

# The Monthly Extractor

Volume 48, Issue 1

January 2023



## President's Message

January Greetings!

Can you believe it? It's 2023! The New Year always brings brand new hopes and opportunities to accomplish great things.



That is exactly what I'm looking forward to for our organization in 2023.

Gathering together as a community, to talk about bees and how to take care of them, both in the hive and in the garden, is the

soul of SCBA. Now that the world is opening up more and more, we have so many more opportunities to gather together to celebrate the bees.

This year I hope that each of us makes a commitment to the bees – to help them, in whatever way we can. Whatever your level of beekeeping and gardening knowledge may be, you are an integral part of what SCBA does. As a member of SCBA, there are many opportunities to learn and to contribute, simply by participating. May your New Year's Resolution be that you get involved this year! Volunteer and give time to the bees through any of our many activities, meetings, and workshops. It's all out there, waiting for you.

If you have ideas or suggestions send them to me at [president@sonomabees.org](mailto:president@sonomabees.org).

I look forward to serving as President this year, and if you'd like to know how you can help.... just ask.

Happy New Year!

Carol Ellis, President

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

## SCBA General Meeting

Date: January 9, 2023, 6:00 – 8:30 (PST)

Join us for our monthly General Meeting in person at the Druids Hall and on Zoom.

In November we asked our members to nominate those members who have made an impact in the association and have helped them in their beekeeping and bee-tending journey. We will be announcing the results of that survey at our January meeting.

We are also excited to have Christine Kurtz, the Petaluma Bee Lady, join us as our speaker this month. Christine will talk to us about her experiences with beekeeping in Sonoma County, as well as stresses on honeybees including climate change and other factors in our environment.

Druids Hall  
1011 College Ave  
Santa Rosa, Ca 95404

Zoom Information:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89716641903?pwd=Z1FJTmt3UmhlY1dtWXZQTzRsd3J4dz09>

Meeting ID: 897 1664 1903

Passcode: SCBA

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## Nominations & Elections

A few weeks back we took nominations for 2023 SCBA Board of Directors AND asked our members to nominate other members who have made a difference to them and their journey as a beekeeper. We will be announcing those Acknowledgment Awards at our January meeting.

2023 Board of Directors election took place at the beginning of December and the SCBA 2023 Board is:

- **Treasurer: Andrea Brum-Oome**
- **Secretary: Andy Baxter**
- **2nd VP, VP of Gardening: Ann Gallagher-White**
- **1st VP, VP of Bees: Mohammed Ibrahim**
- **President: Carol Ellis**

We have a new Regional Cluster Coordinator: Kelli Cox. We are still looking for: West Cluster, South and East Clusters.

Gardening for Bees is off to a great start for 2023. Kim Bergstrom, SCBA's Gardening Coordinator, hosted a strategic planning meeting, and they are working on building up the Home Nursery program to help all of us get more pollinator plants into the ground to help provide nutrients for the bees. They are also establishing Garden Liaisons within each cluster. Garden Liaisons will help coordinate two to three garden-related activities within each cluster (a garden dig, a propagation workshop, etc.) as well as be the clusters' point person for garden related advice.

### SCBA Member Events January

#### [SCBA Calendar](#)

The SCBA on-line calendar is updated frequently. Check it out to see current event listings.

Jan 9 – [SCBA General Meeting](#)

Jan 16 – [Beginner Beekeepers Forum](#)

Jan 23 – [Seasoned Beekeepers Forum](#)

## Membership Renewal Time

For many SCBA members, annual dues come due on January 1st. With your \$100 Worker Bee membership you get to be a part of a community that supports our local honeybees and backyard beekeepers as well as native bees and all pollinators.

Your membership includes (but not limited to):

- Educational opportunities on beekeeping and creating diverse pollinator habitats through our Cluster programs and Gardening for Bees programs.
- With our new office, easier access to the SCBA Library and other educational materials.
- Social opportunities to make Bee and Garden Buddies
- Access to member-only events: Cluster Cafés and Workshops, G4B Propagation Workshops and Garden Digs, and the Spring Fling.
- Volunteer opportunities at SCBA events, community events, and through SCBA's Education Program.

If you are able to upgrade to the \$250 Queen Bee member level, you will also become a sponsor, giving extra support to the education programs we offer our members and our community.

To renew your membership, [click here](#). If you have any questions, email [membership@sonomabees.org](mailto:membership@sonomabees.org).



Pack your gloves and veil and learn as other members check their hives at Cluster hive dives.

# Bee Talk!

by Mohammed Ibrahim, 1st Vice President

Happy New Year Fellow Beekeepers.

Your surviving colonies will start preparing for spring, and so should we. The mid-winter hive expansion is triggered when the weather is mild/warm enough for the bees to come out of the hive for cleansing flights and some forging. Such activities happen mid-day when temperatures are above 50° and there is no rain.

Around this time of the season, the nurse bees will consume more honey as their source of energy and bee bread if pollen is not available. Nurse bees do that to start preparing for the hive expansion that will take place over the next three months to be able to take advantage of the early spring honey flow.

I usually inspect the exterior condition of the hives around this time of the year and ensure everything is still set and secured. Pay attention to the hive's entrance and ensure it is not obstructed. Also, observe the ground in front of the hive for any strange-looking dead bees such as bee pupa mummies, deformed wings on nurse bees, etc.

I highly recommend you at least put a veil when you are around the hive to do the following: examine the monitoring tray (if you have screened the bottom board) Look for evidence of mice, yellow jackets, lizards, or other animals entered the hive. You should see pieces of comb or feces visible on the monitoring trays.

If you do not see any activities, even on warm days, place your ear against the side of the hive and listen to bees. If the colony is dead, remove it from the apiary, diagnose the problem, and discard comb that shows disease and/or clean the equipment. In the latter part of January and weather permitting (that is, warm enough), quickly peek into the hives from the top to assess the cluster's location and whether you need to do emergency feed.

This time of the season is an excellent opportunity for beekeepers to read and learn more about bees and beekeeping. You can start repairing and painting hive bodies for the next season. Clean your hive tools and equipment, and most importantly, plant bee forage!



Lastly, I would like to take the opportunity to welcome our new Regional Coordinator Kelli Cox and all the new cluster leaders to the SCBA bee program. I also like to challenge all the clusters this year to put together at least five hive dives per cluster to allow our members to share their knowledge and expertise with each other, socialize and welcome new beekeepers to their beekeeping journey and answer their questions.

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming new and seasoned beekeeper's forums for 2023. All dates and information are on our website calendar section. I look forward to seeing you at those meetings. Do not hesitate to reach out to me for any questions, suggestions, comments, and feedback at [1stvp@sonomabees.org](mailto:1stvp@sonomabees.org).



In the winter the Queen and her daughters will cluster in the middle of the hive for warmth. All the drones have been kicked out of the hive to conserve resources.



# January's Hive To-Do List

By Serge Labesque

*Serge Labesque was a beekeeping educator and long-time contributor to The Monthly Extractor. He has graciously given us permission to reprint his January To-Do List.*

## January

- Inspect the exterior condition of the hives.
- Hive tops should remain properly set and secured.
- Observe the entrances and the ground in front of the hives.
- Verify that the hive entrances are not obstructed.
- Maintain adequate and safe ventilation through the hives.
- Examine the monitoring trays.
- Watch for the appearance of drone brood cappings on the monitoring tray and make a note of the date.
- Verify that mice have not entered hives. Telltale clues of their presence, such as coarse pieces of comb and mouse feces, etc. are visible on the monitoring trays.
- When no activity is observed, place your ear against the side of the hive, and listen for bee noises. If the colony is dead, close the hive, remove it from the apiary, diagnose the problem, and discard or clean the equipment, as appropriate.
- On nice days, observe the flight paths and the bee activity at the entrances.
- Lift the back of the hives and feel the weight to see if they may be at risk of running out of stores.
- In the latter part of the month and weather permitting, quickly peek into the top of the hives to assess the location of the clusters.
- Place supers or additional frames where and when warranted.
- Clean and scorch tools and equipment.
- Scrub your smoker.

- Review notes from the past year.
- Plan for next season.
- Evaluate the need for equipment and bees.
- Procure, build, and repair beekeeping equipment.
- Read and learn more about bees and beekeeping.
- Don't forget your beekeeping New Year's resolutions.

And then plant, plant and plant more. Plant bee forage. Plant like a gardener gone berserk! Don't listen to those who claim that planting for bees does not make economic sense. They tell you that it is not worth your money to plant for the bees and then they turn around and buy sugar, corn syrup and pollen substitute every year! Their vision is shortsighted and considers only direct and immediate returns. Sugar syrup does not make honey. Nectar does. \$20 worth of sugar does not go very far when feeding bees. In addition, you also have to mix and distribute the syrup in feeders that you have to buy or make and clean! Alternatively, \$20 will buy a lot of bulk seeds or plants or maybe an apple tree. A good seed mix will provide nectar and pollen for weeks or months. Perennials will do the same for years. On top of this, they will beautify your surroundings and may benefit birds and other animals. The apple tree will bring you and your kids delightful apples for years. Planting bee forage is the way to feed bees! In fact, you may not even have to pay a dime for seeds or for plants. For example, seeds of Spanish lavender are easy to collect by the thousands from a single plant. The plants these seeds will produce will help feed your bees for two months every year, for years. Cuttings of rosemary take root easily. And then there are the native plants that do not require special care. Many are tough, drought tolerant, deer-resistant and beautiful.

# Gardening for Bees G4Bs Happenings!

*By Ann Gallagher-White*

When the days start to get longer (after December 21) I look forward to having more time in the sunshine and as we close out 2022 and move to winter from fall, I am grateful for the support I have had from SCBA during a very tough year. 2022 was hard partly because I lost my sister Ellen who was a music teacher in Los Angeles who lost interest in teaching and in music partly due to the isolation that Covid brought on. We all have different ways of coping. My sister's used to be music and Covid put a pause on that – which was more than she could handle.

Our community of beekeepers and gardeners helped me get through not only 2022 but I realize that being outside (preferably in the sunshine) has always been a gift for my mental health. I used to have a high stress career and going outside to dream, weed, plant and work frustrations out while I enjoyed nature got me through a lot of tough times. I am grateful for a community of people to share gardening joy with going into 2023.

This year had some challenges but with the support of our community, we patched it together. I recently read an email from our garden coordinator (Kim Bergstrom) that summed it all up and now I will (with Kim's permission) relate what she had to say about this past year.

*As we close out the 2022 calendar year, I wanted to provide you all with an update on where we are ending the year and what we have planned for 2023!*

*First, I want to thank Angelo Sacerdote for leading this group during the first six months of 2022! Angelo was at the helm when we held several plant sales, selling plants at the Spring Fling and holding a pop-up plant sale at his home in June. Also earlier in the year, the West Cluster held a garden tour supported by Franny and Ellen Sherron. Chris Dicker made a beautiful new "Pollinator Garden-No pesticides" sign that has been selling well at plant sales and member meetings.*

*Over the summer months, G4B's supported events ranging from the Petaluma Art and Garden Festival (where seeds were handed out by folks like Liz Holdmann and Shannon Carr), to the Sonoma County fair where many G4B folks and other members educated Sonomans about good bee forage and where plants*

*were donated by folks like Gulten, to the Gravenstein Apple Fair where we helped participants make seed bombs.*

*In the fall, SCBA partnered with the Santa Rosa Children's Museum and G4B's donated plants to help rebuild their pollinator garden, as well as partnered with several schools including Windsor's alternative high school to help build pollinator gardens. Many folks grew plants for these partnerships including Ann, Franny, Cathy, Angelo, Ellen and Liz. We also held more plant sales at general meetings in September and November. Ann held a propagation workshop and an Iris Bulb dig in early October.*

*As we neared the end of the year, the focus turned towards 2023 with a Strategy workshop that generated great ideas for what the G4B's group should be focused on within the clusters, and across the SCBA enterprise. To aid in the cluster focused gardening work, we recruited four amazing gardening liaisons: Franny Minervini-Zick (West), Maureen Buffon (North), Ellen Schwartz (East) and Kelli Cox (Central). We are still looking for a gardening liaison for the South Cluster! These folks will hit the ground running with their clusters helping to initiate garden-focused activities throughout the coming year. In early January, the Gardening Liaison's and Cluster coordinators will meet to start to plan bee and gardening cluster events for 2023.*

*Throughout the year, Elizabeth Newton provided an article each month for the Extractor focused on a different plant and over many months this year, Chris Dicker and Liz Holdman worked tirelessly to put together a "no pesticide flyer" that can be used by our members to educate the broader Sonoma community.*

*Speaking of 2023, we will continue to build upon the great work at the strategy meeting in November to develop a plan for the G4B's group that incorporates more cluster-focused activities, a robust home nurseries program to support our many plant sales and community-focused events where we will provide plants. We will start a "gardening buddy" program to help new budding gardeners gain confidence in building pollinator-friendly gardens in support of our home nurseries program. I invite all of you to become a mentor to a garden mentee! Let me know if you are interested. Additionally, we hope to switch up our monthly meetings by alternating between Zoom meetings and event-focused meetings every other month. We will be back to all of you with a schedule*

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*for the first few months so that you can get these on your calendar.*

In 2023 I look forward to more gardening bliss, more projects, more community involvement, more outreach, more fundraising, more pesticide education and more fun. I am excited to move into a new year and my hope for our pollinators and for our planet grows stronger every time I am with SCBA members. Thank you to everyone who worked tirelessly to keep our community together in 2022. If you want to reach out to me, please do at [2ndVP@sonomabees.org](mailto:2ndVP@sonomabees.org)

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## A Look Back at 2022's General Meeting Speakers

### January

Dr. Elina Niña

Discussed her work at the UC Davis Research Lab. She shared information about honeybee nutrition and the UC Davis California Master Beekeeping Program.

### February

Dr. Elliud Muli

He joined us live from Kenya. He discussed Indigenous Beekeeping Among the Pokot Tribe of Northern Kenya.

### March

Dr. Susan Kegley

With her expertise in chemistry with an emphasis on pesticides and heavy metals, the owner of Bees-n-Blooms provided an overview of why insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides are harmful to bees and other pollinators and the steps you can take to ensure your garden is a bee haven.

### April

Les Crowder

He discussed finding organic and natural solutions as alternatives for problems that are commonly treated with chemicals.

### June

Ang Roell

From They Keep Bees. She shared her journey with honeybees and her work cultivating Queen Bees.

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## January Bee Plant of the Month

### Hot Lips Salvia

*by Elizabeth Newton*

There are so many wonderful salvias to plant for a bee-friendly garden, but if you had to choose just one, a great choice would be Hot Lips. This sturdy, indestructible perennial is probably a sub-species of *Salvia microphylla* or “baby sages”, which originated in Arizona and Mexico.

Extremely easy to grow, Hot Lips produces clouds of red and white bicolor blooms practically all year around and needs almost no water at all. It grows into a round, bushy shape about two to three feet tall and can grow as wide as six feet. When the blooming slows down, pruning off the top eight to twelve inches stimulates the plant into producing another round of blossoms. I cut mine twice per year: once to refresh the blooms in mid to late summer and a harder prune just before winter sets in. It is very forgiving of pruning but looks best when you preserve its rounded shape. Hot Lips has a pungent smell, something like marigolds. That does not deter a whole host of eager pollinators, including butterflies and hummingbirds. It's also great habitat for small birds who like to take cover and scratch around for food under dense shrubbery.



Another wonderful characteristic of Hot Lips is that it is very easily transplanted. It loves to expand in size at the base. Simply dig out a clump of the pioneering root system

and plant elsewhere in your garden. It will look puny at first, but by the next year it will be fully established and buzzing with happy bees.



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## August

Tora Rocha

A founding member of The Pollinator Posse, she discussed eco-friendly landscape design and pollinator gardening.

## September

2022 Board Members and our Program Director discussed accomplishments, and goals for SCBA, including our Education Programs and Community Outreach.

## October

Lauren Rusert

A graduate student from UC Davis Research Lab, she discussed the details of her research on bee diseases, pests, and Varroa Mite management.

## November

Michael Thiele

Founder of Apis Arborea, he discussed their 7 year research study of wild, unmanaged honeybees in Mendocino CA. He also spoke about the benefits of insulating your hives.

## December

Dr. Tom Seeley

He shared stories from his latest book detailing behavioral mysteries of the hive, *Piping-hot Bees and Boisterous Buzz-runners. 20 Mysteries of Honey Bee Behavior Solved.*

If you missed any of these discussions or would like to revisit them, you can simply go to the SCBA Members-Only Info area on our website and choose Video Recordings from the drop-down menu [SCBA Website > Members Only > Video Recordings](#). There, you will find recordings of our General Meetings Speakers as well as any special speakers and videos made for our clusters.

Enjoy!

Carol Ellis, President

# From the Desk of the Program Director

By Shannon Carr

Happy New Year!!

2022 ended on a high note with our first Holiday Boutique! We had quite a few members join us as vendors. Geoffrey Whitford and his daughter were there with their honey. Mendy and Antonia Cerniglio had their home-made goods. Angy Nowicki had beautiful succulent arrangements, Leonard Willis and his wife brought handmade blankets and other beautiful products. Kimberly Meister brought her handmade ceramics. Benson brought beautiful glassware from Ryan Teurfs Designs. We had other vendors from outside of SCBA as well. A huge thank you to our volunteers Andrea Brum, Andrew Benson, Carol Ellis, Connie Alexich, Kim Bergstrom, Kristi Lucas Hayden, Stevie Lazo, Sylvia Cook, and Tyler Moore who brought goodies for the bake sale and/or helped throughout the day with the event. They helped with set up and tear down, answering beekeeping questions at the SCBA information booth, selling baked goods at the bake sale as well as raffle tickets. While it was a cold day, we had a steady flow of visitors, everyone had fun and we were able to raise some funds for SCBA as well. Looking forward to the next holiday season when we bring back this fun little boutique as we watch it grow.



Boutique set up at SCBA's First Holiday Boutique.

As we enter 2023, we enter it running. The first week of January we will be emptying out our storage unit and moving into our new office at the Druids Hall! This is exciting as it will give us an easy meeting space for clusters and committees. The SCBA library will also be easier to access. For now, till the dust settles, "Of-

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Office Hours” will be by appointment, as I will be alternating between working from home and the new office and often have off site meetings.



Angy's succulents

In January our online Beginner and Seasoned Beekeepers Forums will be resuming. Beginner Beekeepers is the 3rd Monday of every month and Seasoned is the 4th. Just like before, reminders with links will be sent a day or two before via email. Beginner Beekeepers Forum is a great place to ask all your questions and learn about beekeeping from our more experienced members. Seasoned Beekeepers Forum is where we dive a little deeper into the issues facing beekeeping, honeybees and pollinators and discuss ways we can deal with these issues. Both forums are for beekeepers and bee tenders of all levels.

On February 19th we will host our first of three Flower to Table Pollinator Brunch. This will be a fun fundraiser for the association. Held at the Luther Burbank Art and Garden Center, every item on the menu will be centered around pollinators emphasizing the importance of pollinators to our every day of life. Our very own Susan Kegley will be the speaker, and there will be a raffle. See the flyer attached.

There will be a lot going on in 2023 and we are excited to be sharing it with all our members. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions, ideas, or would like to help.

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

## SCBA Volunteer Positions

SCBA is run by its members. There are lots of ways to help and volunteer. If you are interested in one of these positions, OR if you have ideas on other ways to contribute, reach out to our Program Director, Shannon Carr at [programdirector@sonomabees.org](mailto:programdirector@sonomabees.org).

**Cluster Coordinator** – Help lead your cluster through coordinating monthly cafes and workshops and maintain communication with cluster members.

- West Cluster – Cluster Coordinator and Co-Coordinator
- Central Cluster – Cluster Co-Coordinator
- South Cluster – Cluster Co-Coordinator

**Regional Cluster Coordinator** – Assist the cluster coordinators with any needs and as a group plan and strategize workshops and cafes for the year.

**BeeShare Coordinator** – Be a part of the team that helps distribute bees caught in swarms and donated through splits to your cluster members who registered to receive donated bees

- Central Cluster – BeeShare Coordinator

**Librarian** – With our new office, the library will be set up in a permanent location. We need a volunteer to go through the books, sort and organize.

**Host a Hive Dive or Garden Dig** – These are great opportunities to meet your fellow cluster members, make bee and garden buddies and to learn with. Contact your cluster coordinator on scheduling a hive dive or garden dig.

- Hive Dive - No two hives are the same, sharing your hive with members of your cluster provides an educational opportunity for members to learn about honeybees and beekeeping practices.

- Garden Dig – Now is the time to cut back your plants and thin them out for new growth in the spring. By hosting a Garden Dig members can take the excess plants and transplant them into their gardens and help clean up in the process.

**Join a Committee** – Join one of our committees and help make plans and make a difference in our community, both internally and externally. Committees include (but limited to) Education, Fundraising, and Events.



# Time to Register Your Hives, Again

By Ettamarie Peterson

There was an article in the *Sonoma-Marin Farm News* telling beekeepers that for 2023 there will be no fees charged for registering your hives but by California law, specifically Food & Ag Code section 29040, it is still required to register with your home county. I checked with Beverley Hammond in the Sonoma County Department of Agriculture to confirm the information. She said all live colonies must be registered. Registering your hives helps beekeepers and farmers to keep open communications.

The information is well explained on the BeeWhere website.

Remember that under the law beekeepers must register annually with the county Ag Commissioner (go to [www.beewherecalifornia.com](http://www.beewherecalifornia.com) to register). Clearly mark hives with name, address, and phone number if they are not on your own property. Notify the county within 72 hours of hive relocation.



Bee on flower by Andrew Baxter

## CLUSTER REPORT

# Hello From East Cluster

By Bonny Philbin

We had a great December Bee Café thanks to the hospitality of Alan Ross, our former coordinator and excellent Kenwood beekeeper. About 25 folks enjoyed the camaraderie of old friends plus the chance to meet new beekeepers over some cheer and lunch in Alan's beautiful barn. Thank you so much Alan!

Bee Leaders for Kenwood, Glen Ellen and lower Sonoma anchored table groups so that new and experienced beekeepers could get to know others who live in their area. As a result, new bee buddy groups were formed. After lunch, we were able to have a general conversation about what people wanted to see happening in East Cluster in 2023. Some of these ideas were:

- Text group by region so that people can hive dive together without driving a long distance and build relationships nearby.
- Possible workshops on insulating hives and climate change.
- Forensic reviews suggested for lost hives ... an investigative crew perhaps shared by Zoom.
- Glen Ellen will try to bring their "buddies" together for a quarterly meet up.
- Everyone agreed that education plus some social time brings our little community together.

It was another fun and beneficial gathering.

Other happenings:

There will not be a Bee Café in January as Flatbed Farm (our meeting venue) is closed. On February 4th we will meet at Lauri Dorman's garage for a Swarm Building Workshop given by Darrel Jones.

Maralee Joseph has agreed to be the swarm split coordinator for next year.

# Swarm Report: Return to Normal, or New Trend?

Reported Swarms by Month 2018 thru 2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Feb	5	0	2	1	3
Mar	29	30	138	117	96
Apr	149	146	202	172	97
May	51	37	66	52	42
Jun	8	22	15	27	16
Jul	0	4	10	7	7
Aug	1	4	1	2	5
Sep	1	0	1	1	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>266</b>

With only five years reported so far, there is not a lot of data, but let's see what we can distill from the numbers. First, it's clear that in Sonoma County most swarms occur in March and April. That's why we encourage Bee Share participants to not schedule vacations during those two months.

Second, you can see that July through September have very few swarms. In fact, it's possible that some of those are absconding colonies instead.

Third, because there is so little data, it's unclear whether 2022 is returning toward a more typical number of reported swarms, similar to 2018 and 2019. One possible interpretation is that during peak Covid in 2020, when many were working from home, a larger number of swarms were spotted that would have otherwise been unreported if people were away at work. The reported swarms dropped off some in 2021 and more so in 2022. Still, there are so many variables, it's too early to say if this interpretation is correct or a coincidence. We'll have more data points as time goes on.

If you are an SCBA member you can find the latest histogram of swarms by week at this [link](#). A table of swarm counts by city is available at this [link](#).

**SPLIT and SWARM REPORTING REMINDER** - It's not too late to report a 2022 split or swarm that you

intended to report but didn't get around to. You can report your splits and swarms via your laptop, tablet or phone at this member only [Member Swarm Report](#) page. Clicking on the link will prompt you to sign-in to the website to file your report. If you aren't able to access the website to file a report, please email your cluster coordinator or Bee Share coordinator and they can send you instructions for reporting via email.

For those that do use the website to file a report, the top of the Member Swarm Report page also has links to the latest table of swarms by city and the latest plot of swarms by week. You can also find those links under the SCBA MEMBERS-ONLY INFO menu.

The Member Swarm Report page also has contact information for your cluster Bee Share coordinators. Next year when you have a swarm or split to share please contact your cluster's Bee Share coordinator. Thanks for supporting the Bee Share program by reporting your splits and swarms and through your generous sharing of those extra splits and swarms!

The Bee Share Team

# SCBA BOOK NOOK

## [Beekeeper's Lab: 52 Family-Friendly Activities and Experiments Exploring the Life of the Hive](#)

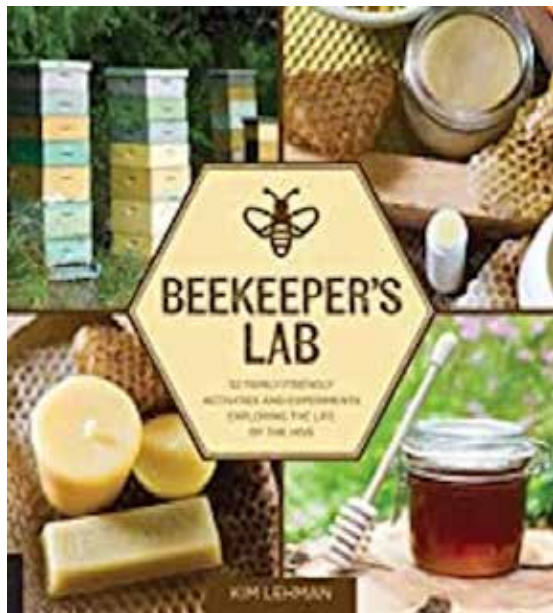
By: Kim Lehman



During the cold winter months, while the bees are clustering to stay warm in the hives, now is the time to explore activities with honey and wax that was harvested from the hive before closing it up for the winter. Beekeeper's Lab includes 52 activities from around and about the hive including art projects, recipes, experiments, and garden activities.

We have more than 250 books and DVDs in the SCBA Library. Beekeeper's Lab 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](#)

Starting mid-January members will be able to make an appointment to view and check out books from the library during the week, not just at in person general meetings. 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.



# Lip Balm – Citrus/Coconut

By *Ettamarie Peterson*

If you saved the cappings from your honey harvest, this is a great way to use them!

For the past several years my 4-H beekeepers have made lip balms in their December meetings. The following recipe is one we really like. The ingredients were found at Whole Foods and CVS stores. Vitamin E is essential as a preservative. The original recipe called for 20-25 drops of organic citrus essential oil. We found that we didn't need that much. The last couple of years we used orange. We used little one-ounce jars last year, and this year we used those and some lipstick tubes one of the mothers found on the internet. There are many lip balm recipes available on the internet.

## Ingredients

2 Tbsp. organic sunflower oil  
1 Tbsp. organic coconut oil  
1 Tbsp. Organic cocoa butter (We found this to be so solid in the jar it needed a little softening in the microwave to scoop it out.)  
1 Tbsp. plus 1 tsp. pure beeswax  
20-25 drops organic citrus essential oil. (We used orange the last two years.) Chose 1 or create a medley: grapefruit, mandarin, orange or tangerine.  
4 drops of vitamin E oil (or the contents of one capsule)

**Directions:** Coarsely chop (or grate) the beeswax or use beeswax pastilles. Place beeswax, cocoa butter and oils in a small pot or glass Pyrex measuring cup and gently heat in a pot of boiling water (never on direct heat!) until the beeswax and butters melt. Remove from heat and add essential oil and vitamin E oil. Immediately pour mixture into lip balm tubes or jars. Allow to cool completely before placing caps onto containers.

We stood the empty tubes into rice in egg cartons. You could also use raw popcorn or sunflower seeds to hold the tubes upright. We decorated the tubes and jars with little seasonal stickers.



# FLOWER TO TABLE POLLINATOR BRUNCH

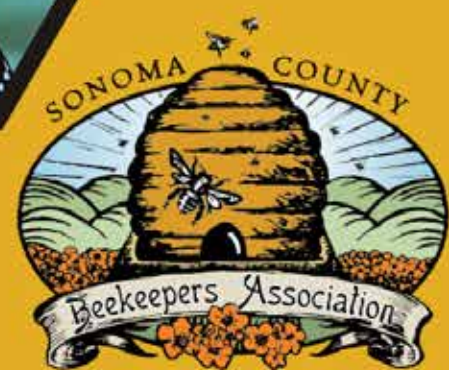
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