

The Monthly Extractor

Volume 49, Issue 12

December 2023

President's Message

Well, my friends, that's a wrap. 2023 has flown by. Now we get to look back and reflect on all the work we have done and all the joy we have shared.



announce the newly elected 2024 Board of Directors that night. So, don't forget to vote! We will also give recognition to the outstanding members who go above and beyond for SCBA. You don't want to miss it.

What a great year it has been for



SCBA! We have finally returned to, mostly, in-person gatherings. I have loved seeing so many of us getting together to talk about how to make the world a better place for our beloved honeybees and native pollinators! Our aspirations to better our environment and make it

more nourishing for the honeybees also improves the lives of all the pollinators and the creatures with whom we share our beautiful county!

We have made great strides in our beekeeping practices and SCBA has become a flagship association for other bee organizations in California that are striving to look outward and tackle the responsibilities that come with beekeeping, the same way we have been. Thank you SCBA for expanding my connection to the natural world and for introducing me to so many like-minded people. I have so many great friends here!

I have loved serving as your president for the past year. Thank you to the incredible 2023 board – Mohammed, Ann, Andy, Andrea, Miles, Kim, and Kelli, along with Shannon, our fabulous Program Director – for all the support and for making my job as stress free as they could. I adore this association and its mission to fiercely defend and look out for all the smallest creatures in Sonoma County.

Please make sure you come to the Holiday Party this year. It's our first one since the pandemic started and it's going to be a celebration! We will

I hope you all have a wonderful holiday season. Enjoy yourself and be safe.

See you outside!
Carol Ellis
President SCBA

Talk to the Board

Please remember that the Board of Directors is here for you. If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, about how things are going in the association or what direction SCBA is headed, or just about anything else, please write to us and we will do our best to help.

Your 2023 Board of Directors

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The SCBA newsletter reflects the various techniques, theories and art of sustainable beekeeping.

SCBA Education and Community Going Strong

By Shannon Carr

As the year comes to an end, we can reflect on the amazing year 2023 was!

Our **Clusters** really came together this year providing educational opportunities for members to learn



about bees and beekeeping techniques through cafes, workshops, and hive dives. The smaller clusters allow the cluster coordinators to adjust to the needs of the members and to fine tune the materials to the micro-climates of their regions

providing opportunities to network and meet beekeepers closer to home.

SCBA's Beeshare program and **Swarm Rescuers** captured more than 300 swarms this last year and helped place them in the apiaries of members. Statistically, 20 percent of swarms survive the swarming process and their first year. This program increases the swarms' chances of survival and helps place local bees that have acclimated to the local environment in the apiaries of members.

Gardening for Bees put together multiple propagation workshops propagating thousands of pollinator plants that they distributed in the community through plant sales and habitat projects. They cleaned up the pollinator habitat at Sonoma County Children's Museum, built a habitat at Prestwood School in Sonoma, created a display of small space gardening through container gardening at the Druid's Hall and helped members create pollinator habitats and hedgerows.

We had amazing teams that put together fantastic educational displays at both the Sonoma County Fair and Gravenstein Apple Fair and our Educational Program reached out to thousands of children through classroom education presentations and monthly presentations at the Children's Museum.

Our first annual **Pollinator Brunch** fundraiser was a huge success, and our second annual **Spring Fling** was a lot of fun for our members to get together.

A lot happened in 2023; it was an amazing year for our members and our community, and we are busy making plans and looking forward to an equally amazing 2024! Wishing everyone a fun and safe Holiday Season and we will see you at the Holiday Party!

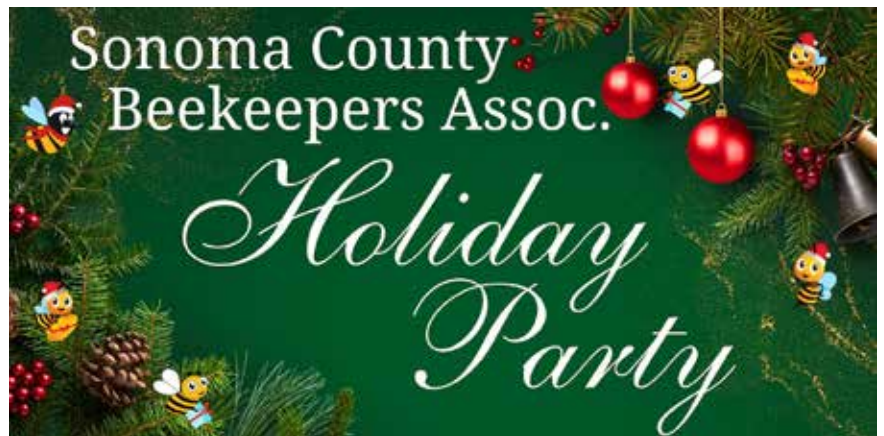
Shannon Carr
Program Director
programdirector@sonomabees.org

SCBA HOLIDAY PARTY

December 11, 6pm to 9pm

Druid Hall: 1011 College Ave, Santa Rosa

At the Holiday Party, we are announcing the 2024 SCBA Board of Directors and acknowledging the members, nominated by members, who have gone above and beyond this last year! Followed by a few rounds of Bingo.



The Druids are opening their Clubhouse for us with a pool table, dart board, and no host bar. SCBA is putting together a delicious charcuterie board with goodies and providing non alcoholic beverages. We

encourage everyone to bring a delicious finger food, or dessert, to share. Bring your family, this will be a fun evening you don't want to miss!

BEE TALK!

Like Beekeeping, Life is Full of Surprises

By Mohammed Ibrahim
1st Vice President

Dear fellow members,

When I first joined SCBA in May 2021, I had no idea that I would make it to the Board after 6 months when Kelli Cox reached out to me one day and said, "Hey you, I think you should be on the Board; we need young energy." She had me at that moment because she knew I loved bees and beekeeping and would be less likely to say no! I made it to the nomination list and was then elected 1st VP of Beekeeping in December 2021. The other thing that I did not see coming is that I took a trip to Turkey that month. When I came back, the Board reached out to me again, and they said, "Kelli stepped down from being president back then; by law, you are now the acting president!!" Just like beekeeping, filled with surprises and changes in plans, I said to myself.

The Board did an amazing job of keeping the organization moving forward. Still, to this day, the commitment, the work ethic, and the care for each member of the organization are just overwhelming to witness in the room at each Board meeting and sometimes side meetings that we must do to make decisions. Some of them were late, going to everyone's bedtime. They supported me in every aspect of logistics, responsibility, education, and everything that a newbie needs to manage two critical roles at SCBA at the same time (1st VP of Beekeeping and Acting President).

In July 2022, Carol Ellis stepped up to be the president. It was such a relief and a big success for the organization. I had the pleasure of serving two terms on the SCBA Board of Directors. I enjoyed every moment. I made new family members, and I learned many things on a personal level from every one of them as well as from our members.

I decided to step down from the Board of Directors for the next term to focus on my career and personal growth. I will still be a member, attending meetings

SCBA CALENDAR

The SCBA online calendar is updated frequently. Check it out to see current events.

Dec 2 – [SCBA's 2nd Annual Holiday Boutique](#)

Dec 2 – [Wreath Building Workshop](#)

Dec 3 – [West Cluster Holiday Party](#)

Dec 9 – [Central Cluster Holiday Party](#)

Dec 9 – [North Cluster Bee Craft Dive and Potluck](#)

Dec 11 – [SCBA Holiday Party](#)

and events, writing for the newsletter, and being a swarm rescuer if the time allows. It has been a pleasure serving our members and our community over the last two years.

I wish you all a happy holiday season.

Warmly,
Mohammed



Leave the Leaves / Scatter Seeds

By Ann Gallagher White, 2nd VP of Gardening



G4Bs met in person in November and Kim Bergstrom has a great year planned for 2024. We are honored and excited to help our members grow more abundant pesticide-free forage in the coming year. Please join us in the garden!

Here are two ideas to keep you outside in the late fall/early winter creating habitat for pollinators:

Leave the Leaves - Wet weather is here and that, along with the cold, makes it a great time to rake up the leaves and let them decompose and avoid filling up the local landfill. We may not always see that leaves are valuable organic matter to help our gardens grow because they are usually making a mess of it. But with abundant rain in November and winter quickly approaching, this is an excellent time to let leaves stay in the garden for lots of reasons. First, you can help [sustain wildlife](#) by letting the leaves be. Insects will thank you for cover. (Think about a cozy cover you crawl under to find shelter at night like your bed or your favorite blanket on the couch and picture [insects doing the same](#) to escape the cold.)

Decomposing leaves also make [great mulch](#), help suppress weeds and supply important nutrients to

garden soil. Some gardeners like to mulch the leaves using a mower/mulcher/chipper/shredder for quicker decomposition. Others like to keep the leaves whole and let them decompose on their own. You may want to add a layer of compost on top. I collect them in a covered bin next to the compost pile to add whenever I add green waste from the kitchen or garden. I also put them around trees and in my pollinator garden. I am going to add some to raised beds and let them help break up the top layer of Bennett Valley clay soil.

Scatter Seeds - This is also an excellent time to spread wildflower seeds (or any cover crop) now that rains are here. [Renee's Garden](#) suggests that you "break up soil clumps and evenly loosen the top two inches of soil with a digging fork or shovel, then smooth out with a flat rake." When spring comes, you'll enjoy the show, and the bees will enjoy the nutrition. Renee's Garden makes a mix (untreated) for pollinators (a fabulous mix of seeds and the colors are beautiful). Locally, some people have recommended [LeBallister's](#). They carry a wide variety of wildflower seeds (including native and pollinator mixes) that are not treated (except for the clover that has been inoculated).

Enjoy the last bit of fall and happy gardening! If you want to reach out, you can reach me at 2ndVP@SonomaBees.org.

Serge's December To-Do List

By Serge Lebesque

Inspect the exterior condition of the hives:

- Hive tops should be properly set and secured.
- Observe the hive entrances and the ground in front of the hives.
- Verify that the hive entrances remain unobstructed.
- On nice days, note flight paths and the bee activity.
- Examine monitoring trays.
- Verify that mice have not entered hives (clues of their presence are visible on the monitoring trays, as

coarse pieces of comb, mouse feces, etc.).

- Ensure that the hives are adequately ventilated.
- Clean and torch tools and equipment and scrub your smoker.
- Repair and build beekeeping equipment.
- Review notes from the year.
- Plan next season (evaluate the need for equipment and bees).
- Read and learn more about bees and beekeeping.
- Enjoy some honey.

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Looking Ahead to 2024's Garden Plans

By Kim Bergstrom
Gardening for Bees Coordinator

Well, it is time to put 2023 to bed and get ready for 2024! To that end, the leadership teams from the “Bee” side and the “Garden” side of SCBA got together to plan the 2024 Calendar for the clusters and marry that with the association-wide calendar. We have some great gardening events planned for next year including:

- More propagation workshops, where you get to dig up plants, save some for the association plant sales and take some home for your bees to enjoy!
- More demonstrations during Cluster Cafés of things like how to grow pollinator plants from seed, best gardening tools, and how to prepare for your fall garden.
- A new gardening workshop at the spring fling on “How to Prune”!
- Garden tours across the county.
- And more plants to pick up at our monthly meetings care of our awesome “home nurseries group.”

In 2023, we brought “gardening” a little closer to you all with the initiation of our “Cluster Gardening Coordinators” who have been doing a fabulous job. Next year, we will bring gardening even closer you. We will select one lucky member from each cluster who fulfills the requirements for the G4B’s group to plant a pollinator garden at your home. If you are interested, please start thinking about an area in your yard with full sun, a water source, and a commitment to keeping it well maintained for the benefit of your bees. More to come on this in the New Year!

As I close out the year, I would be remiss if I didn’t thank several folks inside and outside G4B’s that have helped in so many ways in 2023. Those folks include Kelly Corbett, Ellen Sherron, Gülten Eichler, Liz Holdman, Maureen Bufton, Franny Minervini-Zick, Ellen Schwartz, Angy Nowicki, Karen Cappa, Connie Alexich, Stevie Lazo, Mendy and

Antonia Cerniglia, Chris Dicker, Ann Gallagher White, Tyler Moore, Kelli Cox, Bruce Harris, Frank Gibbons, Jamie Storck, Susan Kegley, Maralee Joseph, Kelli Cox, Carol Ellis, and Shannon Carr!

Cheers to a healthy, happy holiday season!

CLUSTER NEWS

2024 Cluster Planning Full of Buzz

By Kelli Cox
Regional Cluster Coordinator

Greetings fellow beeks!

This is the last month I'm writing as Regional Cluster Coordinator and what a great year it has been!

I'm so proud to be a part of this great association and to be able to work with so many dedicated volunteers! As the year draws to a close, I want to thank all of the Cluster Coordinators who stepped up this year to provide the valuable tools to bring you together, provide information, and support your beekeeping and gardening experience. We just had a fabulous Cluster and Gardening coordinator meeting where we discussed and planned your 2024 calendar.



Sacha Lepley (2024 Regional Cluster Coordinator) is excited to embark on what is going to be another robust and exciting year -- if not better! We still need two coordinators for the East Cluster and a co-coordinator for the Central Cluster. Make sure you go to your January Cluster meeting where you'll meet other beekeepers and gardeners, see what we have planned for 2024, and find your Bee buddies! Happy Holidays and Bee safe!

Kelli Cox
Regional Cluster Coordinator
707 280-4376

CENTRAL CLUSTER

Happy Holidays from Central Cluster

*By Susan Kegley & Sacha Lepley
Cluster Coordinators*

Hi Central Cluster Members! The Holiday season is upon us and our organization is doing a lot of wonderful holiday activities. Susan and Sacha hope you can attend our Central Cluster Holiday Potluck and Gift Exchange Party on Saturday, December 9, 2023 from 11 to 2 at Bees N Blooms! See the email that went out on November 20 or check the SCBA calendar for the event and to register so we have an idea of numbers.

Susan is returning as Central Cluster Coordinator next year. Roger Simpson will be providing occasional assistance. Sacha is moving to the Regional Cluster Coordinator position, which means she will be assisting/guiding all Cluster Coordinators. Sacha looks forward to getting to know the Cluster Coordinators better and hopefully making the job easier.

Thanks so much to all Central Cluster members who have helped out throughout the year. Please vote for board members, nominate members for recognition, volunteer where you can, and let us know your ideas by completing the end of year survey and/or emailing us.

Best wishes for an enjoyable Holiday season! Susan Kegley, Owner Bees n Blooms

West Cluster News

by Cheryl Koeller

Our calendar is getting busy. Our West Cluster Holiday Party will be in December, a frame making clinic and another swap meet was suggested by a few of the people who attended the one on Oct 22nd. Maybe we'll call it Bee Ready for Spring!

EAST CLUSTER

Local Honey Tasting and Reviewing Seeley Thoughts

By Jamie Stork

November was a busy month. On November 4th our cluster meeting focused on honey. We discussed the medicinal uses of honey, gave out a recipe on how to make honey cough syrup, and did a honey tasting. Special thanks to Eileen Pharo for hosting all of us. Hopefully we didn't leave her house too sticky from all the honey. Kudos to Jamie Storck, who picked up honey samples from local Beekeepers in Kenwood, Glen Ellen, Sonoma, Boyes Hot Springs, and Shellville. The tasting even had a few international surprises from our world traveler, Mato.

On November 15 we did our monthly taco social at Sonoma Eats in Boyes Hot Springs. We had a great turnout with 15 beekeepers chatting about the Zoom call with Tom Seeley and confirming everyone tucked their bees in for the winter. We are now



Honey tasting at Eileen Pharo's home

cleaning equipment from varroa, which has hit the valley hard.

There will be no East Cluster gathering in December, so hopefully everyone will save the date for the Christmas party on December 11 at Druids Hall. For those of you who don't like to drive at night, contact

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Propogating for Pollinators

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Jamie Storck; she is happy to pick you up on her way to Santa Rosa. She can take seven people comfortably in her vehicle.

This group of pictures shows SCBA members enjoying a rainy day propagating and potting pollinator plants to take home to their own pollinator habitats and for Gardening 4 Bees Home Nursery and Pollinator Habitat Programs. The workshop was followed by the exploration of a shed wall that houses a “wild colony” where a swarm took up residence, led by Rob Keller from Napa.



Sara Bard and Gülten Eicher



SCBA members enjoying a rainy day propagation workshop at Ellen Sherron's house.



Rob Keller talking about the bees in the wall and a potential plan for keeping them safe while construction takes place (top) and using a heat sensor device to locate the bees in the wall.

California State Beekeeping Association Conference 2023

By Andy Baxter, SCBA Secretary

The SCBA has been an affiliate member of the California State Beekeepers Association ([CSBA](#)) for several years, but for 2024 the board decided to join as a full voting member. The annual three-day conference was just held in Orange County and the board decided to send me to investigate. The three



days were packed with many speakers who presented on a wide variety of topics including industry updates; regulatory news; pest and disease research; and general panel discussions.

My report to our members is below and includes a summary of

all the key presentations. I asked if the CSBA could share the presentation slides on their website and will update our members if they do.

California Department of Food and Agriculture (Marci Skelton):

Marci discussed the hive registration program. She admitted that the messaging to hobbyist beekeepers was poor, so for anyone with fewer than 10 hives, the program has been suspended until 2025. She urged beekeepers however to still register their hives as this data helps national research funding. She believes that local agencies will continue to waive the registration fee for up to nine hives beyond 2025.

[Apiary Inspectors of America \(Natasha Garcia-Anderson\)](#)

This group promotes better beekeeping conditions in North America mainly through the mitigation of pests and diseases as well as communication with inspection officials and other industry stakeholders. AIA recently visited Thailand to learn more about the *Tropilaelaps* mite (more on that later) and how to identify and inspect for it.

Registered US beekeeping demographics (most recent survey).

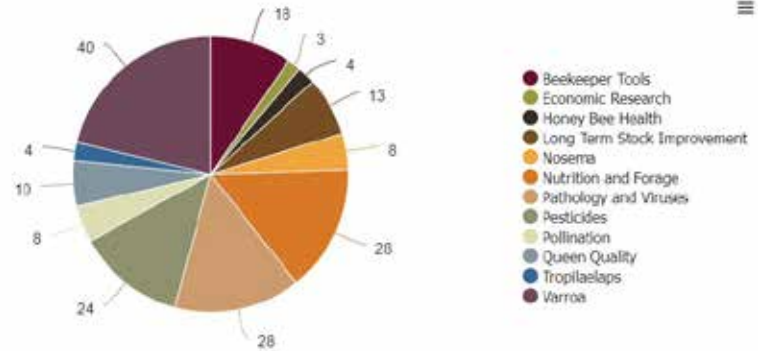
Total beekeepers	66,510
Hobbyist (1-50 colonies)	85.7%
Sideliners (51-500 colonies)	7.3%
Commercial (501+ colonies)	7.0%
Total colonies	1,741,533

American Honey Producers Association (Chris Hiatt) & American Beekeeping Federation (Debbie Seib): The primary goal is to ensure the future of the honey bee. The AHPA actively lobbies for the industry and is involved in multiple legal campaigns, for example keeping "added sugar" from being required to be added to honey labels; a honey anti-dumping lawsuit; and the HIVE act..

Project Apis m (George Hanson):

This is a great organization whose mission is to fund research and effort to improve honey bee health and vitality. For example, the EPA does not regulate pesticide combinations or any of the adjuvants that are

Research Projects by Primary Area of Research



Project Apis m research funding categories.

added to make them more potent. [Project Apis m](#) filled the gaps in our knowledge by funding this and other critical research.

It's worth taking a quick detour here to mention *Tropilaelaps mercedesae* (or "tropi mite"). This pest featured heavily in multiple sessions highlighting the concern it is causing. Unlike varroa, this mite is small and fast moving. It can be extremely difficult to spot when not moving across the comb.



This pest is currently limited to Southeast Asia but is spreading. Originally a parasite of the

Small and deadly: Tropi mite (on right) compared to varroa mite.

Continued, next page

Conference Report, from previous page

Asian giant honey bee, it successfully shifted hosts to *A. mellifera*. Unlike in the US where varroa is arguably the biggest threat to colonies, in areas of the world where both mites exist, it's tropi mites that beekeepers fear most. For example, tropi is being blamed for killing the entire *A. mellifera* population of Pakistan (it can kill a hive in four to five months). Perhaps even more concerning is the evidence that the mite can survive in South Korea (possibly on mice and rats) which has a similar winter climate to many US states.

This detour leads nicely to the next speaker at the conference:

Updates on the efforts to track and manage Tropi Mites (Dr. Sammy Ramsey)

Sammy talked about his research into foreign pests as potential threats to North American apiculture. The tropi mite featured heavily in this presentation. This pest spreads virulent deformed wing virus as well as acute bee paralysis virus (and possibly BQCV). Its population can grow significantly faster than varroa and it spends little time outside of brood cells which leaves few vulnerabilities. Its feeding habits also increase the chance of virus transmission when compared to varroa. We should all keep our fingers crossed that tropi m does not arrive in the US any time soon, if at all. That said, Canada imports bees from Ukraine, and the mite was discovered there recently.



Spread of the tropi mite. Arrows show latest detection areas.

Research is being conducted into how to treat for tropi. Thai beekeepers often use 85 percent Formic acid and heat treatment of the hive has shown some success. More work is needed in this area, however.

Recent research into mite resistance (Randy Oliver)

Randy has been researching mite resistance as well as lobbying the EPA on treatments. After seven years he claimed to have mite resistance demonstrated in 50 percent of his stocks. He told the conference that based on his discussions, the EPA will not be regulating oxalic acid use. It is still up to the individual states as to whether they will enforce action against people who use this treatment, but he is also talking to the California agencies to get clarification on this point. Given that the United States is one of the last countries where Amitraz still works, research into sustainable and organic acids, miticides and pesticides is critical.

Nutritional Supplements (Brandon Hopkins)

Brandon spoke about recent large field trials of a novel nutritional supplement. He presented data showing increased brood coverage for colonies that were fed the supplement. He talked about how even a short-term pollen shortage can have a significant impact months later on hive strength.

Using adjuvants to improve efficacy of varroa control (Brandon Shannon)

An adjuvant in agriculture is something typically added to help a pesticide work, such as surfactants or wetting agents. Research is being conducted to study the effects of adding adjuvants to organic acid treatments (e.g., oxalic). Results so far show improved efficacy.

Queens and the drones that mate with them (David Tarpy)

David shared some interesting discoveries:

- Certain drones are much better producing queens vs workers.
- The queen microbiome is not a function of the colony environment.

Bee informed partnership (Anne Marie Fauvel)

Anne Marie kicked off by saying that the partnership was shutting down due to funding issues, but she gave updates on three completed programs.

- Does supplemental feeding during queen rearing result in better queen cells? No difference was observed in head protein concentration, queen larvae weight, or royal jelly weight per

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Conference Report, from previous page

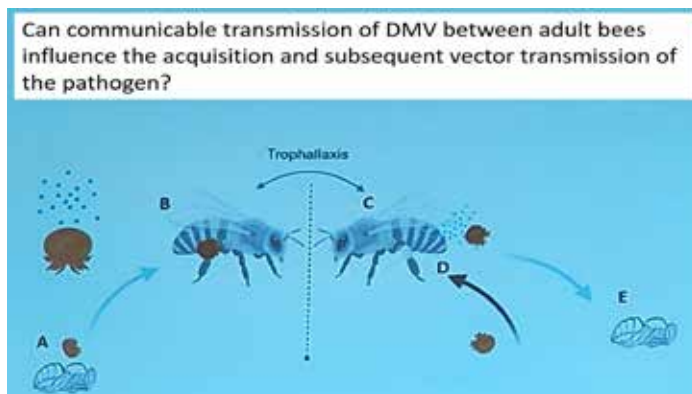
cell. In other words, no positive differences observed.

- Does hive density within an apiary affect viral or mite load? A study was conducted in North Dakota involving full genome sequencing of bees and mites. Low correlation observed. Just one virus was detected on mites (deformed wing virus). Six other known viruses were detected on bees (Sacbrood, black queen cell, deformed wing, acute bee paralysis, apis rhabdovirus, and most commonly lake sinai).
- What are the positive effects of common treatments for Nosema? When comparing infected colonies that were treated or left untreated, there was no difference in size, honey production, or nosema spore count load over the whole season.

Varroa aggregate on adult drones (Zaccary Lamas):

Zaccary led a very interesting discussion of recent research findings.

- Some varroa switch hosts twice a day, whereas others may remain on a single adult bee for two weeks.



- Deformed wing virus is unusual in that it can be vectored both by mites as well as trophallaxis.
- Varroa may not be evenly distributed around the hive. Means that sugar roll/alcohol washes may indicate significantly lower levels than reality. He is researching a more targeted inspection process to give more accurate results.

CA Master Beekeeper program:

The program was well represented by Wendy Mather and Kian Nikzad, hosting a half day of events

(including microscope inspections, dissections etc.) and speakers.

Wrap-up: This was a great conference with three days of educational presentations. In an arguably short-sighted move, the CSBA last week voted to redefine its purpose to be to “promote and protect the California Commercial Beekeeping Industry.” The existing (more inclusive) purpose was scrapped in favor of a commercial-centric one. I hope that the CSBA does not lose sight of the fact that as reported at the conference almost 86% of US beekeepers are hobbyists with fewer than 10 hives. That said, this conference still had much content for non-commercial beekeepers.

Prior to the event I contacted the boards of all the CA associations and clubs and was able to meet up with several different members. We discussed options for closer cooperation going forward, so watch this space.

Thanks to the SCBA for supporting my visit to this year’s CSBA conference.

MORE PHOTOS!



Neither cold nor rain could keep these members from touring Ellen Sherron's vibrant garden!

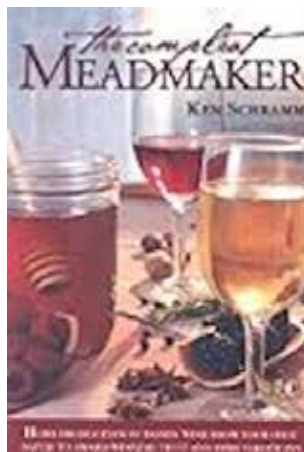


The Compleat Meadmaker

By Ken Schramm

It goes by the name of “mead” or simply “honey wine.” Some call it “ambrosia,” others “nectar of the gods.” Regardless the name, no beverage serves as the focus for more myth and folklore than this romantic and resplendent elixir, says author Ken Schramm. One of the most ancient of human beverages, mead arose in part because it was easy to make. Today’s hobbyists can rediscover the simplicity of making mead while reveling in the range of flavors that can result. *The Compleat Meadmaker* provides easy-to-follow procedures and simple recipes, showing how you can quickly and painlessly make your own mead at home.

SCBA has more than 250 books and DVDs in our library. *The Compleat Meadmaker* is just one of many books about bees, gardening for bees, and products from the hive in our collection. You can view all our books and DVDs available to you at SCBA-Library.



We are looking to expand the SCBA library with current books and resources. If you have

any suggestions for books related to honeybees, beekeeping, native bees, gardening for bees, and products of the hive, please email your suggestions to Librarian@sonomabees.org.

In addition, we are starting to add beekeeping tools and equipment to the library. Keyword search “equipment” to see what we have. Currently not much, but these resources will continue to grow.

We are actively looking for candle molds to add to our equipment library. Please contact us if you have some molds, or other useful equipment, you can donate to the library.

SCBA Library is available to members at in-person general meetings and during the week by appointment. If you are interested in checking out a book, email our librarian at Librarian@sonomabees.org to schedule and appointment to pick up one or two of the books, DVDs, or equipment available to SCBA members.

DELIGHTING IN DETAILS Local photographer Ron Keeley of Santa Rosa captured some lovely close-up photos of bees with his iPhone and offered them to The Monthly Extractor for publication. Thanks Ron!



Holiday Cookies That Celebrate Greece

By Rachel Parker

My mother used to make fruitcakes in October, bathing them in bourbon or brandy and tucking them away until December, when she'd distribute the sweet, boozy confections to friends and family. I haven't followed in her footsteps, but maybe in her direction: Before Halloween, I look for cookies that I'll add to my holiday cookie platters. These days, I like doing things ahead, so that I'm not wiping flour and frosting off my brow as I load the car. This recipe stands out for unusual flavor combinations, sturdy texture, and – of course – honey. Semolina flour joins all purpose, and instead of butter or shortening, the cookies use olive oil for the fat component. There are no eggs in this recipe either, making it suitable for those who avoid animal products. My family loved them, and so did the folks at the South Cluster cocktail party.

Greek Olive Oil-Honey Cookies

From *The New York Times*, Melissa Clark

INGREDIENTS

For the Syrup:

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 2-inch-long cinnamon sticks
- 1 whole clove
- 1 orange
- ½ cup honey

For the cookies:

- 1-1/3 cups extra virgin olive oil, plus more for greasing the pans, if needed
- 1 to 2 large oranges
- ¼ cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons brandy
- 1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground clove
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt
- 3 cups plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 cup fine semolina
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup toasted nuts, such as walnuts, pistachios, or almonds, finely chopped

PREPARATION

First, make the syrup: In a medium saucepan over high heat, combine sugar, cinnamon sticks, and clove with 1 1/3 cup water. Cut the orange in half and place it in the saucepan, flesh down. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally, until the sugar completely dissolves – about 4 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in honey. Set aside to cool completely, leaving the cinnamon, clove, and orange in the syrup until ready to use.

Now the cookies: Heat the oven to 375 degrees and line 4 baking sheets with parchment paper or non-stick liners, or lightly grease the pans with olive oil.

Finely grate the zest of 1 orange into a large mixing bowl. Cut the orange in half and squeeze the juice into a measuring cup. You may need to squeeze the second orange to get 1 cup of juice. Add the juice to the bowl with the zest, then mix in the olive oil, sugar, brandy, cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, and salt.



In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, semolina, and baking soda. Gradually fold in the flour mixture into the olive oil mixture. Mix with a wooden spoon until the flour is evenly incorporated.

Using your hands, roll the dough into 1½ inch ovals or egg shapes and place 1 inch apart on the prepared baking sheets. Using your palm, slightly flatten the dough. Bake until the cookies are golden, about 20 to 25 minutes.

Just before the cookies are done, remove the orange and spices from the syrup. As soon as the cookies are out of the oven, and working in batches, dunk the hot cookies into the syrup, gently flipping them for about 10 seconds so they can absorb the syrup. Remove the cookies from the syrup with a slotted spoon and arrange them on a tray or plate. Sprinkle the center of each cookie with a generous pinch of nuts, patting them lightly so they will stick to the cookies.

Once cool, store the cookies in an airtight container at room temperature for five days. Or freeze for later. The leftover syrup is delicious on pancakes!



Sonoma County Beekeepers Association
Holiday Boutique

SATURDAY DECEMBER 2, 2023

10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

3641 STONY POINT RD

**Local Vendors, Hand Crafted Gifts
and Home Made Holiday treats**



SCBA Business Members, Donors, and Sponsors

SCBA Business Members

Beekind Honey and Beekeeping Supply

Doug & Katia Vincent
beekind@beekind.com
www.beekind.com

Located in Sebastopol, Beekind is the place to get all your beekeeping supplies as well as gifts from the hive.

Bees N Blooms

Susan Kegley
Info@beesnblooms.com
www.BeesNBlooms.com

Sustaining bees, trees, blooms and you. Bees N Blooms is home to thousands of honeybees and native bees, a lavender labyrinth, a butterfly pollinator garden, and acres of pollinator-friendly plants and trees.

Buzz Off Honey

John & Darlene McGinnis
goahwayranch@gmail.com
www.goahwayranch.com

John McGinnis, with his expert craftsmanship, makes all the equipment he sells by hand. You'll find hives, nucs, swarm traps and all the equipment in between.

K2 Ranch and Vineyards

Ken and Kat Savano
<https://k2ranch.com/>

K2 Ranch and Vineyards offer vacation rental, event space, and gardens

Marin Coastal Bee Co.

Michael Louis Turner
<https://marincoastalbee.com>

Raw Pacific Coast honey and bee-hive removal Services in Marin and Sonoma Counties.

R Honey Pots

Liz & Joey Russell
rhoneypots@gmail.com

Liz is a beekeeper and potter motivated by the intersection of art and conservation. Along with pottery she offers live bee removal and backyard beekeeping services.

Sonoma County Bee Company

Candice Koseba
info@sonomacountybeecompany.com
<https://www.sonomacountybeecompany.com>

Dedicated to the support and practice of regenerative beekeeping in Northern California, Sonoma County Bee Company maintains colonies for individuals and small businesses.

Tauzer Family & Apiaries Sola Bee Farms / Honey Bee Genetics

info@solabeefarms.com
www.solabeefarms.com

Sola Bee Farms prides itself on maintaining healthy bees from safe, local regions. They produce and package honey in a sustainable manner through maintaining innovative, socially responsible and eco-friendly practices.

Wild Wills Honey

Will Ackley
willackley@gmail.com

Beekeeping consultations including bee hive setup for new beekeepers, bee rescue, and full service bee removal. Serving Sonoma, Marin and Napa Counties.

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

Canopy – \$5,000+



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