

# The Monthly Extractor



Volume 47, Issue 10

October 2022

*This is our newsletter that reflects the various techniques, theories and art of sustainable beekeeping. Articles are contributed by SCBA members.*

## SCBA October General Meeting

### President's Message

Happy October Beeks!



Can you believe it's already October?!! How are your bees and your pollinator gardens? Fall has arrived and the Maximillian Sunflowers started blooming a few weeks ago, just in time for the bees to bring in a bit more nectar for their winter storage. Even though the weather has been erratic

lately, it is always beautiful to sit in the garden and watch the bees, butterflies, and birds busily gathering nectar for the winter. Like Ann, our 1st VP, said at the General Meeting, "There is so much life buzzing around!" Don't forget to send us pictures of your late summer bees and blooms. We would love to post them here!

The September General Meeting was in-person, at the Druid's Hall, for the second time since the pandemic started. We had about 1/3 of the attendance of our average pre-pandemic meetings, so we are getting more members each time.

*Continued next page*

### SCBA Member Events September

[SCBA Calendar](#) SCBA online calendar is updated frequently. Check it out to see current events.

- Oct 10 – [SCBA General Meeting](#)
- Oct 17 – [Beginner Beekeepers Forum](#)
- Oct 24 – [Seasoned Beekeepers Forum](#)
- Oct 27 – [Gardening for Bees Meeting](#)

**Date: October 10, 2022, 6:00 – 8:30 pm**

We are excited to have Lauren Ruser join us as our speaker in October. She is a Sonoma County native who was raised in Windsor. She is currently working on her Masters at UC Davis. Lauren will share with us current research on bee diseases, pests, and Varroa Mite management. She will also mix in some of what the E.L. Niño Lab at Davis is currently working on.

Our October general meeting will be in person and zoom hybrid.

Location: Druids Hall  
1011 College Ave  
Santa Rosa

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86514254718?pwd=cHZqcERVdG5HZIR1eXF5MDNaQkRGUT09>  
ID: 865 1425 4718  
Password: 768368

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## President's Message continued

Remember, if you cannot make it to an in-person meeting, we will simultaneously provide live, Zoom access, so you won't have to miss a thing!

Thank you to everyone who showed up at the Druid's Hall. The Board was there to share SCBA's 2022 accomplishments, as well as some fun plans for the future. We had some great questions and shared ideas. If you missed it, you can always find the recording in the Members Only section of our website.

Have you taken time to explore our SCBA Website? The Members Only Section is jam-packed with helpful information. After you log in, look for the "SCBA Members Only Info" option on the top navigation bar, and when you hover your pointer over that, you will see a drop-down menu with all kinds of information about our organization, from the Bees Share Program and swarms, to our financials, recordings of general meeting speakers, and archived newsletters dating back to the 1980s! Now is a good time to search around for videos and articles about getting your hives ready for winter. There is also information about our Equipment Rentals, including Honey Extractors and a Fruit Press! The Gardening for Bees group has also been busily filling their section with info about bloom tracking, the seed library, gardening tips, and so much more. Be sure to check it out.

Now that summer is over, Sonoma County students are heading back to the classroom and SCBA has been receiving many requests from schools, asking for bee presentations and guidance with building their pollinator gardens. Autumn is the time to plant bulbs in the ground and spread wildflower seeds, so the students are going to have a lot of fun at these presentations learning about the bees and how to feed them.

Thank you to our team of volunteers in the Education Program for making this all happen. If you want to join in on the fun, contact Shannon, our Program Director, to find out how you can help out.

And finally, let me send out a huge thank you to all of our members who work tirelessly to support the bees, the pollinators, and this incredible association. I'm looking forward to seeing more of you at our next General Meeting!

Stay safe and Bee Well!

Carol Ellis, President  
[president@sonomabees.org](mailto:president@sonomabees.org)

## September Bee Plant of the Month: Leach Field Gardens By Ann-Gallagher White

If you are a rural resident with a leach field, you may not realize that these often-neglected areas can be easily converted into beautiful gardens. Too often, homeowners default to lawns to cover these areas. Or perhaps they are simply left unplanted, which may cause erosion or other problems, such as opportunities for pest plants to flourish. However, with a little effort and imagination, you can turn these under-utilized areas into significant forage for honeybees and other pollinators.

If you use a well, you pump groundwater into your home. After using the water, you return the water to the soil, where it percolates through the soil, a purification process. It's a closed system which, properly managed, is a sustainable and eco-friendly way to recycle our most precious resource, water. You can take this a step further by upcycling the by-products (water and nutrients) by planting a flower garden. Food crops are generally not recommended.

To start your leach field garden, choose a mixture of annuals and perennials which have shallow roots, so that they won't breach the outflow pipes. Choose plants, including natives, which don't need a lot of irrigation. Water-loving plants with deep roots have a tendency to reach for the saturated soil around the pipes, or even grow into them, potentially causing damage.

One beautiful way to fill in the bare spaces between plants is to scatter a wildflower mix. While taking a walk last April, I came across a stunning wildflower meadow that made me stop in my tracks. While speaking with the gardener who planted it, I learned that it was grown from a wildflower scatter mix. Many nurseries offer various types of wildflower seed mixes. Harmony Farm Supplies in Sebastopol offers a special Sonoma County native wildflower mix, which includes California poppies, lupine and a variety of other beautiful, colorful annuals. Most wildflower seed mixes reliably re-seed themselves year after year. Once the flower show is over, wild birds arrive to feast on the seeds and scatter them far and wide. Thus, your leach field can provide for our pollinators far beyond the limits of your own property.

# Bee Talk!

By Mohammed Ibrahim / 1st VP - Beekeeping

October is the month to prepare your bees for this upcoming winter to get the bees ready for what mother nature has in store in our area.

The past couple of rainy weekends brought some hope to beekeeping. Some late swarms have been reported this past week. It tells us that some colonies had a heavy nectar stimulus ( or too much feeding!) that allowed them to afford to reproduce themselves one more time before winter.

I will walk you through what I did last weekend at my apiary. I could've done it through the first couple of weeks of October as well. Last Friday, I threw a veil on my head in the afternoon and walked down to my apiary. Let's call this a "patrolling trip ". I sat by the side of each colony for about 5 minutes and watched the entrance closely. I do this because around this time of the year the activities at the hive entrance and around the hives give me an idea of what to expect or prepare for in my inspection on Saturday late morning.

A couple of hives had heavy orientation flights. This is a good sign of a new forager transition that will allow the bees to forage on the after-rain bloomed resources and bring home more nectar for winter stores. On the other hand, a couple of colonies were in defensive mode, and guard bees were in standby mode to attack any yellow jackets or robbers bees hovering around. That told me it is time to flip the entrance and reduce to 1 bee size or 3-inch max on strong colonies. That brings me back to the veil story and why it is necessary around this time of the year in the apiary.

Over the last years, around September through October, beekeepers reported concerns that their hive might be Africanized due to sudden changes in colony behavior and defensiveness. Colonies under threat tend to be defensive and attack close predators to their homes as robbers and yellow jackets are trying to breach through the entrance. There was some drones traffic back to the hives from DCA ( Drones Congregation Area), which is a good sign that there are some colonies that reared drones after the one day of rain in August. Hopefully, those drones mated with the virgin queens that will head the colonies through the winter. I also paid attention to hive boxes and hive stands, whether anything needed to be fixed or replaced before it was too late to take corrective action. I looked for cracks in hive bodies or bottom boards, gaps between supers or covers, and how secure the boxes on hive stands are. Those observations will allow me to plan the inspection for the next day. It is always a good idea to have a plan before you open your hives. You must always have a plan!! The more time

you spend working your bees, the more robbing risk you run into. It won't be a pleasant inspection if you trigger robbing.

I usually crack the supers first and place them covered on an extra bottom board I had to minimize the exposure to robbers. After removing one follower board, I go directly to the three middle frames in the brood box to check the colony's health and then look for stores on the outer frames. Removing the follower board gives more room to push frames apart before lifting them. Then I put the supers back and took a quick look at the honey stores without removing frames. This inspection takes about five minutes from start to finish.

The recommended stores you should leave for a healthy colony should be about 30 - 50 pounds of honey per brood box. A full deep frame holds about 8 pounds (4 kg) of honey, and a full medium holds about 6 pounds (3 kg). For example, if you have 8 -10 deep brood nest frames, you leave about a full super of honey (40 pounds). That should be sufficient stores for winter through early spring. Keep in mind that sometime in November and even December, bees go out foraging for more resources on warm days above 50F.

It is also important to pay attention to any viruses and diseases around this time and watch out for the varroa mites infestation load in the uncapped brood cells, the nurse bees, and ones on the bottom boards. There are many credited resources online on how to do mite checks and some organic methods of treatment that do not harm the bees or leave any chemical residues in the hive. However, those are subjectable treatments. I like to leave it to mother nature's selectivity and keep bee stocks with hygienic behavior and DNA traits more resistant to mites.

If your colonies are struggling with stores and you do not have extra healthy frames of honey to give them, then your only option is to feed them now rather than later. Feed 2:1 ratio ( 2 volumes of sugar to 1 volume of water) and use the inside feeder to avoid robbing. If you use a queen excluder, remove it before winterizing to allow the cluster with the queen to move smoothly up during the winter. Otherwise, the queen will be left behind in the brood nest, and the colony will collapse.

If you are a new beekeeper, I recommend you attend upcoming hive dives within your cluster; reach out to your bee buddy if you have one; and review the available resources on our website under "Members-Only" for recorded sessions. Also, feel free to reach out to your cluster leaders or myself ([1stvp@sonomabees.org](mailto:1stvp@sonomabees.org)) for any questions.

## From the Desk of the Program Director

Education is a key component of our association.

Through our internal programs we strive to educate our members on responsible and sustainable beekeeping. We bring in speakers to talk to our members at our general meetings about beekeeping methods from all over the world. We have 2 monthly ZOOM forums for Beginner and Seasoned Beekeepers to ask questions and discuss the issues we are facing as beekeepers and bee-tenders.



Our 1st VP, VP of the Bees, works with our cluster coordinators to provide educational opportunities, on a cluster level, through hive dives and workshops for our members. Our 2nd VP, VP of Gardening, works with our Gardening Coordinator, and Gardening for Bees, coordinating garden digs, propagation workshops, garden tours and plant sales for our members to enjoy and to get more pollinator plants in Sonoma County.

We went to multiple community events this summer – Sonoma County and Gravenstein Apple fairs, Petaluma Art and Garden Festival, Wednesday Night Market, just to list a few, talking to our community about the importance of honeybees, native bees and pollinators, responsible beekeeping, and how to care for pollinators through providing forage and not using pesticides

With school back in session, we are back in the classroom working with students again. We were in multiple classrooms this last month and will be in more during this new school year. We have partnered with Sonoma County Children's Museum to bring in beekeepers to talk to children and to point out the pollinators in their edible and pollinator gardens. Our Gardening for Bees program will be working with them to enhance their pollinator garden. We are also working with the students of Santa Rosa High School's Bee and Garden Club and excited to see where that goes and the opportunities it may lead to.

These education programs are not possible without the support of our members. Our members support is key to the success of all SCBA educational opportunities, internal and external. Members offer the use of their hives for hive dives and their property for work-

shops and garden digs. Our members volunteer their time to talk to members of our community at community outreach events. Our members are stepping into classrooms to work with students, of all ages, teaching them about honeybees, pollinators, and how we can help them through planting forage.

If you would like to volunteer with any of these program, reach out to me or your cluster coordinator. Financial aid is also needed to help support these educational programs we offer our community. If you know a business, or a community member, who would like to be a supporter of SCBA and our education programs, you can have them reach out to me or go to our website.

A successful education program ensures a future for all our pollinators.

Shannon Carr  
Program Director  
[programdirector@sonomabees.org](mailto:programdirector@sonomabees.org)



A student's art



Shannon Carr and Sylvia Cook doing a classroom presentation

# Looking Into Our Past Newsletters

by Ettamarie Peterson

A few years ago I turned over my stash of old newsletters to our historian. She has now returned them as she does not want the job anymore. Shannon scanned this page from a 1986 newsletter. Notice that in those days we were a club, not an association. This was before I was editor, or even a beekeeper, but brought back memories of how we used to print out our newsletters and mail them to the members. It was a lot of work and expensive mailing them to members every month. We have come a long ways and hope members and non-members appreciate the advancements we have made.

Ettamarie Peterson, your long time Editor (I think more than 20 years now!) [ettamarie@petersonsfarm.com](mailto:ettamarie@petersonsfarm.com)



## The SONOMA COUNTY BEE CLUB'S MONTHLY EXTRACTOR

To increase interest in and knowledge of bees and beekeeping for the hobby and commercial beekeeper, and to educate the general public in the value of bees.

Volume VII Issue 10

October 1986

### ON STINGING AND STINGING

No creature on earth harvests and stores such an amazing creation as is honey, and no creature on earth is so well equipped, physically and psychologically, to defend its treasure as is the bee. Honey is a precious commodity, and throughout time bees have had to defend their precious resource against theft by bears, skunks, other bees, and man.

The stinger of the worker honey bee is a complex apparatus, well suited to its function. It consists of a long central shaft on which two barbed flanks slide up and down, one on each side. When the tip of the stinger pierces the skin, muscles begin pulling upwards on the barbed flanks alternating sides. Since the barbs prevent the stinger from pulling up out of the skin, the pulling up action of one side pulls the other side deeper. Deeper and deeper, side after side. At this point the stinger doesn't need the bee any longer..... you've already swatted her off, and are running laps around the yard yelling.

Attached to the top of the stinger is the venom sac. When the stinging bee is swatted away, the venom sac is torn from her body along with the stinger (and some of her insides, which means she must die). The venom sac has a life of its own also, as erratically contracting muscles continue to pump venom down the stinger, into the flesh of the unfortunate victim. Bee venom is a chemically complex clear liquid with a sharp bitter taste, an aromatic odor, an acid reaction, and a specific gravity of 1.1313(Beck, 1935). When it is injected into one's skin it causes pain (Hardman, 1984). It is pain, and threat of pain, that bees use to defend their treasures.

Bees generally sting for two reasons; (1)their hive is being threatened or invaded, (2)away from the hive because the individual bee is being threatened. At their hive bees are sensitive to vibrations, rapid movements, disagreeable odors, and dark furry bearlike bodies (note here that beekeepers generally wear white cotton outfits, and move slowly and gently). Away from the hive, honey bees sting only when they are squeezed, stepped on, or otherwise threatened. You can easily demonstrate this by catching a bee out of the air, and holding it in your closed hand. If it is free to run around in your closed hand it will not sting you, no matter what you do, but if you should not make a clean catch, and pinch or squeeze her, she will sting you without doubt.

After a bee has stung, and until she dies, she will continue to fly about, ever attacking as though stinging, thereby adding to the defensive power of the hive. Her stinger and venom sac, which remains in the victim emit odors which excite additional bees to begin stinging. In order to minimize the and potency of a sting it is important to remove the stinger immediately by scraping it away. Do not pinch or pull, or you will squeeze all the venom into yourself.

Most people are afraid of bees, and everyone expresses it differently. Last week an uninitiated civilian looked over my shoulder, into an open hive, and remarked, "I'm allergic to pain. Goodbye!".

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## SCBA Book Nook

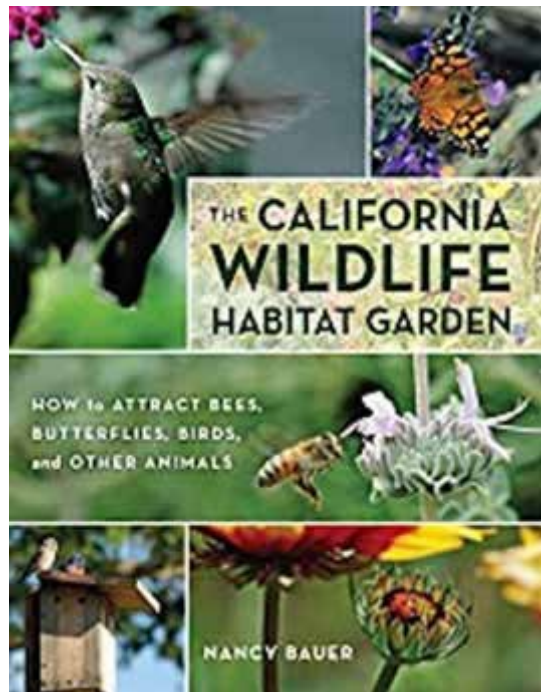
*The California Wildlife Habitat Garden: How to Attract Bees, Butterflies, Birds, and other animals*

By: Nancy Bauer

<https://www.librarycat.org/lib/SCBA-Library/item/201727312>

The California Wildlife Habitat Garden explains how to transform your backyard garden into a living ecosystem that is not only enjoyable for humans but will make it a thriving sanctuary for pollinators and other wildlife. Beautifully illustrated with color photos this book provides easy to follow recommendations for providing food, cover and water for all pollinators. Bauer dives into the intricate relationship between plants and wildlife and explores our changing role as steward, rather than manipulator, in creating this habitat. She shows ways of attracting pollinators to your sanctuary through planting choices. This book is a great resource in helping you create a biologically diverse and environmentally friendly garden.

We have over 250 books and DVDs in the SCBA Library. The California Wildlife Habitat, is just one of many books about bees, gardening for bees, and products from in the hive in our collection. You can view all our books and DVDs available to you at [SCBA-Library](#). If you are interested in checking out a book, email our librarian at [Librarian@sonomabees.org](mailto:Librarian@sonomabees.org), to make arrangements to pick up one or two of the books or DVDs available to SCBA members.



### Honey Extractor Rental

One of the benefits of SCBA membership is access to our honey extractors. We currently have a honey extractor for each cluster as well as one fruit press shared across all regions. Members can find the terms of this rental, as well as the necessary contact information, in the "SCBA Members-Only Info" section of the website.



# What to Do If Your Colony Dies

by Ettamarie Peterson

It is not unusual to have a colony fail at the end of the summer unfortunately. If you find yours died, do not just ignore it. Look at the monitoring board to see if there are bits and pieces of chewed wax and bee parts. Those are signs of robbing which could have been the cause of the death of the colony or what happened afterwards. Look at the combs. Do you see little mummies in them? This would be chalk brood. Do you see a random amount of capped brood? This might be a sign of queen failure. You might also see some queen cells. One or two might have a neat hole at the tip indicating a queen had hatched out. Something must have happened to her and she was not able to resume the role of the former queen. If you see lots of capped brood with sunken cappings, take a tooth pick or a nail and poke into those cells. If there is gunky, stringing looking stuff that looks sort of like thick motor oil it is most likely American Foul Brood. This is also smelly! If you suspect AFB, have someone else confirm it and report this to your cluster so they can be on the lookout for it in their hives. It is the worst disease as it is highly contagious and the spores last for at least 70 years and are spread by robbing. All of this equipment should be burned if possible. Another common cause of a colony collapsing at this time of year is being overwhelmed by mites.

Whatever you do about your "dead out", do not ignore it. Clean it up and store it properly. The old brood comb becomes a home for wax moths. They are very destructive to your combs and the woodenware. Wax moths thrive in warm weather and October has warm days! The old combs can be stored in a freezer to kill the eggs and brood nicely. Those old combs will be great for bait to catch swarms next year if they are in good shape.

## We Need You on SCBA's Board of Directors!

Join the Board! We need your enthusiasm, organization and financial skills to help run SCBA. We are looking for a Treasurer for 2023 to start on the board as soon as possible so that you can familiarize yourself with the current responsibilities of our outgoing SCBA Treasurer, George Hermann. Board members attend a monthly meeting (usually the first Monday of the month) and contribute to the running of our organization. If interested, please reach out to [electedboard@sonomabees.org](mailto:electedboard@sonomabees.org) or talk to someone on SCBA's board to get the lowdown. The position begins in January of 2023.

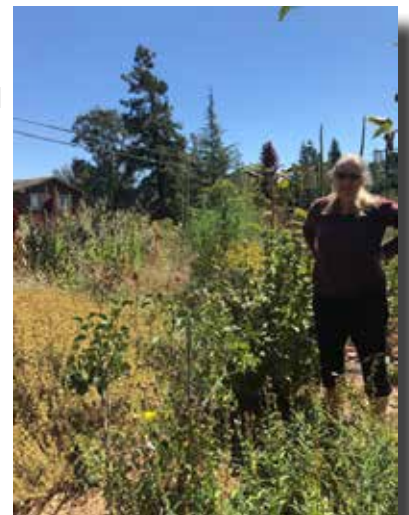
# Using Your Leach Field

by Elizabeth Newton

Ellen Sherron had a great idea! Turning the area over her leach field into a sun-loving, drought-resistant garden had been percolating in her mind for some time, given the broad implications of climate change. Ellen, an avid gardener and frequent host of "garden digs" benefiting SCBA members, started moving plants to this area about 3 years ago. There was some weeding involved initially; she put down rice straw as mulch to discourage weeds and keep the soil moist. And she believes in fall planting, so with a few volunteer plants from her garden that she knew would work well in a sunny spot she planted: California bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*), Buckwheats (*Eriogonum*, 4 species), Maximillian sunflower (*Helianthus maximiliani*), New England aster (*Aster novae-angliae*), Purple haze aster (*Symphytotrichum chilensis* 'Purple Haze'), Bulbine (*Bulbine frutescens*), Fireworks goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks'), California fuchsia (*Epilobium canum* 'Catalina'), and Common oregano (*Origanum vulgare*) all from divisions.

Over time she added more varieties including Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*), Farewell to spring (*Clarkia amoena*), Common mullein (*Verbascum Thapsus*), Amaranth, Tall verbena (*Verbena bonariensis*)- all self seeding plants. Admittedly, she needed to provide extra water to establish the new starts, but over time the garden has become self-sustaining with no additional water required. It has been 3 years now and her leach field garden is plentiful. It is a wonderful pollinator garden that requires very little effort to maintain; in fact the weeds just cannot compete with the pollinator plants for space. This fall she is getting ready to move some volunteer Iranian germander (*Teucrium hircanicum*) after the next rain. She will water during some of the winter dry spells until the germander is established. Hopefully, this winter, Ellen will have another garden dig for SCBA members so that we can all benefit from her leach field garden and establish our own.

Thanks Ellen!



## Gardening for Bees

The Gardening for Bee's Group within SCBA has had a busy year! Led by Angelo Sacerdote from January through July, the "G4B's" group has been busy across many areas of interest.

**Home nursery group and plant sales:** We have a committed group of folks within the G4B's group that propagate and grow from seed, plants for different uses across the organization. Anyone with a love of plants can participate and we are always looking for new growers to join us! We have held 3 plant sales at in-person SCBA meetings and the Spring Fling generating money from plants and "bee" signs in support of planting for bees and SCBA in general. In addition, we have held a pop-up plant sale in June and will hold another with the help of Angie Nowicki in November (stay tuned).

**County-wide Events:** The G4B's group has participated in several county-wide events across 2022 including the Petaluma Art and Garden Festival where Liz Holdman and other volunteers passed out seed packets (for a donation to SCBA) and provided educational materials on planting for bees. Liz Holdman has started our "Seed Library" collecting hundreds of seed packets from seed companies, and creating our own SCBA seed packet holder which members can use to hold and document their own propagated seeds for future planting. Shannon Carr spearheaded both the "Sonoma County Fair" demonstration garden and the Gravenstein Apple Fair booth where we helped participants make seed bombs, and brought an observation hive so that people could see the inner workings of a bee hive.

**Internal Events:** Franny Minervini-Zick held a propagation workshop and garden tour in the West Cluster this past spring. Propagation workshops allow members to learn how to take cuttings from plants such as lavender to create new plants. These new plants can then become part of our home nurseries program or simply planted in the members yard to support the bees. Ann Gallagher-White, 2nd VP will be holding a lavender propagation workshop and Iris bulb dig-up event at her home on October 2nd which is open to the entire membership but limited to the first 20 people who sign up.

**Community Events:** Gardening for Bees is also involved in some exciting new programs with the community. Ann Gallagher-White is working with the Sonoma County School's Garden Network to estab-

lish 5 school pollinator gardens across the county. The home nurseries group is growing plants for these gardens and the Education committee will be teaming up with G4B members to educate them about the importance of pollinator gardens. Additionally, the Children's Museum in Santa Rosa has asked the G4B's group to help re-establish their pollinator garden this fall. Back in 2017, SCBA helped the museum to create the original pollinator garden.

**Gardening Resources:** Be sure to check out the many wonderful G4B generated gardening resources on the members-only section of the SCBA website. Under the Gardening Program tab you will find:

- A **dearth planting list** of plants to help bees survive the dearth of late summer and fall
- A **gardening flyer**-an introductory pamphlet for gardening for honey bees
- A garden blog where you can post questions for G4B members to help answer
- **Bee plant of the month**-a monthly article about one plant that pollinators love by Elizabeth Newton, member extraordinaire!

In November we will be hosting a strategic planning meeting for G4B's to plan for 2023! We welcome participation from the general membership. We would love and frankly need more involvement from the membership so that we can continue to provide programs like the ones above and to support new programs and activities that support gardening for the bees. Feel free to reach out to me if you have interest in joining our group! We would love to have you...

Kim Bergstrom  
Gardening Coordinator, G4B's  
[gardening@sonomabees.org](mailto:gardening@sonomabees.org)



Sonoma County Fair Hall of Flowers Plant Sale



## Cooking with Honey

### Improving on a pantry staple: Honey Graham Crackers

By Rachel Parker

Last year, my daughter gave me a copy of *BraveTart* by Stella Parks, who takes a fresh look at “Iconic American Desserts” and offers recipes that home cooks can use to create popular treats in their home kitchens. And in the case of many of the cookies and crackers, get rid of all the stabilizers and other chemicals that appear in the snack food aisle of grocery stores. Along the way, she tells the stories of how many of these iconic foods came into creation in the first place. It is a fun read, as well as a solid baking resource.

This recipe comes together quickly; you can make them over lunch and have them ready for when the kids come home from school.

#### **Crispy Whole Wheat Graham Crackers** By Stella Parks (from *BraveTart*)

¾ cup sugar  
1 ½ teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon kosher salt (use ¼ teaspoon if using iodized salt)  
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 tablespoon vanilla extract  
¼ cup honey (you can also use golden syrup or unsulfured molasses)  
1 ½ sticks unsalted butter at about 70 degrees  
2 ½ cups whole wheat flour, plus more for dusting

#### **For the Dough:**

Combine the sugar, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, vanilla, honey, and butter in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Mix on low speed to moisten, then increase to medium and beat until somewhat light – about 3 minutes. Reduce speed to low, add the flour and mix to form a soft dough.

Scrape the dough onto a work surface and knead gently to form a ball. Divide the ball in half. (At this point, you can wrap the dough in plastic and refrigerate for up to 1 week. Soften cooled dough for 30 minutes at room temperature then knead on a bare work surface until pliable and smooth.)

#### **To bake:**

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees

Generously flour a large sheet of parchment paper and place one portion of the dough in the center. Pat it into a 5” by 6” rectangle, sprinkle with flour, flip the rectangle, and dust again. Working from the center out and adding more flour as needed, roll the dough until roughly 15” by 11” and very thin. Slide onto a baking sheet and brush away excess flour. Repeat with the other half of dough.

For grocery store look-alikes, score each sheet of dough into twelve rectangles (2 ¼ by 4 ¾ inches) and poke holes with a bamboo skewer or the narrow end of a chopstick [I cut the dough into rectangles, then use a fork to make the indentations.]. Or, you can leave the dough uncut. Be sure to bake your edge scraps as well: the scraps are terrific snacks, or can be used for graham cracker crumbs.

Bake the crackers for about 20 minutes – until they are tawny brown and firm, though your fingertip may leave a faint indentation. If you’ve scored the crackers, immediately cut along the prescored lines with a knife, or cut into free-form shapes using a pizza wheel. Cool to room temperature directly on the baking sheets.

Makes 24 crackers plus about 8 ounces (or 2 cups) of crumbs.

## East Cluster News

submitted by Lisa Salamone

East Cluster had another informative bee cafe at Flatbed Farm this past Saturday (it's always the first Saturday of the month). Lizanne Pastore was our guest speaker, taking all 22 beekeepers in attendance through winter prep. She is a wonderful natural beekeeper (Meaning she does not treat or feed) and has taught many of us many skills from splits to hive expansion over the years. We are lucky to have her and many others in our cluster who have tirelessly helped all of us. To name a few; Susan Simmons, Nadya Clark, MaraLee Joseph, Mato Herzog, Darrel Jones, Alan Ross and Thea Vierling.

Some important takeaways from the bee cafe:

- Space Management: Every time you are in the hive, especially these last few months before winter, take out old comb and keep working towards building your chimney configuration in lang hives.
- When in doubt, don't remodel. The bees know what to do...
- Be sure to leave adequate stores if you are fortunate to have some. Rule of thumb in medium lang; 2 frames of stores to 1 frame of brood.
- Don't worry as you see the population decrease this is what they need to do to prep themselves for winter clustering.
- Don't inspect any hives during excessive heat spells as it invites robbing even if it's cool in am. Instead, only use the monitor boards to check, at least until weather is more suitable for inspections

- Lizanne talked about wash boarding behavior which occurs outside the hive above the entrance. Many of us had no idea what that was. Nadya Clark, veteran beekeeper, shared her up to date information about what it was. Who knew that honeybees do wash boarding!
- Yes, it sounds like we are in the construction or housekeeping business instead of the bee keeping business. We learned about so many important yet simple ideas. There were good questions, wonderful observations and answers!

Remember our **East Cluster Bee Cafes are on the 1st Saturday of the month** at Flatbed farm on highway 12 from 11:00 AM to 12. Please RSVP at [Eastcluster@sonomabees.org](mailto:Eastcluster@sonomabees.org). Please remember to bring your own chair, your own water, and try to come with a friend. Parking is limited!!!! We are required to park up the hill since that is their "Farm Sale" day. In fact, bring money as there is so much to buy like fresh produce, oils, fresh eggs, bread, plant starts and much more. Let's give a round of thanks to Flat Bed Farms for allowing us to be there. Bonney Philbein, one of our cluster coordinators, is doing a great job of bringing us together.

Thanks Bonney



## SCBA PHOTO GALLERY

*The Monthly Extractor* is dedicating space to members' photos from their apiary or garden, with captions. Please note, because *The Monthly Extractor* is publicly published, if you send photos featuring people (whether adults, children, or teens), we need to have their consent. Email written consent should do the job. Send photos to [editor@sonomabees.org](mailto:editor@sonomabees.org)



Aster



Maximilian Sunflower



Scented Geranium



Penny Royal



Cowpen by Ann  
Gallagher White



Wild mustard – yes it is  
still blooming

# SCBA Business Members, Donors, and Sponsors

## SCBA Business Members

Anderson Ranch Honey  
Darius Anderson  
[info@andersonranch.com](mailto:info@andersonranch.com)

Baker Lane Vineyards  
Michel Boynton  
[info@bakerlane.wine](mailto:info@bakerlane.wine)  
[bakerlanevineyards.com](http://bakerlanevineyards.com)

Bee Conscious Removal  
Chris Conrad  
[chrisbconrad@comcast.net](mailto:chrisbconrad@comcast.net)  
[www.beeconsciousremovals.com](http://www.beeconsciousremovals.com)

Bee Focused  
Joy Wesley  
[joy@bee-focused.com](mailto:joy@bee-focused.com)  
<https://bee-focused.com/>

Beekind Honey and  
Beekeeping Supply  
Doug & Katia Vincent  
[beekind@beekind.com](mailto:beekind@beekind.com)  
[www.beekind.com](http://www.beekind.com)

Bees N Blooms  
Susan Kegley  
[Info@beesnblooms.com](mailto:Info@beesnblooms.com)  
[www.BeesNBlooms.com](http://www.BeesNBlooms.com)

Buzz Off Honey  
John & Darlene McGinnis  
[goahwayranch@gmail.com](mailto:goahwayranch@gmail.com)  
[www.goahwayranch.com](http://www.goahwayranch.com)

K2 Ranch and Vineyards  
Ken & Kat Savano  
[ksavano@me.com](mailto:ksavano@me.com)  
[www.K2ranch.com](http://www.K2ranch.com)

Kate Gomes Real Estate, Inc.  
Kate Gomes  
[kgrealestate2016@gmail.com](mailto:kgrealestate2016@gmail.com)  
[Kategomes.com](http://Kategomes.com)

Marin Coastal Bee Co.  
Michael Louis Turner  
[info@marincoastalbee.com](mailto:info@marincoastalbee.com)  
[marincoastalbee.com](http://marincoastalbee.com)

Tauzer Family & Apiaries  
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Genetics  
[Www.solabeefarms.com](http://Www.solabeefarms.com)  
[info@solabeefarms.com](mailto:info@solabeefarms.com)

Ryan Teurfs Designs  
Ryan Teurfs, Andrew Benson, and  
Justin Zimmerman  
[ryanteurfsdesigns@gmail.com](mailto:ryanteurfsdesigns@gmail.com)  
[www.ryanteurfs.com](http://www.ryanteurfs.com)

Wild Wills Honey  
Will Ackley  
[willackley@gmail.com](mailto:willackley@gmail.com)

## Habitat Sponsors

Bees find forage in all kinds of environments -- from pollinator gardens to hedgerows of blooming plants, to meadows of wildflowers, to tree canopies. Your organization can be part of the effort to support the bees. To become a habitat sponsor, click here [www.sonomabees.org/donate](http://www.sonomabees.org/donate)

**Pollinator Garden – \$500**

**Meadow - \$2,500**



**Canopy – \$5,000**

**Hedgerow -- \$1000**

## 2022 Board Members and Other Helpful People

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