



# Northern Piedmont Beekeepers Association

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### JULY

**NO MEETINGS in July and August**

Meetings will resume on September 16.

**In the meantime you can get busy and take off honey (unless you are a first-year beekeeper who has been feeding sugar syrup).**

**Enjoy the summer. Watch bees on plants.**

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### CHINESE AUCTION RESULTS

Wow! A great auction. NPBA made \$141. A big thank you to all who participated and to Deb Parker, organizer of it all, and her little helper who pulled the winning numbers out. Please thank the donors: Betterbee, Miller Bee Supply, Mother Lode Products, Bob and Sandy Stowe, Karen Hunt, Susan Ishmael, and Ann Harman.

### VIRGINIA STATE BEEKEEPERS

Info at: [virginiabeekeepers.org](http://virginiabeekeepers.org)  
Put November 6 on your calendar of events right now and come to Blue Ridge Community College for the VSBA autumn meeting.

### HIVE WORKS FOR JULY

Keep grass and weeds mowed especially at entrance. White Dutch clover will continue blooming if kept mowed and sufficient rain. It will shrivel up and quit blooming if lack of rain.

**NPBA now owns a Honey Harvest Kit that you may rent for your harvest time. Extractor, knife uncapping tank and bottling/settling bucket with gate. Contact the Secretary, Craig Williams, to reserve the Honey Harvest Kit.**

To clean up wet honey supers after harvest, put them over the inner cover and let the bees clean them up.

If those supers have **never** had any brood in wax moth will not be attracted to them. If brood was raised, even one generation, you can bag them, freeze for a week, leave in bags and store. Just be aware that mice can chew through plastic bags.

After harvest check for varroa and take action if necessary. This is the worst time for varroa (actually good times for the mites themselves).

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

It was great to see so many of you at the annual picnic in June. A big "thank you" to Ann Harman for conducting the hive work before the picnic, and thanks to all those who brought fabulous food! I also want to thank Bob & Sandy Stowe, Ann Harman, Susan Ishmael and Karen Hunt for donating items for the Chinese Auction, and to Deb Parker for coordinating donations from bee suppliers. Also, I did not get a chance before he left to say thanks to Doctor Snyder for all his efforts and generosity in again making the pavilion at Verdun available to NPBA. It is nice to see a club where so many folks step forward to help make things work.

Remember we have no monthly Thursday meeting for July or August. Have a great summer, and see you at our next regular meeting in September.

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I just finished an article for an international beekeeping journal. The article concerns the contamination of beeswax foundation that so many use in their hives.

This is not the time to buy or install foundation in hives but in the August issue I will write a brief article about the problems we beekeepers are facing.

Our June weather has been overly hot and humid. We take care of our pets and livestock but we have to take care of our bees, too. Ventilation! My favorite bee word.

## VIRGINIA STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOC.

Annual membership dues are due July 1st. Need to renew your current membership? Interested in becoming a VSBA member? The VSBA membership form can be found on the VSBA website ([www.virginiabeekeepers.org](http://www.virginiabeekeepers.org)) or can be sent via email by contacting Karen at [kahu9@juno.com](mailto:kahu9@juno.com) or 540-937-4792. For NPBA members, your annual VSBA dues are \$10. Not sure if you need to renew or think you are already current with your VSBA dues? Call or email Karen.

## SO YOU WANT TO BE A BEEKEEPER...

The first half of July is the optimum time for removing and extracting honey. At this time the population of bees is stable or declining, but the varroa population is increasing. You cannot do any treatments, if needed, while honey supers are still on the hives. So remove honey, extract. Now you can test for varroa and do whatever is needed.

It is important at this time to be a weather watcher. It is not always possible to choose the perfect day or night to extract honey but if you can choose, then do not uncap and extract when it is really, really humid.

Honey picks up water vapor from the atmosphere. Honey over 18.6% water is apt to ferment. Perhaps not right away, but you don't want to sell some honey and find the customer complaining a few months later.

Running a dehumidifier in the space where you extract can help. Getting the bucket or tank of honey covered as soon as possible and keeping it covered during the settling period will help.

In these days of small hive beetles (SHB), do not remove honey supers and let them sit around until you feel like extracting. Remove, extract, wet supers back on over inner cover, settling buckets/tanks covered, floor cleaned up—all in the time you took to read this paragraph. Or close to it. SHB has made us better beekeepers!

Please don't use cheesecloth to strain your honey. Go to the fabric shop and buy some sheer nylon curtain material. Nylon will not leave small fibers in your honey to be the nuclei for crystallization.

Letting honey settle in a warm place (easy in July weather) removes wax bits, pieces of bees, air bubbles and other miscellaneous junk. Usually after about 4 days to a week you can be sure everything has floated to the top. Now you can skim off the foam with junk.

Don't even contemplate giving your honey away in a recycled, unlabeled jar. I suspect you were going to give it to friends and relatives that way. One word—don't.

## IT'S THE LAW!

Yes, some really crazy old laws are still on the books in many places, especially small towns where the reason for them is lost in the past. The laws are usually not applicable now.

However Virginia does have some laws concerning bees. No, I am not talking about town or city ordinances against keeping bees. I am talking about selling bees.

Everyone is being encouraged to “grow local queens” and “produce local nucs.” Fine. Those are good projects.

So now you have more queens than you need and everyone is clamoring for nucs. So you decide to sell them

**Did you know that your apiary must be inspected by the local state bee inspector before you can sell even one queen or nuc?**

I'll bet you didn't know.

Here are the pertinent laws:

No person in the State engaged in rearing queen bees for sale, shall use honey in the making of candy for use in mailing cages. Every person engaged in rearing queen bees shall have his queen rearing and queen mating apiary or apiaries inspected at least once during each summer season by the State apiarist or inspector....

No bees on comb, hives, used beekeeping equipment with combs or appliances may be sold or offered for sale unless each bill of sale is accompanied by a valid certificate prepared by the Commissioner declaring the specifically identifiable hives, beekeeping equipment and appliances free of the causal agent of American foulbrood disease or other diseases named in the rules and regulations.

Now don't get your knickers in a twist. These laws are there for the protection of the seller and the buyer—and even for the bees.

Just call Bob Wellemeyer before you sell anything. Don't worry—you'll be happy when you know your bees are healthy!

## THINKING AHEAD

Although beekeepers will not be celebrating the start of the Bee Year until August, a few things must be kept in mind during July.

The Bee Year is winding down. As the days of June pass so the abundance of bee flowers will slowly diminish. This does not mean you won't see bee flowers out there. It just means that basically the nectar supply is diminishing. It is important to be a plant watcher.

The first half of July is the ideal time to remove your honey from the hive. Remember that the honey in the brood chambers belong to the bees. It is not your honey. The field bees need the energy—from eating honey—to fly. They need to bring back water for cooling the hive and for diluting the ripened honey in order to eat it.

That's right - the bees may eat honey straight from the cell when smoked with your smoker. But for general use, the honey is diluted with water.

In our area the bees will need 60 pounds of honey left on for the winter. One deep full of honey weighs about 100 pounds. One medium full is about 50 pounds. You do the arithmetic. I'll repeat this information later in the year. But this is just a reminder that any honey from now through the fall belongs to the bees.

Yes, it is possible to take a harvest of goldenrod and even aster. Here is where you need to be a plant watcher. I have seen fields near my home that are golden yellow, fence-to-fence goldenrod. Surplus honey? I would think so. But you need to know what you are doing. That is why being a plant watcher is so important at this time of year.

We can't predict a drought, a severe drought. But you can observe the effects if you are a plant watcher. We can predict endless days of rain but you have to pay attention to the radio, TV and Internet. What is more important is for you to interpret what the plant and the weather person are telling you so you know what to do for your bees.

So pay attention to the world around you!

## COOKING WITH HONEY

This is a good season for raspberries and blackberries.

### BLACKBERRY FLUFF

1 pound blackberries  
2/3 cup honey  
Juice of 1/2 lemon  
2 envelopes unflavored gelatin  
3 egg whites

Place the blackberries, honey, lemon juice and gelatin in a saucepan. Add about 1/3 cup water. Simmer for 15 minutes. Strain through a sieve. Chill until partially set. Beat the egg white until stiff. Fold egg whites into blackberry mixture. Chill. Serve with whipped cream or ice cream.

NATURE'S GOLDEN TREASURE HONEY  
COOKBOOK Joe M. Parkhill

### RASPBERRY SAUCE

1 pint fresh raspberries  
1/4 cup honey  
1/4 cup water  
1-1/2 inch vanilla bean

If you washed the raspberries, drain well. Then crush. Add honey, vanilla bean and water and mix well. Bring to boiling. Simmer gently for 5 minutes. Press through a fine sieve. May be made in quantities. Will keep indefinitely in closed container in refrigerator.

HONEY RECIPES FROM WISCONSIN

Ozaukee-Washington Co. Beekeepers Assoc.

### HONEY BERRY PUREE

2 cups blackberries or raspberries  
1/4 cup honey  
2 tablespoons fruit-flavored or plain brandy  
Puree fruit in blender or processor. Strain if desired. Stir in honey, brandy.

NATIONAL HONEY BOARD

Use honey in your ice tea.

WHAT'S BLOOMING?	
garden flowers	sourwood trees
white Dutch clover	vegetable gardens
Queen Anne's Lace (not popular with bees)	
chicory	Herbs
daisy-like flowers	vitex (in gardens)
some wildflowers (look around)	

## GOOD STUFF

### Meeting dates for NPBA

September 16  
October 21  
November 18

No meeting in July, Aug, Dec and Jan.

**Virginia State Beekeepers Association** Fall meeting November 6 at Blue Ridge Community College, Weyers Cave, a few minutes off I-81.

**Eastern Apicultural Society** Short Course and Conference August 2 - 6, Boone, NC (in the cool mountains!)

### AMAZING STUFF

Knapweed is listed as a good bee plant and if plentiful a honey crop can be made. However, it is considered an invasive, noxious weed.

So how to find knapweed in order to eliminate it? Get a dog! It seems that, if trained, a dog will sniff out knapweed much better than humans can find it by wandering around and looking.

### CLUB EXTRACTION EQUIPMENT

To complement the extractor that was previously donated to NPBA, the club has purchased a double-uncapping tank with honey gate, an electric uncapping knife and one bottling bucket. Our secretary, Craig Williams, has graciously agreed to store the club equipment and coordinate its loan to club members. Interested members may contact Craig to reserve or pick up equipment, or for information about the loan process and general use guidelines at 540-937-3260 or pineviewtech@gmail.com .

#### VIRGINIA BEE SUPPLY

Local authorized Brushy Mountain dealer offering a complete selection of woodenware and bee supplies. Save shipping costs. Contact Jerry Headley at 540-905-5563 or [www.virginiabeesupply.com](http://www.virginiabeesupply.com).

#### C & H BEE BOOKS

If you are interested in bee books contact Ann for a list of books available. We cannot accept credit cards but checks and cash are just fine!