



# Newsletter

Vol. 3, 1st Quarter Spring Issue 2011

## Dr. Edward Ziegler, RI's Premier Apitherapist

For some time I have wanted to do a feature article on apitherapy in Rhode Island, and every time I raised the subject at a RIBA meeting the name of Dr. Ziegler was mentioned. Thus, my first interview on the subject was with Ed Ziegler and in a matter of a few hours I had my first lesson in the basics of bee venom therapy or apitherapy. Apitherapy which is the use of all products of the hive has been used by human since ancient times. The modern use of bee venom therapy was introduced as a treatment for joint pain, arthritis and back pain in 1888 by Austrian physician Philip Terc in his paper "Report about a Peculiar connection between Bee Stings and Rheumatism." The premise is that the intro-

The premise is that the introduction of bee venom stimulates an anti-inflammatory reaction in the human body, in the local affected region and systemically throughout the body. Bee venom is thought to promote healing by improving circulation, decreasing inflammation and stimulating a healthy immune response. Dr. Ziegler's story is compelling. We met in his second floor apartment on Providence's East Side, in his kitchen where he treats people and where he keeps his nuc box full of bees for stinging. First of all he is 92 years young and he practiced Dentistry in his working years. About 35 years ago he reports that he was a virtual cripple from rheumatoid arthritis in all

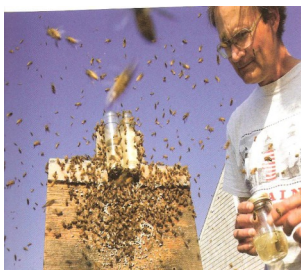


Dr. Ziegler with nuc box of bees -cont'd on p. 2

of his joints. As a hunter he had several hunting friends, among them James Bellaveau a Chemistry Professor at Providence College who told him about the therapeutic value of bee stings, having heard about this from his Laboratory technician, a Ms. Greene. He paid a visit to the well-known New England apitherapist Charles Mraz in Middlebury, VT who treated him on several occasions but

## Honeybee Democracy Lecture by Dr. Tom Seeley

Dr. Thomas D. Seeley, Professor of Neurobiology and Behavior at Cornell University and author of the recently published, highly acclaimed book *Honeybee Democracy* spoke to the RIBA monthly meeting on March 13. Dr. Seeley's pioneering research on honeybee 'decision making' has attracted attention in both the world of science and



Tom Seeley at work ; story continues on p. 8

practical beekeeping. Many beekeepers have observed or captured swarms amazed by their behavior but unable to explain why a swarm remains in place for a few hours or a few days. Dr. Seeley's groundbreaking research reveals many of the answers to bees' swarming and 'house hunting' behavior so critical to colony survival and

Volume 3, 1st Quarter

Spring 2011

### Inside this issue:

Dr. Ziegler, apitherapy; Ber-	1-3, 6-7
Seely Talk	1,8
Honey report	5,6
RIBA News, Uganda Girls' school, Expert	4,7 10
Bee garden, recipes	9,10
Book review, ads	11

### Officers & Committees

- Mark Robar, President, 401-450-4970; mark@tefarm.com
- Louis Chasse III, Vice president, 401- 295-0888
- Tony DiGiulio, Treasurer, (401) 282-9443, beeOdyssey@aol.com
- Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, Secretary, 401-467-2857, cfluehr@ric.edu
- Betty Mencucci, Bee School Director, Glendale, (401) 123-2222, bmencucci@cox.net
- Ed Lafferty, Board member at large; EAS Rep. (401) 261-9641, fruithillaparies@verizon.net
- Celeste Nadworny, Librarian, (401) 481-3751 fruithillaparies@verizon.net
- Jason Kerr, Webmaster, jkerr@serendiporama.com
- Jim Lawson, Bee Inspector, (401)-222-2781

**Join RIBA, Become a Member, attend informative meetings, Receive the Quarterly Newsletter**

Send you name, address and phone number and \$15 annual membership dues to:

RIBA Treasurer, T

Anthony DiGiulio,

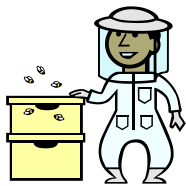
P.O. Box 114014

No. Providence, RI

02911-0214

Make the check payable to, "RIBA".

Include your email address if you prefer to receive information electronically, or by post at your home address.



**Lou Chasse's Weekend Workshops resume on April 9, 2011**

Continue the second Saturday of each month at 2:00 PM  
420 Congdon Hill Road  
Saunderstown, RI  
Phone: 295-0888

**SPRING PHOTO ENTRIES**

*Send your photos for the next issue to [cfluehr@ric.edu](mailto:cfluehr@ric.edu); two submissions from Scott D. Langlais*

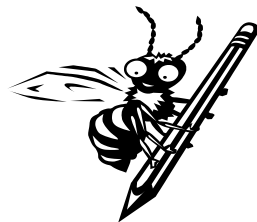


*Above, Bee on Borage; below, Bees with loaded pollen sacs at the hive entrance (SD Langlais)*



*We Want to Hear From You, Send Your Photos, Poetry, Articles of Interest To The RIBA Newsletter Editor At:*

[cfluehr@ric.edu](mailto:cfluehr@ric.edu)



**Dr. Ziegler on Apitherapy**

(cont'd from p. 1)

who warned him that as a first time recipient of bee venom that the pain of the stings will last and that the pain would increase for the first two weeks and then he would improve. Indeed, this proved true and just as he was about to give up on the efficacy of the therapy, his pain ceased and he experienced a sense of euphoria from the cessation of pain. Bee venom contains eight or more complex, little understood and variously toxic proteins, including minute amounts of a nerve poison similar to cobra venom (Vivian, 1986). The treatment varies by the individual but an average course includes: one sting, skip a day, and then a second sting, skip a day and then administer two stings, skip a day and then three stings, skip a day then four stings, skip a day and administer five stings. This ends the initial treatment. He learned the treatment from Charles Mraz and began treating people as he commenced self-treatment. In this 30+ years of practical apitherapy, he estimates that he has treated over 7,000 persons in pain. Before his beloved wife Doris Ziegler, herself a podiatrist, passed away she was his assistant. He reports that he treats 10-12 persons per session. His son Edward Ziegler III treats his father about three days a week, and his daughter Pamela Sawyer is an practicing apitherapist in Bolton, CT.

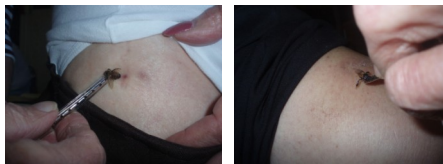
As a result of his successful treatment Dr. Ziegler began to keep bees. Today more than three decades later he maintains several hives for honey and hive products and for his supply of bees for apitherapy. Dr. Ziegler advises that bee venom therapy is highly individual and that some person need only a single treatment, while others continue—moreover not all improve, although he estimates that about 80% do improve. Of interest is that he has not had much success treating vegetarians. He sees about three times more women than men, most are older, but he sees multiple sclerosis patients of all ages. In some cases he has trained people to sting themselves and he provides the bees free of charge as well. Before he begins systematic treatment, he performs test stings three or four times on the back of the person seeking (cont'd on p. 3)

## Apitherapy in RI performed as a public service by Dr. Ed Ziegler

treatment as a test to observe the systemic response of the individual to the bee venom. Then he begins to sting in the arms, legs and joints. He prefers Russian bees but also uses Italians. Each treatment takes approximately fifteen minutes.

It goes without saying that Dr. Ziegler is an expert handler of bees. He uses a combination of wedges he places in the corner of supers to extract bees as well as a glass jam jar with a screen top lid to capture the bees he needs for a day's treatment. He uses ladies' hairclips to pick up the bees by their wings before placing them for stinging. He may prod the bee a bit to encourage stinging, and he may have to push down on the posterior of the bee to force it to sting. Dr. Ziegler asks those whom he treats to fill out a questionnaire regarding their sources of pain, symptoms, details of daily diet and exercise, their reason(s) for trying bee venom therapy and he keeps track of his patients' progress through this record.

On the day I observed Dr. Ziegler's treatments I spoke with the women and men he treated and each one had her or his own story of improvement of pain through bee venom therapy. Maria and Manual Medeiros have experienced relief from radiating sciatica pain in the legs and from shoulder pain for the year since their treatment commenced. They receive stings three times a week. Joan Furtado had a 'frozen' shoulder and arthritis in her hand that was relieved immediately after her initial treatment and she has remained pain free for over a year. Elsie John, 90 years, had a pinched nerve and sciatic pain that left her unable to climb stairs--



Dr. Ziegler applies multiple stings to affected areas (photo cfl)

"Now I can walk pain free and enjoy my favorite activities, like picking strawberries in the spring." Until bee sting therapy Leo Calderella had arthritis in his knees too severe to be able to walk--he walked easily up and down the stairs to Dr. Ziegler's second floor office in his kitchen. Rooks and Virginia Turner have been treated for five years for arthritis in their hands and low back pain. Besides their relief from pain they observe that they do not get colds as frequently as they used to and that cuts and simple abrasions heal faster. They also claim that they experience an energy boost comparable to a caffeine drink after they receive the bee stings.

RIBA member Christine Dwyer praised the beneficial effects of bee sting therapy and Dr. Ziegler who treated her case of bursitis in her hip following an auto accident. She combined massage therapy with the bee venom treatments that has provided lasting relief from her pain. Dr. Ziegler "office" is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 12 noon to 1:00PM at 27 Taber Street, Providence, phone: 401-521-3434. His treatments are free and available to all persons during the above hours of the week when he opens his door to any and all comers. Dr. Ziegler is both an enthusiastic apitherapist as well as a compassionate human who has devoted his later life to amelioration of human suffering through the therapeutic use of bee venom. *Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban*

Sources: *Keeping Bees*, John Vivian, Williamston Publishing, 1986.

*Nuc box with bees for treatment (cfl)*



## 2011 Meeting & Speaker Schedule

**April 10, 2011 Annual meeting and dinner, 4PM at *The Pines*:**

Dr. Elizabeth Capaldi Evans, Associate Professor of Biology and Animal Behavior at Bucknell University. Warwick native and author of *Why Do Bees Buzz? Fascinating Answers to Questions about Bees* She stresses the importance of public education.

**May 8 or 18, 2011**—Speaker and final date to be determined, as May 8 is Mother's Day

**June 12, 2011** at home of Chris and Martha Faella, 1072 Saugatuck Rd., Peacedale, RI 02879 phone: 783-7437

**July 10, 2011** at home of Pat and Alyce Pedder, 64 Pine Orchard Rd., Chepachet, RI 02814, phone: 568-3345

**August 14, 2011** at home of Janet Colardo, 2 Wagon Trail Dr., Johnston, RI, phone: 231-2622

(Contact Tony Marro with your ideas and suggestions for future meeting topics and locations at: [tmninv@hotmial.com](mailto:tmninv@hotmial.com))

## Meetings are the 2nd Sunday of the month at 2:00 unless announced otherwise.

Check the website for meeting notices: [www.ribeekeeper.org](http://www.ribeekeeper.org)

Directions to Rocky Hill Grange, 1340 S. County Trail (Rt. 2), East Greenwich: I-95 North or South, Exit 8/RI 25/Quaker Ln. (8 from south, 8A from north. Merge on to Rt 2 south, go thru light at division St, Grange is on left after shopping center

## RIBA NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

### Bee School Enrollments Strong

By Betty Mencucci



Betty Mencucci teaching at new Saturday class at Burrillville

This year RIBA introduced a third beekeeping class on Saturdays. It was held at the Bridgeton School in Burrillville in an old two room schoolhouse built in 1897. The popularity of the Saturday class proved itself with 54 students attending (filled the room to capacity). The class location is unique because I can display all kinds of educational materials about the room and leave it there for the duration of the three classes. This allows a greater opportunity for learning as students can spend time examining bee photos and exhibits. It allows students to study and handle all of the equipment displayed.

### Bee School Numbers

Betty reports that 76 individuals and 56 families are enrolled in the Davies Bee School and 54 individuals and 36 families are enrolled in the Burrillville Bee School, making a total of 130 individuals and 91 families for the schools in the northern part of the state.

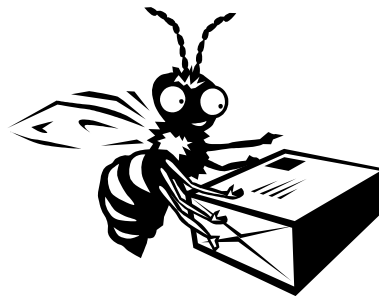
Mark Robar is teaching a class at the Metcalf School in South County.

### NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR RIBA OFFICERS

2011-2012

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR STATE BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATION, CONSIDER RUNNING FOR A RIBA OFFICE

Nominations are still being accepted for officers of RIBA for the year 2011-2012 for: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary. If you are interested, or you know of someone who might be interested in serving (please check with them first), forward your nomination either to Bob Anson (401-683-4711; anson26c@cox.net), or Roger Robitaille at 401-378-3578. Other volunteers, the Bee School Director, Librarian, Webmaster, and Board member at large are appointed by the next president or are approved by the general membership at the April annual meeting.



### ORDER YOUR PACKAGES & NUCS FROM RIBA MEMBERS

**Mark Robar** #3pkgs. \$85.00 #4 pkgs. \$97.00 pick up April 16th & May 7th. Nucs are all 6 frame \$125.00 avail. starting June 1, 2011. group and qty. available on request [tefarm@gmail.com](mailto:tefarm@gmail.com)

**Everett Zurlinden:** Gardner Spell Apiaries, GA; #3 pkg \$85; 5 fr.nucs \$85; 10 fr nucs \$150; queens \$25 each; Aor. 9 & 23 pickup; pollination rental available 401-885-5172; [everett@beehavin.com](mailto:everett@beehavin.com)

**Roger Robitaille** #3 pkg Italian \$85, early April Wilbanks Apiary, GA 401-732-6599 [beehivedr@aol.com](mailto:beehivedr@aol.com)

### BEE LESSONS

All bees get to work outdoors. Foraging for nectar and pollen, all day they get to smell flowers and suck up the sweet nectar. They mingle with friends amid the buzz and hum of fellow insects. Lesson: There's no better place to work than around flowers. (from *Bee Lessons*, H. Scott)

## Late Winter Early Spring Honey Report

James Praski

[James.Praski@ams.usda.gov](mailto:James.Praski@ams.usda.gov)

*Thanks to Jim for his interesting honey reports that appear as a regular feature of the RI BA Newsletter. Jim would like to hear from you with your observations and any information regarding your hives. He is looking for information on the following:*

*What condition are the bees in? Were there any problems (disease/pests) during the month and how did these affect the condition of the bees? What food sources? How did weather conditions affect the bees and honey production? Any other pertinent information such as pollination services offered or fees for services, and prices you being asked for 1lb bottles or for gallon/5 gallon tubs and supply of honey where you live. Please send to Jim's email address any noteworthy, helpful information regarding beekeeping. (editor)*

In New England, seasonal winter weather has been the norm with the usual deep freeze and heavy but sporadic periods of rain and snow fall throughout January and February's low temperatures challenged the survival of many hives. Significant snowfall affords the entire region with high moisture levels which should provide ideal conditions in the spring for abundant pollen and nectar sources. During January, Nor'easter storms constantly bombarded New England with heavy rain and snowfall. Keepers checked colonies for ample supplies of honey for overwintering. In New England, experienced beekeepers made sure that each hive has 60 to 80 lbs

of food stores. As needed, colonies were supplemented with fondant, protein patties, and sugar candy. Many keepers were reluctant to open hives and chance chilling the bees. Beekeepers report that bees have exhibited the usual late winter pattern of clustering just under the inner cover. Additionally, many keepers found bees on the top frames of the upper hive body. The clusters are tight enough to keep the bees safe. As the temperature drops below 55 degrees F and gets progressively colder, they cluster closer together and generate heat by vibrating their wing muscles without moving their wings, as they move to center themselves on the brood. In a strong hive, there will be two inches of bees



Bees on early spring snowdrops (photo cfl).

around the cluster that serves as insulation. This keeps the heat within the cluster so it is not lost, as bees inside the cluster continually replace those on the outside so that none of them freeze to death. Even when it is freezing outside, the bees keep the temperature around the brood nest at 92 degrees F.

The month of February experienced cold, seasonal temperatures with precipitation mainly from snowfall which has resulted in high moisture levels for the entire region. Overnight temperatures recorded in single digits, with daytime highs in the teens meant bees were in tight, small clusters with little activity. It's been a hard winter on the bees coupled with a long confinement

There were some early winter reports of losses due to starvation. Particularly in February, there has been widespread reporting of heavy colony losses due to severe weather conditions. February losses are not uncommon because the bees are aging and the colonies honey stores have dwindled. Evidence shows that starvation was this season's biggest killer so far. When the weather is as cold as it has been, the bees can freeze in place and cannot migrate to those far away frames. In New England, hives normally lose 5% to 10% of their population due to weather related issues, however, this year some areas reported losses near 40% to 60% rate especially in Northern New England. This season overall, reported losses are currently at a conservative 40%. Some keys to winter survival were the reported practice before winter of sugar dusting, drone comb removal, using screened bottom boards and the application of apiguard and/or formic acid during the first week of August, thus forgoing the last honey flow. The primary pest losses going into this winter were purportedly due to tracheal mites and nosema. Tracheal mites and nosema can reduce a workers lifespan by as much as 80%. New England beekeepers associations have independently worked toward the development of greenhouse based winter management of bees to produce locally raised packages, nucs and queens. In New England, keepers advise checking the brood areas and replacing empty frames with capped honey ones without physically disturbing the cluster. The current mindset is-, feed while you can until the bees can forage on the early spring flowers. As we go to press, bees have been foraging on early spring white snowdrops found in

in many RI gardens and fields. In this inspection process, check the hives for the weight of the stores. Light weight store conditions require adding granulated sugar or fondant on the inner cover and monitor to see if the bees are utilizing it. In the event that the current temperature consistently stays above freezing; feeding 2:1 sugar water, with the necessary accessibility above the hive, is standard procedure. Tilting hives to assist drainage is accomplished by tilting the back end of the hive up and the front end down in order to assist drainage of the bottom board. Condensation from poor ventilation will more adversely affect bees than cold weather. Colonies need to be well ventilated to abate this problem. In New England, hives normally lose 5 to 10% of their population due to normal winter ventilation issues. The increase in daylight hours will signal the queen to begin laying eggs hence a food source is necessary and timely needed. Overall colonies were reported to be in moderate to fairly good condition whereby the colonies experiencing good health were reportedly the ones that received regular and aggressive applications of mite treatments.

Late winter, early spring is traditionally a time for keepers to be occupied in building, repairing, and maintenance of equipment, checking of shows, fairs, workshops, and planning bee association classes as well as nuc and package bee pick-ups. This is the time to plan for the coming year. New England keepers will be seeking answers to the following questions: How many hives would you like to have? How much equipment will you need? When you have made these decisions you will need to order the bees, queens and equipment. Some regional beekeeping

associations have been discussing the pros and cons of instituting irradiation programs for bee keeping equipment in light of the many disease causing conditions. The New England honey crop this past year showed an average of 50 to 80 pounds per colony. Demand at all retail/wholesale outlets remains good and honey sales remains firm. Supplies of new crop locally produced honey are continuing to be made available. Prices quoted for 1 lb bottled units were higher at \$6.00 to \$9.00 mostly \$8.50 occasionally higher inclusive of all varieties; for food service operations prices were steady with wholesale 5 gallon units at \$150.00 to \$200.00 mostly \$175.00 and occasionally lower for both light and dark raw and natural honey depending on variety and quality. A multi-disciplined group of industry participants, including honey companies (packers, producers, importers and exporters) that want to increase industry participation in solving the problem of illegally sourced honey, have initiated a Certified True Source Honey™ Traceability Program starting in 2011. The program, which was formally launched at the 2011 North American Beekeeping Conference in January, is designed to certify the origin, food safety and purity of the honey being distributed and consumed within North America.



*Late winter, hives of Cherie,  
Jan, Mike Nolin*

## A Note on APITHERAPY

by Bernard Bieder

When we check our hives, we dress so that we can avoid the discomfort of bee stings. This is natural, but do we know about the possible benefits of bee stings? Learning how to raise bees and get the harvest of honey relegates the bee stings to the back burner.

If you have arthritic problems or even back problems you can try bee stings. The discomfort of shingles can be reduced, and while nothing can cure multiple sclerosis, its progress in the body can be slowed. Stings set off your body's immune system. A sting normally causes swelling which many people think is an allergic reaction. A serious reaction results in an inability to breathe properly. In these cases it is best to call 911 immediately. Dr. Ziegler reports that of the hundreds of people stung by him over the years, there were only two allergic reactions.

Our association is fortunate to have Dr. Ed Ziegler. He is a retired dentist. Several years ago he was ready for a wheelchair due to severe arthritis. I was told many years ago that my wounds from World War II would eventually cause arthritis. There was a period about 20 years ago that an X-Ray of a persistent pain in my shoulder confirmed that I had arthritis. This was about the same time that I began beekeeping. Once I began apitherapy the pain disappeared; I never needed to take any medication and actually forgot all about the pain. I credit the stings I received for keeping it away.

Another incident not too long ago was my getting plantar fasciitis. (cont'd p. 7)

### *Apitherapy, B. Bieder*

The nerve that passes through the heel of the foot gets inflamed. It can be very painful. Three cortisone shots did nothing to relieve the pain, but two stings of my calf cure my troubles.

Dr. Ziegler is still going strong at 92 years of age. He can grab a bee with his tweezers in the twinkling of an eye. He places an iced stone on your skin so that the discomfort of the sting is minimal. Some people require two stings, and others as many as teen stings or more. If you have nagging pain, I suggest that you see him, it might help.

Edward Ziegler, 27 Taber Avenue, Providence, 521-3434. Enter through the back door and proceed to the second floor. Any Monday-Wednesday-Friday from 12noon to 1PM. There is no charge.

<<»»»»»>>



*Bee on Burr comb,*

*Scott Langlais*

### **Ugandan Girl's School Beekeeping Initiative, a way to do some good**

by Martha Dolben

[mdolben@comcast.net](mailto:mdolben@comcast.net)

The Uganda Rural Development and Training Girls (URDT) School Demo Farm started a Beekeeping Project in 1993 with the following goals: 1) To develop best practices in apiculture for apiculture for students and the community 2) To ensure food security and self-sufficiency for supplementing people's diets given the high nutritional value of honey and hive bi-products 3) Honey and bee products are used in modern medicine, e.g. propolis, royal jelly & bee venom 4) Bee conservation is rural farming essential, especially for crop pollination 5) To enhance income generation toward sustainability.

The overall goal is to increase the incomes and nutrition of rural Ugandan households and self-sustainability by demonstrating the value of commercial beekeeping for young women. Since 1993 URDT helped to form several beekeepers associations, such as Buyaga and Bugangaizi Beekeepers. By 2000 there were 500 local beekeepers and now that number has more than doubled. Ugandan Coffee is highly prized and "coffee honey" is in great demand regionally and globally. The demonstration farm is located adjacent to 2.5 acres of a Robusta coffee plantation. The project currently has 10 Kenya Top Bar Hives (with acquired materials to produce more)

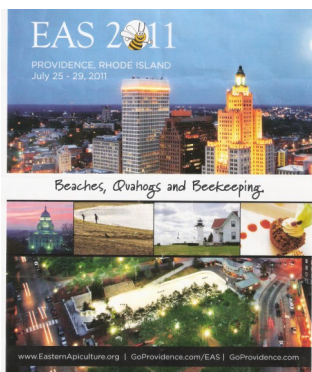
and 15 Langstroth Hives. However, there are insufficient hives and equipment to develop a commercial project. There are critical needs to reach this new level of productivity leading to a locally based commercial bee industry that would enhance family income and develop a sustainable industry, while improving overall agricultural productivity in the area through better crop pollination.

To further develop the URDT beekeeping project the following items are needed: Langstroth and Kenya Top Bar Hives to achieve a commercial level of productivity, smokers, harvesting gear, air tight buckets, honey extractor, jars, chain link fencing, paid apiary attendants and training, motorcycle (transport for community mobilization), computer, training in queen breeding & hive management.

Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban made a brief presentation at a RIBA meeting on the Ugandan girls school beekeeping project and Roger Robitaille immediately stepped forward and has donated a half-dozen bee veils. Beekeepers around the world share a special bond and through the bees we are all connected. Any other donations from RIBA members would be greatly appreciated. Contact Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban at [cfluehr@ric.edu](mailto:cfluehr@ric.edu)



**EASTERN APICULTURE  
SOCIETY (EAS) IN RI  
JULY 25-29, 2011 AT  
WARWICK CROWNE  
PLAZA**



The EAS is coming to RI in July. The Short Courses will take place on July 25-27, and the conference will be on July 27-29 at Warwick's Crowne Plaza Hotel. The agenda and speakers are set. Speakers include: Randy Oliver, David Mendes, Dave Tarpy, Jeff Pettis as well as beekeepers and researchers from around the country. This year's short courses are "From August to August" for beginners, and a refresher "The Business of Bees—from hobby to hard work" for experienced beekeepers. The Conference theme is "Practical Beekeeping. Registration and conference updates can be accessed at the conference website ([www.easternapiculture.org](http://www.easternapiculture.org)) and through EAS leaders; Everett Zurlinden ([president@easternapiculture.org](mailto:president@easternapiculture.org)); Kathy Summers ([Kathy@BeeCulture.com](mailto:Kathy@BeeCulture.com)) and Jim Bobb, Chair ([chairman@easternapiculture.com](mailto:chairman@easternapiculture.com)).

**( Seeley talk cont'd from p. 1)**

reproduction. As Dr. Seeley recounts, when a hive swarms about 10,000 workers and a queen begin the search for a suitable new nest site. Among the workers are about 3,500 scout bees, the oldest being the most experienced, fan out to search for their new home. Ideally they are looking for a tree with a cavernous empty space, for about 10 gallons capacity, and a high small entry, but as all beekeepers know these empty spaces can be in houses, chimneys, or abandoned buildings. The scouts visit appropriate potential homes, measuring them by walking their length and breadth for 10-30 minutes and report back to the cluster the location and distance of the site using the well-known waggle dance for directionality, 40 degrees to the right of the sun, and for distance, the length of the dance. The competing sites are then 'debated' by caucusing in the swarm for the desirability of one over the other. In one of his studies, conducted in New England on Appledore Island part of the Isles of Shoals off the coast of New Hampshire, a 16 hour debate over three days considering 11 different sites and information from 149 different scout bees ended with the full consensus of the swarm as to which site to select. The debate takes the form of 'votes' cast by bees—who make site inspection visits-- dancing for one site over another until one by one less desirable sites are eliminated in favor of more desirable ones. Dr. Seeley recorded a progression of selecting a site that moved from 33% to 62% and finally 100% consensus before the decision to move was made. Once made,

the swarm leaves. The queen has played no role in the entire process. The judgment process is absolute and not relative, and presumably even poor decisions are final. However, the likely increase in the number of feral hives suggests that bees are doing alright outside of Langstroth hives.

**Swarm Capture:** Dr. Seeley offered excellent advice on swarm capture. Feral hives are usually smaller than the capacity of one deep, preferring long, narrow spaces to the broad Langstroth box. They consist of cavities in high, secure places, such as trees, with a small entry near to the bottom of the nest often facing south. Feral colonies have about 15% drone comb and they propolize all drafty or potentially wet surfaces.

The swarm collection box should be 14" square, made of plywood, painted green for camouflage from hunters, placed about 10' high in trees, facing south and in a shady area. Use of a swarm lure chemical, such as pheromone, and foundation with the smell of beeswax to lure bees. Heck the swarm lure frequently as they may fill quickly—look for pollen being brought in and use caution at these heights with a stable ladder, rope, and smoker. Using this method Dr. Seeley reports a 50% success rate. The feral hives are likely to be strong. You may contact Dr. Seeley at: [tds5@cornell.edu](mailto:tds5@cornell.edu).





## Visit to the Harry Laidlaw Bee Garden, University of California, Davis

by Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban

Our daughter moved to Sacramento, CA a year ago and we have enjoyed visiting her new city where the newspaper is “The Sacramento Bee” and northern California honey comes in dozens of varieties, and where a beekeeping supply store is a few blocks from where her home. Our family spent the Thanksgiving holiday in the Sacramento area and we set aside some time to visit the new Hagen-Dazs Honey Bee Bee Haven Garden at the Harry H. Laidlaw Bee Research Center in nearby Davis. A feature story appeared in the October 2010 issue of the *American Bee Journal* (vol. 150, no. 10) on this unique bee-friendly garden connected to one of the nation’s premier research centers. We visited the half acre garden on a Sunday when, unfortunately, the research center was closed but we did stroll the grounds where the bees were flying on a mild November day among the 30+ visible hives that are kept for bee research. Another 80 hives are part of the research station.

The Bee Garden features a number of bee-related works of art that are unique, including Miss Bee Haven, designed and executed by local artist Donna Billick, is about 4 foot high and 6 feet long, anatomically correct worker bee. Shaded by an almond tree (what else in California?) she is constructed of rebar, chicken wire, sand, cement, tile, bronze, steel, grout, fiberglass and ceramic. Set in 200 lbs of cement, with 6 bronze legs, she is built to last. Billick used the lost wax process for casting the bronze legs, an ancient technique used by Egyptians and west Africans in their sculptures using beeswax for the process. She stands proudly inside the gate just after you encounter two “pillars” of stacked hive bodies all colorfully painted with scenes of the hive and of bees, workers. Fascinated by bees since creating Miss Bee Haven, the artist is planning a new sculpture called “Swarmed” that features 30 suspended bees in classic swarm shape. The sculpture was funded by Wells Fargo.

in the garden that attracted workers, although these were few and far between. Milkweed, Sedum, thistle, lavender and knapweed. Large wall plaques also designed by the Miss Bee Haven designer greet the visitor at the entrance to the Research Center itself. The research center is located close to a grove of old olive trees, clearly near to old and existing farm lands. Small black olives covered the ground near the center, but are bitter—this was my first time to eat a raw olive clearly improved by the brine. The Garden is clearly intended for the general public as an educational tool, and not for the beekeeper or specialist. The key goals of the garden are to provide a year long source of food for the bees at the research station and to raise public awareness about the plight of the bees, and to encourage visitors to plant bee-friendly gardens. The bee stands on a pedestal that also serves as a bench decorated with ceramic art tiles, the work of the U California Davis Science/Art Fusion Program founded at U C Davis in 2006. This is a unique venture in and of itself and was founded by U C Davis Professor of Entomology Diane Ullman



### BEE WISDOM

Bees live naturally in the wild or are artificially kept by beekeepers. We put them in a box and let them do their thing. Either way, they devote their lives to the hive. That’s the miracle of bees—complete subjugation of the individual for the group. Lesson: It is satisfying to work for the greater good. (from *Bee Lessons*, H. Scott)

## ADVICE FROM AN EXPERT

By Bernard Bieder

### On Packages and Nucs

New beekeepers waiting for their packages and nucs should have enough frames/foundation to accommodate the packages, and enough sugar to in syrup (BJ's and Sams Club have 25 lb. bags and Betty Mencucci has sugar for sale).

To transfer to the new super, shake the opened package if bees bown into the hive box, reserve the syrup can and queen cage and check to make sure that the queen is alive. The super should have 5 frames so shake the bees into the empty space. Gently add the remaining frames over the bees. They will move way and will not be harmed. Place the queen cge between two frames near the center of the super making sure again that she is alive. Cover with both inner and outer covers and reduce the hive entrance to prevent robbing. Feed the hive until they stop taking syrup.

I have put entire packages into a deep hive box with 5 frames of foundation or drawn comb, and placed the queen cage as described above. When all of the bees have left the package box, add the other 5 frames and shake any of the remaining "laggards" out. After several days, check to see if the queen has been released and thus accepted. There is a candy plug which the bees eat to release the queen. You can help them by placing a thin nail hole through the candy. Be sure to place the candy end up so that the exit of the queen will not be blocked by dead bees. If there is no wire to hold the cage, try using an elastic or whatever

D might be handy to hold the cage between the two frames.

For Nucs: Nucs come in 4 or 5 frames. After removing the top of the syrup can, gently remove each frame from the nuc and fill the center of the new super. Be careful not to harm or lose the queen. Place the frames in the same order as they were in the nuc box. Surround those frames with a frame of capped honey, drawn comb, or foundation. Cover and reduce the entrance, feed until they stop taking sugar syrup. I recommend a product called "Honey B Healthy" which, when added to sugar syrup, gets the bees to slurp up the syrup faster.

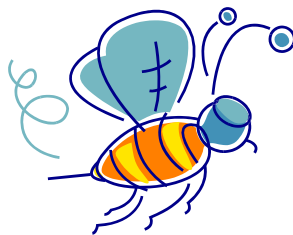
### HONEY RECIPES FOR SPRINGTIME (from Joy with Honey, Doris Mech)



#### Energy Drink

1/4 cup honey  
1/2 cup unsweetened Pineapple juice  
1 banana, sliced  
1 egg  
1 cup cold milk  
1 Tbsp bee pollen

Put all ingredients together in a Blender and process until frothy. Great drink for jogging or walking as the warmer days approach.



#### Poppy Seed Dressing

1/2 cup mild honey  
1 tsp. dry mustard  
1 tsp salt  
1/3 cup apple cider vinegar  
1 tbsp fresh onion puree  
1 cup vegetable oil, soy, olive  
1 1/2 Tbsp poppy seeds

Mix all ingredients, except poppy seeds, in a blender adding the oil in a slow stream, add poppy seeds and pulse the blender 2-3 times. Dressing excellent on spring greens, avocados, grapefruit slices, and apples on a crisp bed of romaine lettuce. Use you imagination!

#### Hot Honeyed Grapefruit

2 grapefruit  
1/4 cup honey  
1/4 cup orange juice

Cut grapefruit in half and section. Blend the honey-orange mixture and drizzle over each grapefruit half. Bake for 15 minutes in a 300 degree oven. Garnish with strawberry or cherry and serve warm.

**The RIBA Quarterly Newsletter wants to improve education for beekeepers & public understanding of the importance of honey bees; send your ideas & suggestions to the editor: [cfluehr@ric.edu](mailto:cfluehr@ric.edu)**

## BOOK REVIEW

*Storey's Guide to Keeping Bees* (Storey Publishing, 2010) by Malcolm Sanford and Richard Bonney; ISBN:978-1-60342-550-6; \$19.95, 244 pages.

Reviewed by Scott D. Langlais  
[scooterbot@gmail.com](mailto:scooterbot@gmail.com)

As the preface explains, Storey's new guide is an update and distillation of two previous books by Bonney, *Hive Management* (1990) and *Beekeeping, a Practical Guide* (1994). As may be expected, this new volume devotes significantly more coverage to varroa and colony collapse disorder. It also seems better adapted to contemporary society's declining attention span, discarding longer sections of prose in favor of smaller, easily digestible blocks of information. This makes for a convenient read, even if your time permits only a few pages per session. The book's organizational style intersperses anecdotes from Sanford's *Apis* newsletter, offering a myriad of viewpoints from around the globe on various aspects of beekeeping. They are clearly and succinctly presented in a way that few photos can match. The book ends with a standard glossary and detailed index for reference, as well as a sample pollination contract, model beekeeping ordinance, and recommended retailers, publications, websites, etc.

The book is an excellent introduction for new beekeepers. More experienced beekeepers will also find it useful for its up to date information and concise handling of the fundamentals. All areas of beekeeping are detailed, though the heart of the book is maintaining healthy colonies, rather than maximizing honey production. Especially useful are the over 40 pages devoted to diseases and pests of the

honey bee. Sanford takes an impartial view of current treatments, outlining both pros and cons, as well as commenting on several medication-free strategies from other countries. Top bar hives are briefly mentioned, though the majority of hive-specific advice focuses on the Langstroth. Depending on your personal preference, you may find the writing style a bit disjointed, but I found it an engaging style. The considerable experience and authority behind this new Guide provides ample grounds to recommend it as an outstanding reference or beginner's text.

>>>>>>>><<



**New Report:** *Global Bee Colony Disorders and other Threats to Insect Pollinators*, just published by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) documents the emerging global spread of colony collapse disorder due to the rise in the widespread use of chemical pesticides and their memory damaging effects on bees. Bees are the early warning indicators of wider effects on plant and animal life and emergency interventions to prevent further losses and boost pollinator protection is recommended. (A reviewer for this report is sought for the summer issue.)

## LOCAL PURVEYORS OF BEES AND BEEKEEPING SUPPLIES

### Cottage Industry Apiary

Louis J. Chasse II,

31 years RI manufactured fine woodenware with a 2009 price

401-295-0888

### Roger Robitaille

#### D & R Honey Farm

Package Bees & Queens

Bee removal; Pollination

Custom made Observation Hives; Hive Boxes

Cell: 401-378-3578

Email: [bhivedr@aol.com](mailto:bhivedr@aol.com)

### Sugar for Spring feeding *limited supply*

5lb bags = \$2.25

10 lb bags= \$4.59

Betty Mencucci

[bmencucci@cox.net](mailto:bmencucci@cox.net)

401-568-8449



## **RI Beekeepers' Association**

**RIBA, c/o Mark Robar  
P.O. Box 169  
Wyoming, RI 02898**

Newsletter editor: Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban  
cfluehr@ric.edu

---

We're on the Web!

[www.ribeekeeper.com](http://www.ribeekeeper.com)

---

---

## **Headline**