



# SEMBA NEWS

Volume 26 Number 2 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association  
February, March 2016

## 78<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SEMBA BEEKEEPING CONFERENCE

**When:** Saturday, March 19, 2016  
7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Where:** Wayne County Community  
College

9555 Haggerty Road  
Belleville, Michigan

**Directions:** Take the Ecorse Rd. Exit 20 off  
I-275. Go west a short distance to Haggerty  
Road. Turn left and go south 1.07 miles on  
Haggerty Road. Just after Tyler Road,  
WCCC is on the left. Enter the main entrance  
of the college.

The SEMBA Beekeeping Conference is a one-day event designed for beekeepers as well as anyone considering keeping honey bees for the first time.

**Admission is free to all. Pre-registration is required to be eligible for door prizes. To pre-register, go to SEMBAConfReg@gmail.com by noon on Saturday, March 12, 2016.**

A potluck lunch will be held with tea and coffee provided. Bring a dish to pass and your own table service. Please mark your name on all dishes and utensils. Food may also be purchased at the college or at area restaurants.

## CONFERENCE PROGRAM

**7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.** - Registration  
Video in D104, Main Auditorium

**8:00 a.m. - 8:10 a.m.** - D104, Main Auditorium  
Welcome, Introduction to Concurrent Sessions,  
and Explanation of Drawings and Silent Auction  
*Clay Ottoni*

**8:10 a.m. - 9:50 a.m.** - D104, Main Auditorium  
Keynote Address: "Small-scale queen rearing  
and Making nucs"  
*Kent Williams*

### 10:00 a.m. - 10:50 a.m. - 1st Concurrent Session

- 1) Q and A and Follow-up with *Kent Williams*
- 2) Langstroth Equipment Essentials  
*Keith Lazar*
- 3) Building Bee Wood Ware Equipment from Scratch  
*Winn Harless*
- 4) Overwintering Hives for Backyard and Sideliner Beekeepers  
*Clay Ottoni*
- 5) How to Produce Comb Honey  
*Bob Hollis*
- 6) Advanced Natural Beekeeping  
*Rich Wieske*

### 11:00 a.m. - 11:40 p.m. - LUNCH 1

D104, Main Auditorium, Keynote Address:  
"Honey Bee Colony Treatments" *Kent Williams*

### 12:00 noon - 12:40 p.m. - LUNCH 2

D104, Main Auditorium, Keynote Address:  
"Honey Bee Colony Treatments" *Kent Williams*

### 12:40 p.m. - 1:30 p.m. - 2nd Concurrent Session

- 1) Q and A Follow-up with *Kent Williams*
- 2) Getting Started in Beekeeping  
*Richard Mendel*
- 3) Bee Removal from Structures  
*Charlotte Hubbard*
- 4) Dealing with Varroa in the 21st Century  
*Mike Siarkowski*
- 5) How to make Cold Process Soap with Honey and Beeswax  
*Judy Schmaltz*
- 6) Going Treatment Free; What's Wrong With Our Bees?  
*Don Schram*

### 1:40 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. - D104, Main Auditorium

Keynote Address: "Establishing a Varroa Resistant Stock in your Apiary"  
*Dr. Roger Hoopingarner*

### 2:40 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. - 3rd Concurrent Session

- 1) Q and A and Follow-up with  
*Roger Hoopingarner*
- 2) Bee-ginner Panel Discussion  
*Winn Harless*
- 3) Advanced Panel Discussion  
*Kent Williams*
- 4) Integrated Pest Management for a Healthy Hive  
*Michael Risk*
- 5) Basics of Apitherapy  
*Jerry Catana, Cindy Dudock, Mary Mason, Rebecca Roman, and Bob Schroeder*
- 6) Bee Nutrition & Bee Health  
*Earl Hoffman*

**3:30 p.m.** - D104, Main Auditorium  
Silent Auction Winners announced, Drawings  
and Closing Clay Ottoni

The two keynote speakers at the conference are Dr. Roger Hoopingarner, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus and former Apicultural Specialist at MSU, and Kent Williams, a commercial beekeeper with apiaries in both Kentucky and Mississippi. Kent was the past president of the Eastern Apiculture Society and president of the Lake Barkley Beekeepers in Kentucky.

Subject to availability, individuals will have an opportunity to enroll in a "year-long, hands-on" beekeeping course to be held in a demonstration apiary. See <http://www.sembabees.org/toplevelpages/education.html>

SEMBA members will be able to renew their memberships at the conference.

For further information, please contact: Clay Ottoni at [SEMBAConfReg@gmail.com](mailto:SEMBAConfReg@gmail.com).

**VENDORS INTERESTED IN A TABLE AT THE MARCH 19th CONFERENCE MUST CONTACT KEITH LAZAR, (248) 361-1710, [keithmlazar@hotmail.com](mailto:keithmlazar@hotmail.com)**

To save shipping charges and to be assured that a vendor has what you want, it is advisable to place your order with the vendor before attending the conference.

#### **VENDORS ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE**

AWS Bees, LLC 810-516-0779  
Golden Harvest Apiaries 810-338-1523  
Buggsnest, LLC 248-361-1710  
Turtle Bee-Honey Tree Farms 810-266-4880  
Napoleon Bee Supply 517-499-0439  
Northern Bee 989-370-4841  
Cutler Supply 810-633-9450  
Dadant & Sons 877-932-3268  
T.M. Klein & Sons 989-865-9377  
U of M Bees  
A2B2 651-428-0543  
Bob the Bee Guy 734-748-2185  
Strong Microbials, Hoffmans 734-427-7649  
Nardelli Honey Products 734-751-3597  
Catherine Woonton--bee Jewelry  
Bee Jewelry  
Honey Tree Nursery

#### **SEMBA NEWS EDITORSHIP CHANGES**

Editors: Roger & Mary Sutherland [rsuther30@gmail.com](mailto:rsuther30@gmail.com) <http://www.sembabees.org>

After writing and editing the SEMBA News for twenty-six years, Roger and Mary Sutherland are welcoming Brad and Tammy Bonifield as the newsletter editors for SEMBA. Please give them your support by submitting articles and making positive suggestions. Their Email addresses are:

[tammybonifield@gmail.com](mailto:tammybonifield@gmail.com), [bb2194@att.com](mailto:bb2194@att.com)

#### **APRIL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

The SEMBA board has passed a motion stating that postal delivery of the newsletter will be phased out in one year; therefore, the renewal application will no longer include a postal-mail option.

The SEMBA treasurer is now accepting membership renewals for those members whose dues expire in April 2016. Enclosed is a renewal slip for members who currently receive their newsletters by postal delivery. Email renewal forms will be sent to members receiving their newsletters by email.

#### **2014 –2015 WINTER LOSSES**

Total number of beekeepers surveyed.....113

#### **2015 – 2016 WINTER LOSS SURVEY**

How many of your hives were alive in October 2015? \_\_\_\_\_

How many of your hives were alive in March-April 2016? \_\_\_\_\_

Send your report to Roger Sutherland  
[rsuther@sembabees.org](mailto:rsuther@sembabees.org)

Total number of hives reported alive, October 2014.....1040

Total number of hives reported alive, March 2015.....488  
Survival 47% Loss 53%

#### **POLLINATION NEWS – LOCAL AND NATIONAL PROJECTS**

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Pollinators are essential to ecosystem biodiversity and to produce many food crops that require pollination. Food crops such as apples, pumpkins, cucumbers, almonds and blueberries all require pollination for fruit production.

#### **National Projects**

The Xerces Society (a Society of Invertebrate Conservation) has numerous projects, including:

The Bumble Bee Watch, Migratory Dragonfly Partnership, The Xerces Society Western Monarch Count, Milkweed Survey.

These are citizen science projects in which you can get involved in monitoring bee, dragonfly or Monarch butterfly populations and report them in order to generate a massive database of information about insects, plants and their migration patterns.

The Great Sunflower Project is a citizen science project with over 100,000 members who count pollinators on sunflowers and other plants that are great for them. Citizen scientists count the number of pollinators they see during a 15-minute period or observe them while taking a walk.

You can join the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge creating gardens and landscapes that promote pollinators such as bees, butterflies, birds and bats. You can register your garden to be part of the national pollinator garden network. There are already 185,257 gardens registered and counting!

You can also register your city as a certified "Bee City USA." Fifteen cities have been certified as Bee City USA Communities. The first one in Michigan is Ypsilanti. You will need to complete a Bee City USA application and resolution template and then have the resolution approved by your city.

### **Local Projects**

For those in Michigan, you can get involved in numerous projects and attend programs on pollinators. For example, the Kalamazoo County Master Gardener Program will be planting a pollinator garden. The Grand Ideas Garden at the Kent County Michigan State University Extension office in Grand Rapids, Michigan, installed a new pollinator garden in 2015. These gardens will demonstrate how to plant a pollinator garden of your very own. MSU also has hosted a "Bee-Palooza" at the MSUHorticulture Gardens in early June for the last few years. This event allows families to learn about pollinators and plants attractive to pollinators, observe a live colony and much more.

This article was published by the MSU Extension. For more information, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu>. To have a digest of information delivered straight to your email inbox, visit <http://bit.ly/MSUENews>. To contact an expert in your area, call Heidi Wollaeger at 888-678-3464.

## **USDA RESEARCH IDENTIFIES FACTORS CAUSING PREMATURE**

## **COMMERCIAL HONEY BEE QUEEN FAILURE**

*BELTSVILLE, Md., Feb. 10, 2016—*

Temperature extremes during shipping and elevated pathogen levels may be contributing to honey bee queens failing faster today than in the past, according to a study just published by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) scientists in the scientific journal *PLOS One*.

"Either stress individually or in combination could be part of the reason beekeepers have reported having to replace queens about every six months in recent years when queens have generally lasted one to two years," explained entomologist Jeff Pettis with the Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, who led the study. The Bee Research Laboratory is part of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Queens only mate in the first few weeks of life. Then they use the stored semen to fertilize eggs laid throughout their life. Queen failure occurs when the queen dies or when the queen does not produce enough viable eggs to maintain the adult worker population in the colony. Replacing queens cost about \$15 each, a significant cost per colony for beekeepers.

*~by Kim Kaplan ARS News Service, USDA*

### **BEEKEEPING MEETINGS IN SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN**

#### Oakland Bee Club

For information contact Dennis Holly, (248)-542-1316 or [Hollysapiaries@yahoo.com](mailto:Hollysapiaries@yahoo.com)

#### Monroe Bee Club

For information contact Bill Bray at [braybill@hotmail.com](mailto:braybill@hotmail.com)

#### Ann Arbor Backyard Beekeepers (A2B2)

For information contact Meghan Milbrath, (651)-428-0543, or [a2b2club@gmail.com](mailto:a2b2club@gmail.com)

#### Biodynamic Beekeeping, Ann Arbor

For information contact Eileen Dickinson at (734)-717-4145.

#### Pine River Bee Club, Goodells, MI

For information contact (810)-364-5477.

#### Green Toe Gardens

Introduction to Beekeeping Workshops

March 26 in Royal Oak

April 17 in Detroit

Cost: \$80.00

[greentoe gardens.com/site/classes-workshops](http://greentoe gardens.com/site/classes-workshops)

## 2016 SEMBA CONTACT INFORMATION

SEMBA President-- Clay Ottoni, 248-454-9800.....president@sembabees.org  
SEMBA Secretary-- Sandy and Randy Graichen .....kyger7@hotmail.com  
SEMBA Treasurer -- Wayne Titus III.....wbt@amdgservices.com  
Beginning Beekeeping Course information – Clay Ottoni, 248-454-9800.....president@sembabees.org  
Sembabees.org website information --Tom Lisk .....tosk@comcast.net  
SEMBA membership information – Wayne Titus III.....wbt@amdgservices.com  
Borrowing books from SEMBA Library – Roger Sutherland, 734-668-8568.....rsuther@sembabees.org  
Obtaining beekeeping videos from SEMBA Library -- Roger Sutherland, 734-668-8568..rsuther@sembabees.org  
Renting Schoolcraft Bee Club extractor -- Roger Sutherland, 734-668-8568.....rsuther@sembabees.org  
Submitting ads and items for the SEMBA Newsletter – Tammy and Brad Bonifield, 734-432-0789  
tammybonifield@gmail.com, bb2194@att.com

### SEMBA Bargain Corner

#### **For sale:**

- ~Michigan (and Florida) nucs available for sale. Five-frame nucs available for \$150 for April delivery (from Florida), or with all Michigan bees (later delivery). Email Meghan Milbrath at sandhillbees@gmail.com, or visit [www.thesandhill.squarespace.com](http://www.thesandhill.squarespace.com) for more details.
- ~Italian Bees from Wilbanks Apiaries in Georgia. 3# package W/queen, \$99. Call Blanche Barber, 248-634-7017 for pickup date.
- ~Nucs for sale, \$160.00. Pickup in Canton, MI. Contact Bob Jastrzebski, 734-748-2185 or [bob@cimsurf.com](mailto:bob@cimsurf.com). You can also purchase online [www.bobilinhoney.com](http://www.bobilinhoney.com)
- ~Bees. 2# package w/queen, \$97, 3# package w/queen,\$109. Deliveries April 3 & 17, May 1 & 8. Contact Shawn Shubel, 517-548-5176. \$5 off list price for SEMBA members.
- ~Bees by AWS BEES, LLC from California. For information see AWSBEESLLC.COM or call/email Dave Anthony at 810-516-0779, Anthonybeefarms@aol.com or Leo at 810-639-3640, honeyfarm130@yahoo.com.
- ~3lb packages of Italians from Gardner Apiaries in South Georgia. Available for pickup in Wayne County on May 15<sup>th</sup>. \$105/package for SEMBA members, \$112/package for non-SEMBA members, (\$70 deposit) \$5 for queen marking (free for %100 deposit). Call, Text, or E-Mail Marisa Benzle at 919-222-7219 or marisabenzle@gmail.com
- ~Spring 2016 nucs for sale with Carnolian (Michigan) queens, Italian(Georgia) queens or Buckfast ( Florida ) queens. Available beginning of May. Five frames (not 4+1) medium, price \$140.00. Contact Senad Livadic by Email, [senadl@sbcglobal.net](mailto:senadl@sbcglobal.net)
- ~ Michigan 5 frame medium nucs from Michigan-wintered hives. Queens grafted from survivor stock. Email - [info@honeydewapiaries.com](mailto:info@honeydewapiaries.com) Website: [honeydewapiaries.com](http://honeydewapiaries.com)
- ~ Bee packages, 2# \$97.00, 3# \$104.00 to SEMBA members. Call Mike Siarkowski at 517-304-9013. Pickup 4/17/16 in Howell.MI.

#### **Wanted:**

~Bower Farms, the Bloomfield Hills School's teaching farm, is looking for beekeepers who are interested in helping with their hives. Please contact Bernie Ethridge 248-549-6249 for more information.

~Beeswax. Contact Wyatt Short, 989-708-0159, [wyattshort@bhhsmi.co](mailto:wyattshort@bhhsmi.co)

Southeastern Michigan  
Beekeepers' Association  
*Organized April 1, 1934*

SEMBA Membership  
5488 Warren Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-9425

Oakland Beekeepers' Club



Schoolcraft Beekeepers' Club



## **Green Toe Gardens "INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING" Workshop, March 26 and April 17**



**"Introduction to Beekeeping"** is a six-hour intensive workshop that introduces you to the first year of beekeeping. Think of it as Green Toe Gardens' "waggle dance": an opportunity to orient yourself to the realities of beekeeping in our urban and suburban northern climate.

Instructors Joan Mandell and Rich Wieske discuss bee biology, beekeeping history, plants and human health, and where to get bees and beekeeping equipment. You'll learn how to choose hive locations, how to build a hive and how to approach your neighbors.

Whether you want to have your own hive, be mentored in our apiary, or just learn how beekeepers work, **"Introduction to Beekeeping"** is for you. And it is a pre-requisite for all our April-November hands-on classes.

The workshop includes lecture and interactive demonstrations, coffee break, lunch and course materials. We are offering the workshop twice: Saturday, March 26, in Royal Oak, and Sunday, April 17, in Detroit.

Fee: \$80 for the workshop; or buy as part of our first-year package of small-group mentorship classes in our Detroit and Auburn Hills apiaries. We offer discounts for additional family members.

Register by contacting us at [info@greentogardens.com](mailto:info@greentogardens.com). And check out our full class schedule at: [greentogardens.com/site/classes-workshops](http://greentogardens.com/site/classes-workshops)

### **US TO CREATE NATIONAL BEE GENE BANK**

By Malcolm Flanagan

Published: 09 February 2016 11:47 AM

The US Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is creating a national bee gene bank as part of the agency's response to ongoing problems facing the country's beekeepers.

Average losses of managed bee colonies have increased to more than 30% year due to pathogens, pests, parasites and other pressures, including deficient nutrition and sub-lethal impacts of pesticides. These stresses have threatened the continued business sustainability of commercial beekeepers.

The gene bank, which will be located in Fort Collins, Colorado, will help preserve the genetic diversity of US honeybees, especially for traits such as resistance to pests or diseases and pollination efficiency. It will also provide ARS and other scientific organizations access to resources from which to breed better bees.

Dr Robert Danka, an entomologist with the ARS Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics, and Physiology Research Unit in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, said the Russian honey bee and Varroa sensitive hygiene lines will be among those conserved first.

"To help make the gene bank a practical reality, ARS researchers are developing better long-term storage techniques for honey bees, including improving cryopreservation of bee sperm and embryos. Their work will include creating a way to reliably revive frozen embryos and grow them into reproductively viable adults after storage," said Dr Danka.

Another component needed to create the new gene bank is a germplasm species committee, which will decide which species and subspecies to collect and preserve. Washington State University is also working with ARS on the project.

Disease threats are year-round

In February 2015, US researchers said the disease threats to US bees are year-round problems<<https://www.agra-net.com/agra/animal-pharm/food-producing-animals/minor-species/bees-face-year-round-threat-from-diseases-469520.htm>> not just in growing seasons as was previously thought.

ARS scientists in Maryland found two species of bacteria, Spiroplasma melliferum and S apis, are more common year round and infect honey bees in places as diverse as Brazil and Beltsville, Maryland.

Both pathogens were discovered more than 30 years ago but US scientists are still unsure if they are factors in colony collapse disorder or major causes of other bee mortalities.

German animal health company Bayer said in 2013 the battle against destructive Varroa mites in honeybee hives is more difficult than previously thought<<https://www.agra-net.com/agra/animal-pharm/business/r-and-d/bayer-says-varroa-mite-not-easily-defeated-131738.htm>> because the pest can re-infest a bee colony quickly after a successful control treatment.

According to Cornell University research<<http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/2012/05/insect-pollinators-contribute-29b-us-farm-income>> in 2012 crops pollinated by honeybees and other insects contributed \$29 billion to US farm incomes.

## 2016 Spring Conference

**The 2016 MBA Spring Conference is closer than you think – it is time to register and plan to attend!**

*All folks interested in bees are welcomed to attend!*

The conference will be held at the Kellogg Center on the Michigan State University campus during ANR week on **Friday, March 11, 2016 and Saturday, March 12, 2016**. The MBA is the oldest bee association in the country. The MBA is also the longest continually operating agricultural association in the state of Michigan and – we think, though we can't yet prove it – also in the country. We are very proud of this accomplishment!

The MBA board is (and has been) busy finalizing the conference plans. As things get settled, we will update this page with the latest information. So stay tuned!

The keynote speakers will be Gary Reuter. A long time hobby beekeeper and trained in technology education, Gary began working with Marla Spivak when she moved to Minnesota in 1993. Without his hard work, the program would not be what it is today. He maintains the research colonies, helps train and work with students in the field, designs and builds specialty equipment and speaks to beekeeping, student and civic groups. He plans the Extension short courses and together with Marla teaches beginning as well as experienced beekeepers. His humorous style of teaching helps the classes stay interested and enthusiastic about a sometimes challenging subject. He is a past president of both Minnesota Hobby Beekeepers Association and Wisconsin Honey Producers Association and director of the American Beekeeping Federation, and remains active in these groups. He still finds time to manage his own colonies, while learning to blacksmith, maintaining an orchard, and helping his wife raise sheep.

There will be break-out sessions on both days covering a wide range of topics that should be of interest for both the beginner and advanced beekeeper alike. Many of these classes are new. Of course, the ever-popular vendor area will be back so that you can see all of the latest beekeeping equipment in one place. Here will be your opportunity to see what's new in the beekeeping world and meet the folks who actually make your stuff!

Pre-registration is available on-line and we encourage all attendees to do so. When you pre-register you get a discount too! We encourage all conference attendees to pre-register. If you pre-pay when you pre-register, your conference material will be available for immediate pick-up... no waiting in line.

Before you pre-register, please note that in order to get the MBA member discount you must be a **current** member of the MBA. The 2015 memberships expired on December 31, 2015. So you may need to renew your membership for 2016. If in doubt, you can check your membership status by [clicking here](#).

**Note: Pre-registration will close Tuesday, March 8.**

**Registration Fees:**

Pre-Registered  
MBA Member, 2-Day: \$30.00  
MBA Member, 1-Day: \$20.00  
MBA Guest/Spouse: \$20.00  
Non-Member, 2-Day: \$50.00  
Non-Member, 1-Day: \$30.00  
Non-Member Spouse/Guest: \$25.00  
Children under 16 (with 1 registered adult): no charge  
Paid At-the-Door

MBA Member, 2-Day: \$35.00  
MBA Member, 1-Day: \$25.00  
MBA Member Spouse/Guest: \$25.00  
Non-Member, 2-Day: \$55.00  
Non-Member, 1-Day: \$35.00  
Non-Member Spouse/Guest: \$30.00  
Children under 16 (with 1 registered adult): no charge