance.



Another aspect of backyard gardening is, of course, **water management**. The easiest method is to use a garden hose, and while this supplies perfectly drinkable water to your garden plants, I propose supplementing your water usage with rain water by using a **rain barrel**. The largest expense for this is the actual 55-gallon barrel (preferable food grade), but it's possible to source this for \$75 or less. Adding in a rain barrel kit and some manual labor, you now have a large source of free, soft water that is perfect for garden plants. You can hook up a hose to the rain barrel spigot and use gravity OR use a trusty watering can.

Related to the water source, please consider providing a place for honeybees and other pollinators to get a sip of water. A bird bath works well, or even just a shallow saucer.

Remember to add some **wine corks** or small pebbles as landing surfaces for honeybees so they don't drown in the process. Honeybees actually prefer somewhat "**dirty water**" - ideally it has some algae or moss which provides necessary minerals, so don't worry about changing out the water every day. I've experimented with rigging up a drip system to my rain barrel with limited success, but I'm sure it can be done.

Mason bee houses are another option for backyard gardeners. There are many varieties of mason and solitary bees in Ohio, and they are fantastic pollinators! In fact, many outperform honeybees in terms of pollination. You simply hang the "house" (collection of tubes of various diameters) in a good location and let the solitary bees create their nests. Later generations of these bees typically return each year to the same location, so keep that in mind. [This article from OSU](#) covers a variety of Ohio's wild bees.



Lastly, I want to share something new I just encountered: **greenhouse pollinator bees**. Donna and I met with some folks at the Dayton Food Bank in downtown Dayton to provide hive location advice. They showed us their wonderful greenhouse full of lettuce varieties and casually mentioned wanting to use "greenhouse bees" in a different enclosure once they start growing tomatoes. The concept is this: a box of ~100 bumblebees is placed in the greenhouse for 8-12 weeks during which their only focus is pollination. Unlike honeybees, bumblebees only collect pollen, are less aggressive, can tolerate colder temperatures, and can operate well in the closed greenhouse environment. This sounds pretty neat to me and I'm hoping maybe we can do a follow-up visit to see it in action. Check out this [article by OSU](#) for more information.

Happy Beekeeping!!

Meeting commenced at the Tipp City Library at 6:30 PM led by Jeff Adler, President. There were 30 attendees in person (including 4 new members) and 4 online via Zoom.

Jeff welcomed prior and new members to the meeting. He shared information on the sign up for the Swarm List and reminders to renew Apiary Registration and OSBA Membership. He shared eight out of ten beekeeping books that the MVBA purchased for the Tipp City Library. He brought beekeeping magazines and catalogs for members to take home.



Jeff gave a recap of the North American Honeybee Expo that he attended Jan 4-6. There were over 3,000 attendees.

He learned there are all kinds of new equipment and products coming out related to beekeeping, including an American Foul Brood vaccination that is close to being released. He shared numerous brochures he picked up at the event.

He did a recap of the last newsletter and what you should be doing now in your hives, i.e., feeding, providing pollen substitute, preparing for splits, building up equipment, or purchasing nucs or packages. Determine what your goals are for the coming year whether it's growing your apiary, honey production or selling queens.

Jeff introduced Benjamin Keller, Top of Ohio OSBA Representative. He is the traveling speaker coordinator for the OSBA. Some information he shared was that the OSBA has a Monthly Live Webinar through their website. They hold a Monthly Round Table Discussion on the first Sunday of every month at 7 PM. You can get a ticket on their website to participate. Go to the site and navigate to Events and you can find it on their calendar. He shared information on the OSBA Quality Awards



Program for associations in Ohio. He announced a new Traveling Speaker Program topic: All

About Winter Bees. OSBA also has a Diagnostic Presentation and provides a ticket for 50% off a diagnostic kit to the association when presented. OSBA is working with inspectors to educate and work on continuity throughout the state. Visit their website for more information on these and many other topics.



<https://ohiostatebeekeepers.org>



March guest speaker was Dana Petrillo from Dancing Bee Equipment in Ontario, the #1 beekeeping equipment supplier in Canada. Her presentation was titled “Propolis and its Benefits to Honeybees and the Hive”. She shared that propolis is mainly used as a sealant in hives. The resin collectors are the older workers, between 25 and 38 days old. They collect resin by chewing it off with her mandibles, and passing it to their pollen baskets. Once full, they return to the colony where other workers chew off the resin from her pollen baskets and use it to fill gaps and line walls.

She showed a video that detailed studies and the health benefits of propolis in the hive. People have also taken advantage of the medicinal properties of propolis for ages. She also talked about a different hive body design that is rough on the inside, encouraging more propolis collection and lining of the walls, with the goal of healthier bees. Jeff brought some that he had purchased to show the members.



Questions from the audience for the guest speaker:

- Do the different hive bodies built for propolis lining affect honey production? *No*
- What is the difference between burr comb and propolis? *Burr comb is built by the bees to fill any gaps within the hive larger than 3/8” or to build bridges between the hive bodies. Propolis is a sealant to prevent outside drafts and fill cracks in the hive body. Propolis is very sticky.*



- Since propolis is supposed to have health benefits, can we chew on it? *Definitely!*

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM. Our next meeting is April 1, 2024.

Treasurer Report

Brian Willis

Checking Account		Total Holdings		Cash On Hand
Beginning Balance Checking Acct March 2024	\$ 5,310.13	\$ 5,460.13	\$ 150.00	Beginning Balance March 2024
Income				Income during Meeting
Transfer paypal funds	\$ 94.05		\$ 220.00	Member dues
Member Check	\$ 20.00			
	\$ -			
Total for Deposit	\$ 114.05		\$ 220.00	Total meeting income (cash/checks received)
Total Income		\$ 334.05		
Expenses				
	\$ -		\$ -	
	\$ -		\$ -	
	\$ -		\$ -	
Total Check Withdrawals/Debits	\$ -		\$ -	Total Cashbox Withdrawals
Total Expenses		\$ -		
Cash xfer (Deposit from Cashbox)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	Cash Xfer to lessen Cashbox contents
Ending Checking Balance March 15 2024	\$ 5,424.18		\$ 370.00	Ending Cash Balance March 15 2024
Monthly total Net change		\$ 334.05		
Previous month Net funds		\$ 5,460.13		
Sum balance should equal total holdings (Bank activity +/- Cash Activity)		\$ 5,794.18		This acts as a check to ensure activity = actual balances
A Total Holdings 15 March 2024 (Checking balance + Cash Balance)		\$ 5,794.18		



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Open by Appointment Only

Services

- Swarm Recovery
- Live Bee Removal
- Beginner Beekeeping Classes

Products

- Ohio Made Amish Wooden Ware
- Raw Honey
- Beeswax Products

112 Merrie Lane - PO Box 191 - Pittsburg, OH 45358

The Basic Buzz in the Apiary

April

- Monitor colony stores, esp. if weather is cold & wet
- Inspect brood nest for laying queen, disease, etc.
- Introduce package bees on drawn combs
- Requeen colonies with failing queens
- Reverse brood chambers when weather moderates
- Add supers to strong colonies at maple or dandelion bloom
- Unite weak colonies
- Equalize strength of all colonies
- Renew your subscription to Bee Culture and American Bee Journal

May

- Monitor colonies for queen cells
- Control swarming
- Add more supers as needed (oversuper)
- Place queen excluder below shallow super on colonies for comb honey
- Install packages on foundation
- Split strong colonies
- Capture swarms
- Cull and replace defective combs with full sheets of foundation
- Begin implementing an IPM program for the control of mites
- Add room for bees, either by honey supers, or deeps. Remember the



7/10 rule: when they have filled 7 of the 10 frames, its time to add space!

Remember to register your hives:

https://agri.ohio.gov/divisions/plant-health/forms/plnt_4201-002



Get Your Gardens Ready for Blooms

Nectar: Mustards

Pollen: Poplars, Willows, Oak, Cedar, Junipers

Pollen and Nectar: Apple Trees, Chickweed, Hackberry Trees, Dandelion, Redbud Trees

Know what's blooming and you can plan your honey crop (or if you need to feed your girls):

<http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/gdd>



2024 MVBA Board

Jeff Adler – President

Fran Davidson – Vice President

Donna Meade – Secretary

Brian Willis – Treasurer

Dave Collins – Member at Large

George Doviak – Member at Large



www.ohionativeplantmonth.org

A website dedicated to Native Plants in Ohio.

A few resources they offer:

Where Can I Buy Ohio Native Plants and Support Ohio Growers?

Why are Native Plants Important?

Learn more about planting a Garden to feed pollinators and wildlife



Virginia Bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), Celadine Poppy (*Stylophorum diphyllum*), Blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia verna*), and Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*)



Cedar Waxwing by Sandy Spicknall/APA

Celebrate Ohio's
Native Plant Month
this April with the

Aullwood Audubon **NATIVE PLANT SALE**

Friday & Saturday • April 26 & 27, 2024
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Charity A. Krueger Farm
Discovery Center
9101 Frederick Pike, Dayton,
Ohio

**FREE ADMISSION
TO SALE**

NPS Catalog V2 Updated March 19, 2024



Ruby-throated Hummingbird by
Mitzel Gelman/APA

Learn more at <https://aullwood.audubon.org/NPS>

Beekeeping Equipment

I D R D M H T L R H K U Q F Q K R R F R
T V I G R R O E L C I U L U M E Z E O E
V L O V W A D N A E E V I X C W Z V U P
F A I P I E O R E E C L E U P L R O N U
R U C G E S D B N Y T I D T I E Y C D S
A B C F A E I E I B S E T E O W F G A M
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X C O O M W U V L R R K Z A X D D W O H
F A T P E G D E E Z J O X F R E Y X X U
C H G U B L I F H G I Y U T E R W I Q G
T K G A S A A M P T Z O P D P N P T I R
G R B H I C R H Q K K S K H T E Y F L O

BEE BRUSH
BROOD BOX
DURAGILT
FRAME
HIVE TOOL
IPM BOTTOM BOARD
MEDIUM SUPER
QUEEN EXCLUDER
SMOKER
TOP FEEDER

BEE VEIL
CRIMP WIRE
ENTRANCE REDUCER
HIVE BODY
HONEY SUPER
LANGSTROTH
PAIL FEEDER
QUILT BOX
TELESCOPING COVER
VIVALDI BOARD

BOARDMAN FEEDER
DIVISION FEEDER
FOUNDATION
HIVE STAND
INNER COVER
LEMON GRASS OIL
PLASTICELL
SLATTED RACK
TOP BAR
WARRE