



NEWSLETTER

Bowie-Upper Marlboro Beekeepers Association

April 2015

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www.BUMBAbees.com

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MEETING HAS MOVED!!

Next BUMBA Meeting

***Thurs, April 2, 7:30 PM
Largo-Perrywood-Kettering
Community Park School Center
431 Watkins Park Dr. (Rt 193)***

Elections and "Meet the Beekeepers" Night

Our April 2 BUMBA meeting has been moved due to the street closures in Watkins Park for the "Autism in Children" Walk-a-Thon. We will convene at 7:30 PM at the Largo-Perrywood-Kettering Community Park School Center, located less than 1/2 mile south of the Watkins Park entrance on the same side of the road.

The April meeting will be "**Meet the Beekeepers Night**". We will do a round robin in the room, introducing our experienced members and our **2015 Short Course grads** to one another. Each person will be asked to introduce themselves to the group and give just a little background info, such as where you are located, how long you have been involved beekeeping, how many hives you normally manage, any specialty aspects of the craft you might be engaged in, and perhaps whether you would be willing to help out a newbie in a pinch.

The new folks will be encouraged to introduce themselves, tell us what caught their interest in beekeeping, how they came to choose **BUMBA** as their club affiliation, and the area in which they will be setting up their apiary. Once we get all the way around the room, we can break into an open forum type meeting, and questions could be asked from the floor by anyone and answered by anyone having experience with the subject matter. If no questions, we will finish out the evening with socialization.

It is also the April meeting where we conduct our **Annual Election** of officers, and it will be a bit different than the past 4 years. Our long serving vice president, **Leigh Walton**, is vacating the position he has so admirably filled in the leadership of **BUMBA** after having served, like forever...15 years maybe. While Leigh is not moving away to our knowledge, you will want to be at the meeting to show your admiration and appreciation for his very active and supportive tenure as our vice president and a great friend with a passion for bees and beekeepers. **Thank you, Leigh**, for always being there, and all the many roles you have played, and the comfort I have enjoyed always knowing that you would be there if I failed...Thank you.

On a glad note, we do have a candidate who has expressed an interest and desire to step in to the office of vice president, and whom I think will serve **BUMBA** well, notwithstanding that Leigh leaves some pretty large shoes to fill. Come to the meeting to participate in the election (appointment?) of officers...these folks guide the direction in which your club embarks. We have enjoyed a long run of capable leadership, and have one of the best clubs in beekeeping to be affiliated with. Let's keep it going and growing. You have a voice. Thank you all.

The President's Smoker

I am ready for some warm weather and hive inspections. It has been a decidedly hard winter. Overall, my colonies had shown a pretty good survival rate until the first of March, when I had a few of the overwintering nucs starve out. The full size colonies have done well...oh, there is one with laying workers or a drone laying queen in it, and a couple more have dwindled to the point that I don't believe they will make it, but counting only strong viable colonies, it looks like 50 of them have made it. I think I had combined down to 56 full colonies going into winter and am coming out with 50.

The overwintering nucs is another story. I went into winter with, I think it was 46 nucs, and am down to 22 left. I am sure most of those went down due to mite stress in the fall with most of them not getting any mite treatment in time to produce a good crop of fat winter bees. I spent the available time and resources...well, more toward the full size hives at the expense of the poor little nucs. Need to do better this year...need more time. Oxalic acid vaporization is the tool that I believe will make a huge

difference in over-wintering my banks of nucs. More on this subject later in the year...I am envisioning a mite control- challenge meeting for June, if we can pull that off.

We had a good short course and have made some new friends. I am certain this year's class is going to have many successful beeks. There was a determination in their faces that I don't know that I've seen before. I spoke very frankly to this class, disclosing my concerns over the attrition rates among new beekeepers. Perhaps they sensed my uneasiness with what is happening in the current world of hobbyist beekeeping. Each year, all of our regional clubs fill out their short course classes to capacity. Yet, after a year or two, many of those new beeks are no longer involved with bees, it seems. I have mainly the club roster, meeting attendance, the support forum, and personal networking to base my reckoning on, though I daily read several beekeeping online forums as well. Those forums indicate that it is not just our local club experiencing this phenomenon, but that it occurs pretty universally across the country. So I ask myself, "What's up with this?" Sure, I know that some of the folks coming in are just kicking the tires; some move away; and, some discover that their neighbors or community make a nuisance of their distrust of the hive. I once purchased a set of golf clubs that have been in the basement for years, because it was just too hard to learn to play successfully for me. I know that we live in a world of "instant gratification" where some just are not willing to participate in the continuing self- education that is the real meat of successfully managing and sustaining an apiary. Like myself and golf. A number of the new beeks just never get it... that is, "If you're going to keep bees alive, you have to get control of the Varroa mites or your bees are going to die", and they'll quit.

In this day of broad electronic information highways, the "plight of the honeybees" is well known and understood. The local clubs have enjoyed an increasing number of new wannabees annually. I wonder sometimes if the articles we read should perhaps be titled "The Plight of the New Beekeepers". The number of honeybee colonies in Maryland is increasing...not declining, that is fact. But the attrition rate among new beekeepers after the first year is alarming. Our club roster hovers at a pretty level number of active members, year by year, notwithstanding adding 50-60 newbees each spring. Why do they leave? I ask myself, "Are we not teaching them enough pertinent information, or not emphasizing the most

important points, such as control of Varroa destructor?”

Have to chuckle here... I was emblazoned with the rank of “Old Timer” last week during class, a title that upon reflection, I hold fondly, and as such, I can tell you that back in the day, beekeeping was best learned by a one-on-one relationship with a mentor, face to face, hands-on in a hive. You just can’t learn everything you need on YouTube or in a class room. I think that our **BUMBA** club and those dedicated to presenting our short course do a remarkable job. There aren’t many clubs around or classes offered that are better.

Still, it is disheartening when a student of the craft fails to make it into a second or a third year, because they lost their bees (think investment), and they don’t have anyone after their short course helping them to climb that mountain. Those few gifted (or lucky?) determined self-learners who do enter a third year are usually smitten for life. I think we are just not getting enough social networking going between our old timers and our annual crop of new beeks. If we old timers, and I am including all club beeks with a second successful winter under our belts in this instance, would break the ice to introduce ourselves to these new folks, and each of us take one or two under our wings so to speak, I suspect we could greatly improve the numbers of new beekeepers making their way into the ranks of the Successful. Yes, there are a few folks that come along who are just not cut out for it, but I think there may be many more who just drift away with a feeling of being marooned after the course and the first summer is over.

Can we do anything to change the outcome of this trend in backyard beekeeping? We try to offer educational and entertaining meetings. We try to offer a well compiled short course and a hands-on field day. At least one of our members, **Maggie Mills**, is offering continuing education classes for intermediate beeks. Some members, such as **Leigh Walton**, are trying to make local queens available to new beeks in need. We encourage folks to join their state organization, **MSBA**, for higher level keynote speakers, and insightful education. Two of our members, **Gerry Jones** and **Chuck Mewshaw**, house and maintain the club extracting equipment, making it available to any current (read that, “paid”) club member to borrow. **Linda Thompson** has done an *extraordinary* job with the **BUMBA Outreach Initiative**, and many help to participate in those events. Folks, we do a lot...but are we doing enough? Are we doing it right? Shouldn’t we be mentoring these new guys along, showing them the ropes, helping them to get it right? I think I would rather put the effort into really, and I mean

really, teaching these new students of the bees, that we already have attracted to our ranks, by one-on-one, or two-on-one, or three-on-one, mentoring, than in going out and rounding up more of them for next year. Well...better to do both I suppose. At least we would know that it is just some nuance of the trend, and not because we are dropping the ball when class is out. I am carrying a burden for this...will you help?

Hope to see you all at the April meeting!

God save the queen!

Bob Greenwell

MSBA Spring Meeting

June 13, 9:30AM – 4:30PM

Univ. of Maryland
College Park



www.mdbeekeepers.org

Featured Speaker: Dr. Juliana Rangel, Texas A & M

MSBA’s guest speaker is **Dr. Juliana Rangel**, from **Texas A&M University**. She received her PhD from Cornell University and studied with **Dr. Thomas Seeley**. Her topics are TBD. MSBA will also continue their reports on “**The Honey Regions of Maryland**”; this meeting will be, “**Tulip Popular Region**”, by **Jim Fraser**

EAS 2015 Summer Convention

August 10-14

The University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada

Timothy McMahon, EAS Director for Maryland



DC Beekeepers' Alliance

www.dcbeckeepers.org

The DC Beekeepers Alliance is now holding regular meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the **Rock Creek Nature Center** of the National Park Service, 5200 Glover Road NW from 6:30 PM to 8 PM. For directions and other meeting information, visit www.dcbeckeepers.org



Beekeeping Workshop for Farmers and Landowners

Saturday, April 25, 2015.

UMES Small Farm Outreach Initiative
Prince George's Soil Conservation District Office
5301 Marlboro Race Track Road, Suite 100
Upper Marlboro, Md.

Have you ever considered keeping honey bees? Have you ever wondered if beekeeping is for you? The UMES will offer a six-hour introductory workshop about beekeeping, providing a basic overview of becoming a beekeeper. Workshop participants will learn beekeeping basics. Topics include: Why Keep Bees, Honey Bee Management, Equipment and Tools Needed to Get Started, Honeybee Biology, Diseases and Pests, and much more. Participants will learn about the value of keeping bees, both environmentally and personally; local nectar sources for honey production; pollination benefits from honey bees; and a host of other topics that will help get participants started. In addition to the educational presentations by area beekeepers, information about joining local beekeeping associations and/or participating in area beekeeping short courses will be offered along with plenty of opportunities for networking.

For more information: <http://www.umes.edu/sans/news4041.html> or, contact Candy Walter 301-868-9366 or email: cjwalter@umes.edu

CLUB HAPPENINGS

Annual Elections

The April meeting is time, once again, to hold our Annual Elections. If you want to run for an office or nominate a member, please contact an officer listed on the Club Contacts page.

BUMBA Field Day

April 11, 11AM - 4PM

7804 Woodyard Road, Clinton Md. 20735

As a conclusion to this year's Short Course, BUMBA will hold its annual **Field Day**, at **Scott Seccomb's** apiary; directions are below. The Field Day is open to the Short Course students, current **BUMBA** members, and invited guests. Please bring a lawn chair with you unless you intend to sit on the ground, which might be wet. There will be opportunity for hands on participation in open hive inspections so be certain to bring your protective clothing, a veil at a minimum. If you have an extra veil, please bring it along to share with someone visiting without proper equipment. We will instruct in the method of lighting your smoker, the use of various hive tools to perform hive inspections, and give as many students as possible the opportunity to handle frames of live bees, while pointing out the sights to behold in an active honeybee hive. The weather and temperatures will have an impact on how much hive examination we can do; let's hope we get a nice warm, calm, sunny day. A soap making demonstration, using products of the hive, also is planned. The **raffle hive**, for the new Short Course students, will be drawn and awarded. We hope, if shipping works favorably, to install the package of bees that accompanies the raffle hive for all to see. Last chance tickets will be available at field day prior to the drawing.

Lunch! \$10 in advance!

There will be a southern BBQ style meal catered by a friend of Scott's who always provides great tasting and nutritious food, such as ribs, pulled BBQ, potato salad, cole slaw, hot dogs, and like stuff. There is a

meal ticket charge of \$10.00 per person. Please buy your meal tickets at the April 2nd meeting so we will know how many folks we will be feeding. Kids age 12 and under can eat free. We don't want to over order, but we don't want anyone that wishes to partake to go hungry either, so order ahead. **BUMBA** will provide a variety of complimentary beverages.

We intend to hold the field day to the best of our ability come what may; but, in the event of a solid forecast of frog strangling deluges of rain, the date will likely be postponed a week, or cancelled. The short course students and staff members will receive an alert via email if such weather looks eminent.

Thank you to Scott Seccomb for once again offering to host the field day at his home and apiary. It is a great place to hold a field day with many memories. Hope to see all the students there.

Directions

From Route 4:

Take Md. Route 4 west (towards DC) to the Woodyard Road exit (MD Rt 223).

At the bottom of the ramp turn left onto Woodyard Road (south).

Go about 2.3 miles (to the 3rd light) and veer right at the light where all the construction is/was (this is still Woodyard Rd.).

After you go around a couple of S turns, you will see **Don Drive** on the right and **TALL PINE TREES ON THE LEFT**. Just on the other side on the pine trees is a field and a gate. Do not park in the main driveway of the house! Enter the field through the gate, come back by the house and park anywhere you want.

From Route 5: Take Woodyard Road exit (MD Rt 223) towards Upper Marlboro/Mellwood.

Go past the Sunoco gas station at the 4-way light and continue until you see Resurrection Cemetery on the right.

After the 7th house on the right, past the cemetery and **across from Tangelwood Plant Nursery** is a field and a gate. Do not park in the main driveway of the house! Enter the field through the gate, come back by the house and park anywhere you want.

From I-495: Take the Washington Beltway to either Rt 4 or Rt 5 and follow directions above.

If you're lost!

Call Scott Seccomb, Cell 301-580-8031

Leader Needed for BUMBA's Outreach Program

David Morris

Two of the things that I feel make **BUMBA** a special club are the success and quality of our Beginning Beekeeping Course and our public outreach events. Our beekeeping class is well organized by **Bob Greenwell** and the **BUMBA Board** with classes conducted by many **BUMBA** volunteers.

Our outreach events present the positive image of beekeeping and honey bees that they need and deserve. The driving force behind this extremely successful publicity campaign for many years has been **Linda Thompson**. Now we need a new Outreach Program leader. It could be YOU!

The primary responsibility is to organize the **BUMBA** events calendar, identify organizers for each event and assist the organizers with getting equipment and volunteers.

If you think you could help the club with our events, either as our program leader, as an event organizer, or as a volunteer for an event near you, speak to an officer at the meeting, make a phone call, or send an email. The **BUMBA Officers** names and contact information is available on the last page of the newsletter.

BUMBA Outreach Events Scheduled!

Linda Thompson

Hello fellow beeks! I hope you all enjoyed this wonderful day - 50 degree respite from the crazy winter weather - as much as I did, and that your bees are hanging in there. I know they are looking forward to Spring as much as I am. Here is the info for the **Spring Outreach Events**. Please choose an event to volunteer for an hour or two and let me know. **BUMBA** has been attending these events for years. You know enough to talk about

bees. REALLY!

Thanks, in advance, for your support.

Sat, April 18, noon - 4pm: Spring Greening Fair

Mt Rainier Nature and Rec Center
4701 31st Pl, Mount Rainier 20712

A M-NCPPC event, at a nature center similar to Watkins; outdoors

Sat April 25, 10am - 4pm: Maryland Day

University of Maryland, College Park, 20742;
Regents and Farm Drive, across from horse barn, at entrance to Ag courtyard

Our largest event of the year! Hundreds of visitors of all ages get introduced to bees; **we need dozens of volunteers!**

<http://www.marylandday.umd.edu/>

Sat, May 9, 10am - 6pm & Sun, May 10, 11am - 5pm

Green Man Festival

Roosevelt Center, Greenbelt, 20770

2014 was our first year and we worked this event only on Sunday. I am inclined to only choose one day again this year, so please indicate which day you prefer and I will choose the day with the most volunteers.

<http://greenbeltgreenmanfestival.org/features.do>

Sat, May 16, noon - 4pm: A-MAY-Zing Animal Festival

Bladensburg Waterfront Park,
4601 Annapolis Rd, Bladensburg 20710

a beautiful setting; geared towards children

http://www.pgparcs.com/Things_To_Do/Nature/Bladensburg_Waterfront_Park.htm

Thanks again. I look forward to seeing you at an event. Please share a little of your time, and your voice, to help save the bees!

Linda Thompson (h) 301-352-3663 (c) 301-943-4368

LMTpublic@comcast.net

Short Course Graduates 56 Beekeepers

The **BUMBA Short Course** class of 2015 has been exciting and seems to have been well received among the students. I believe that this year's class of students has been particularly focused on learning the craft, and that **BUMBA** stands to gain a worthy influx of new beeks, intent on the pursuit of happiness via managing a few colonies of *Apis mellifera*. Thank you to the staff members who have made this year's class presentation successful. The staff and presenters consisted of **Leigh Walton, Jutta Dunaway, Debby Heyes, Linda Thompson, Tony Drake, Dave Polk, Jeff Forbes, Nikki Thompson, Gregg Gochnour, Maggie Mills, David Morris, and Toni Burham**. **Gerry Jones and Chuck Mewshaw** provided the club's extracting equipment. **Gerry Jones, Jutta Dunaway, and Bruce Murray** donated numerous door prizes as well as several of the large bee supply houses. Many thanks to **Brushy Mountain, Dadant, Mann Lake, and Betterbee**. We had an assemblage of auditors, including **David Clark, Nora Wixon, and Dave Jones**, who participated in the class with questions and anecdotal inclusions enjoyed by all. Several of the students helped with class set-up and breakdown. Even with our first inclement weather dilemma in remembered history, all went smoothly. There were others I'm sure I missed recording, and I apologize if I did not list your names...your presence and help were appreciated! We had 56 registered students this year. Many thanks to all involved.

Bob Greenwell

BUMBA CLASS OF 2015

Katie Ablard, Gijs Aarden, Joni Aarden, Monika Bachmann, Effie Baldwin, Glay Blocker, Ellery Brown, Linda Brown, Leslie Burks, Jessica Callahan, Rhonda Callahan, Karen Cowden, Tony Creamer, Beth Creamer, Robert Creamer, Leanne Kendig, John Donnelly, Thomas Dekornfeld, Kris Fegler, Melinda Fegler, Robert Frankenfield, Stephanie Frankenfield, Verna Gehring, Bridget Grier, Jill Hall, Clement Hey, Madolynn Jones, Elena Kozlowski, Nancy Murray, Meagan Lusby, Wendy Margolis, David Norken, Peter Misiewicz, Hollis Misiewicz, Chris Mayse, Terry Mayse, Tina Moczydlowski, David Nelson, Erica Nelson, Erika Newby, Kurt Pluntke, Larry Prikockis, Frank Ragsac, Jim Sauer, Jessica Shue, Donald Steward, Connie Trossbach, John Vu, Suzanne Wells,

Colleen White, Bill Wigton, Thunder Williams, Penny Williams, Laura Wixon, Delphine Youkharibache, Dan Zagone,

MEMBERS' CORNER

Phil Hazen's Bee Equipment

Phil's hanging up his smoker

Phil Hazen, long a member of **BUMBA** and longtime beekeeping friend, announced on, March 7, that he has made the decision that he has to give up his bees, due to physical limitations from a health perspective. He has provided a list of his offerings, and asked that it be posted on the forum in hopes that there may be items that would be of interest to some of the club members. As of March 7, there are 4 pages of items, including two hives with live bees, last time he checked. We are sorry that Phil has to leave beekeeping, but hopefully someone may benefit from his cache. Contact Phil or Ruth directly, phone (410) 867-4911 or email philruthhazen@verizon.net

You can view the full announcement by following this link:

www.bumbabees.com/forums/index.php?topic=270.0

BEES IN THE NEWS

April - National Colony Loss and Management Survey

www.beeinformed.org

It's that time of the year again. Flowers are coming into bloom and our bees are beginning to get a bit of cabin fever as they start to venture for new forage.

As April approaches and Spring gets its start the **2014 – 2015 National Colony Loss and National Management Survey** will be ready to accept submissions starting April 1st and continuing until April 30th. The results



that are received from this survey provide invaluable information that helps us obtain a clear picture of honey bee health throughout the country. Without the aid of the many beekeepers who participate in this survey we would never be able to obtain the results that we have received in the past and hope to continue to receive in the future. If you would like to take an early peek at the 2014 – 2015 survey questions, or download the survey so that you can take some notes, click on the link below:

[2014 – 2015 National Colony Loss and Management Survey Preview](#)

This copy of the survey is meant to serve as an aid and early preview of the questions that will be asked on the survey. It is not meant to be mailed in as a hard copy submission.

We would like to thank everyone who has participated in this survey in the past and hope that you will be able to take some time out of your busy days to fill out the survey this year. To sign up for an email reminder when the survey is launched on April 1st, please follow the link below:

[Sign Up for a Survey Email Alert](#)

Excerpts from “Catch the Buzz” at BeeCulture.com

Colony Count, Honey Production and Honey Prices Up In 2014

Released March 20, 2015, by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, USDA

United States Honey Production Up 19 Percent

Honey production in 2014 from producers with five or more colonies totaled 178 million pounds, up 19 percent from 2013. There were 2.74 million colonies producing honey in 2014, up 4 percent from 2013. Yield per colony averaged 65.1 pounds, up 15 percent from the 56.6 pounds in 2013. Colonies which produced honey in more than one State were counted in each State where the honey was produced. Therefore, at the United States level yield per colony may be understated, but total production would not be impacted. Colonies were not included if honey was not harvested. Producer honey stocks were 41.2 million pounds on December 15, 2014, up 8 percent from a year earlier. Stocks held by producers exclude those held under the commodity loan program.

Record High Honey Prices

Honey prices increased to a record high during 2014 to 216.1 cents per pound, up 1 percent from 214.1 cents per pound in 2013. United States and State level prices reflect the portions of honey sold through cooperatives, private, and retail channels. Prices for each color class are derived by weighting the quantities sold for each marketing channel. Prices for the 2013 crop reflect honey sold in 2013 and 2014. Some 2013 crop honey was sold in 2014, which caused some revisions to the 2013 crop prices.

Excerpts from "ABJ Extra" at Dadant.com

EPA Okays Oxalic Acid for Varroa Mite Control

Registration Decision for the New Active Ingredient Oxalic Acid

Summary *{the following is greatly condensed, editor}*

This document announces the decision by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to register the new active ingredient oxalic acid for use against the Varroa mite, a parasite on honeybees. ... Due to the significant problems this parasite poses for honeybees, the EPA review of the application was conducted under a greatly expedited process.

Background

Application for Registration: The Varroa mite, *Varroa destructor*, is a serious and devastating pest of honeybee colonies. Varroa mites are parasites that feed on developing bees (larvae and pupae; brood) leading to brood mortality and the reduction of the lifespan of workers that were parasitized during development.... Thus, the health of a colony can be critically impacted by an infestation of Varroa, if the colony is not treated, it will likely die.

Evaluation: Oxalic acid dihydrate (the crystalline form) is a dicarboxylic acid, which is a relatively strong organic acid. Oxalic acid is ubiquitous in the environment being found naturally in many plants and vegetables, as well as in honey. It occurs naturally as the potassium or calcium salt in sap, notably in plants of the Oxalis and Rumex families.

Assessment of Risk to Human Health: The use pattern for this compound is in beehives when honey supers are not present. Dietary exposure from the proposed use as an in-hive application will be indistinguishable from naturally occurring levels of oxalic acid. In fact,

oxalic acid is a natural constituent of honey and is commonly found in the range of 1 mg/kg to 800 mg/kg.

In evaluating the risk to applicators, **EPA notes that oxalic acid is corrosive to the eyes and skin and has been placed in Toxicity Category I, indicating the highest degree of toxicity.** It is also highly irritating and damaging to the respiratory system if inhaled. Thus, the product label will carry the "Danger" signal word. In addition to the standard beekeeping suit (veil, long-sleeved shirt, long pants and gloves) as personal protective equipment, **a respirator and goggles are required.**

Application Methods and Labeling: Oxalic acid will be labeled for application by three different methods:

By Solution to Package Bees (Oxalic acid in sugar solution is applied as a spray to the package)

By Solution to Beehives (Oxalic acid in sugar solution is trickled between frames and other spaces)

Vapor Treatment of Beehives (Oxalic acid dihydrate is heated and the vapor sublimates in the hive)

Efficacy and Mode of Action: Oxalic acid is shown to be a tool with high potential benefit for control of Varroa mite in honeybee colonies. Evaluated data demonstrated that Oxalic Acid Dihydrate can provide 90-99% control of Varroa mites in honeybee colonies when either the sugar solution treatment or vaporization application methods are used in the late fall to early spring, and for treating packaged bees to ensure that a beekeeper is not introducing phoretic mites into healthy hives.

Since Varroa populations have quickly developed resistance to registered chemicals, the Agency required the following language on the label that advises pesticide users to manage applications effectively to minimize the likelihood of developing resistance to oxalic acid or any chemical used in hives to control Varroa mites.

Any Varroa mite population has the potential to become resistant to acaricides. Resistance development is affected by both the frequency of application and rate/dose of application. Continued reliance on a single class of miticide or single miticide with the same mode of action will select for resistant individuals which may dominate the mite population in subsequent generations. In order to prevent resistance development and to maintain the usefulness of individual acaricides it is important to adopt appropriate resistance management strategies.

To delay resistance:

When possible, rotate the use of miticides to reduce selection pressure as compared to repeatedly using the same product, mode or action or chemical class. If multiple applications are required, use a different mode of action each time before returning to a previously-used one.

Base miticide use on Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This includes proper pest identification, monitoring for locality specific economic threshold and economic injury levels, record keeping, and utilizing all available control practices (cultural, biological and chemical).

Maximize efficacy by following all label instructions including dosage and timing of application.

Club Programs

BUMBA has initiated several programs over the years and we are always looking for members' assistance. For more information about a program please contact an officer.

FREE STATE Bee Supply

Your local bee supply dealer

Free State Bees, 2420 Mill Hill Rd

Waldorf, MD 20603-3752

Phone: 301-580-9313.

Email: Freestatebees@gmail.com

Call or email if you have any questions.

Please be sure to call ahead to set up a time to visit! As always, thank you for your continued support!

Dave and Laura Polk

BUMBA Extractor for members' use

BUMBA now has two honey extractors for members to use. The extractor managers are **Chuck Mewshaw** (ctmmaw@aol.com, 301-249-3229) and **Gerry Jones** (gejones486@verizon.net, 301-577-1365). Each

has a complete set of equipment. The Board has established an extractor agreement, rules, and cleaning instructions. Copies are available from the managers. To reserve the equipment, call the managers, bring a \$50 refundable deposit (cash or check upon pickup), and sign the use agreement and inventory form. Please be sure to read what you are signing☺. The first 4 days are free!

Chuck and Gerry report that the extractor was been borrowed 6 times in 2014. The extractors have always been returned on time and in good shape. To reserve your use of either of the extractors, simply email or call Chuck or Gerry!

www.BUMBAbees.com

Check out the club web site maintained by **Toni Burnham**, www.bumbabees.com. You will find meeting schedules, newsletters, information and membership application forms (payments are still by mail or at a meeting.) *We need content, pictures, ideas, suggestions and help with administration.* If you have any interesting photos to add to the photo gallery, send them with a short description or story to Toni at phang@tonitoni.org.

www.BUMBAbees.com/forums

Check out a new feature. Thanks to **Scott Seccomb** and **Toni Burnham**, we have a private web forum on the BUMBA web page for members' use.

Electronic Newsletter

As with all organizations cost cutting is always on the table. One way we reduce our expenses is by eliminating the printed newsletter mailed 6 times a year at a cost of roughly \$1 per newsletter. People who don't have email, of course, continue to receive it. If you are willing to depend on email delivery, please inform our editor, **David Morris**, via email. Help keep club \$\$'s in the bank for club activities

Notice of your dues will either be on your label or in your email message

Every club needs a little money to keep it going. Although BUMBA is solvent, dues are needed to cover meeting room rental, speakers, refreshments and the newsletter. **BUMBA** annual dues are **\$15**. Please remember to bring your dues (**checks preferred**) to the next meeting. Consider paying for two years, as a commitment to beekeeping. Jutta loves to find checks in the mailbox, so you can mail your dues to:

Jutta Dunaway, **BUMBA** Treas., 11814 GALAXY LANE, BOWIE, MD 20715

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

Check if you are willing to help out with a club activity or program
Jutta will not be at the April meeting. Debbie Hayes and Linda Thompson will be accepting dues at the meeting. Please have a check, or \$15 cash.

Bowie-Upper Marlboro Beekeepers Association Officers			
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MSBA Pres.	Toni Burnham	202-255-4318	dcbees@dcbeekeepers.org

BUMBA Meets at – Watkins Park Nature Center

BUMBA annual dues are \$15. Our regular meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of the even months at the **Watkins Park Nature Center, 301 Watkins Park Drive in Largo**. From Route 301 or I-495 take Central Ave. (Rte 214) to the intersection with Enterprise Rd. (Rte 193). Turn south onto Watkins Park Dr. and go ½ mile to the park. Follow the road all the way to the back to the Nature Center. We thank the Nature Center Staff for their assistance.
For information about the Nature Center, please call **301-218-6702**

Club Calendar

Put these dates on your **2015 BUMBA** Calendar:

- April 2, 7:30-10, BUMBA Mtg
- April 11, BUMBA Field Day
- June 4, 7:30-10, BUMBA Mtg
- June 13, MSBA Summer Mtg
- August 6, 7:30-10, BUMBA Mtg
- August 10-14, EAS Conference
- October 1, 7:30-10, BUMBA Mtg
- November ??, MSBA Fall Mtg
- December 3, 7:30-10, BUMBA Mtg

David Morris, BUMBA Editor
9309 Montpelier Drive
Laurel, MD 20708-2553

BUMBA EXTRA!

The Oil Bees of Costa Rica

By Tim McMahon

It's late February and I'm writing this article here on my last day in Bagaces Costa Rica not wanting to come home. Not only do I not want to leave chasing bees around the dry Guanacaste region of Costa Rica but the weather channel shows that it was 2 degrees in Maryland this morning. That's a 90 degree difference from Costa Rica (makes you think about emigrating).

Oil bees, the genera of *Centris* and *Epicharis*, are native to much warmer and mostly tropical climates. Oil bees are solitary bees that use oil as plugs to separate individual nesting pollen balls in their nest which are either in the ground or in empty holes in wood (much like the leafcutter bees, *Megachile*, who use leaflets to plug the holes or the mason bees, *Osmia*, who use mud to plug the holes). The oil may also be added to the pollen for the larvae to eat, but more research is needed here. The oil bees have very hairy hide legs (called scopal hairs) to carry pollen and also to carry oil when needed.

A professor Dr. Gordon Frankie and his team from UC Berkley have multiple pieces of research work going on at the same time in

California and Costa Rica. The team on this trip was made up of Prof. Gordon Frankie, Dr. Rollin Coville, researcher Sara Leon Guerrero and the full time local biologist Louis who is a local who does the bee work full time for the team in Costa Rica doing the day-to-day observations and counts. The team is doing work on bee pollination in gardens in California (see his new book,

"California Bees and Blooms: A Guide for Gardeners and Naturalists") and in Costa Rica, work on general pollination of various plants and outreach to the public and children on the importance of native pollinators. On top of all this, Prof. Gordon Frankie is a world expert on *Centris* bees. I had the good fortune to take a native bee class last year from Prof. Gordon Frankie and others. At the class given on native bees, I found out about the three trips a year that Dr. Frankie makes to Costa Rica every year to study pollination, *Centris* bees and other facets of native bees. Well me being who I am, I volunteer to work on one of the Costa Rica trips ☺ !!!

I arranged to spend two weeks volunteering doing anything needed on the dry season trip. Bagaces, Costa Rica, is in the northwest part of the country and has a dry season from November to April. At this time of year the weather moves from the Caribbean westward, but the moisture fails to make it over the mountains and volcanoes to the northwest part of Costa Rica. It's during the dry season that many of the local plants and trees bloom and are pollinated. When I arrived at the airport in Costa Rica, it was only a 15 mile drive to where we were staying but none the less I saw several hundred birds on the way and it seemed that no more than two seemed to be of the same species (other than chickens, which seem to be everywhere).

Costa Rica makes up only 0.1% of the total world landmass but 5% of all species worldwide are represented here, one of the highest bio diversities' anywhere on the planet, and it shows. I saw groups of wild monkeys, howlers and white faced, almost every day. I saw lizards and mammals that I didn't know

the names of. And even though Costa Rica is only slightly larger than the state of Maryland, it has over 800 species of native bees, most of which I had not even heard the genera names before as they don't show up in the US, at least not east of the Mississippi. The genera names are also all tongue twisters and sometimes fun to say if you've had too much to drink, such as *Ancyloscelis*, *Euglossa*,



Figure 1 Male *Ancyloscelis* lifting off of an *Ipomoea* vine (Morning Glory)

Centris, Eulaema, Tetratrigona, Ptiloglossa, Epicharis, Nannotrigona, Exomalopsis, Gaesishia, Mesoplia, Cephalotrigona, Plebia, Scaptotrigona and Anthodiocites. I've done lots of work with local native bees here in Maryland over the past two years, and the range of native bees in Costa Rica just made my head spin. I was in heaven! Even with just my cell phone camera, I was able to get some fantastic pictures.



Figure 2 Africanized Honey Bee on Black Flow of Macropitillium Nance (Brysonima crassifolia) the major oil producing tree of the Centris bees, and off of Andria inermis and Roble (Tabebuia rosea) trees.

Over the two weeks here in Costa Rica I helped to do things such as record native plant bloom records, collecting bees samples off of plants and trees such as Morning Glory (*Ipomoea trifida*), *Macropitillium* a local weed

with a black flower,



Picture 3: Social Stingless Bee Trigona

We did bee genus visitation counts of some of the plants. The count process was selecting three different 1.5 meter square plots of flowering plants and counting how many bees of various genera visited the patch in a three minute period, we did this every half hour for an entire morning. We saw Africanized honey bees (*Apis mellifera scutellata*) everywhere. The feral Africanized honey bee has done very well in Costa Rica; however, in the town I was staying, Bagaces, with a population just over 5000, no one kept honey bees, which seems to be the norm for the country. No one really tries to keep honey bees here as it's just too much work and most people are doing moderately well financially without trying to work Africanized bees.



Picture 4: Team Member Louis collecting bees off of a tree.

One of the other things we did here was set out trap nests for Centris and Megachilidae bees. It was amazing how fast the bees could fill up a block of wood with a hole drilled in it. The nests we put out one day would be more than half full a week later. The bees did not seem to mind humans standing right next to the nest as they flew back and forth bringing pollen to the nest to form a pollen ball to lay an egg on. You could even watch a Centris bee bring back oil and put the final exterior plug on the nest. To make the final plug, the Centris bee places an amount of oil just inside the entrance and then backs her abdomen in to the oil and blows air out her

hind spiracles to foam up the oil, just like it was mayonnaise, with the oil hardening into a plug after a period of time. The trap nest are collected by the team, sorted by bee type (told by hole size, color and texture of the plug) and a glass test tube is taped on top (see pic).



Picture 5: Trap nests with test tubes taped on the plug ends These trap nests are then saved for a year until the new bees emerge out and counts are done on number of bees emerging, species type, sex and date of emergence before releasing the bees out to start the whole process over again.



Picture 6: Some of the bees collected on the 2015 dry season trip



Picture 7: One of the fields where counts and collections were done (volcano in background with steam rising from vents in the side of the volcano)

Spending two weeks seeing some exotic bees in a tropical location is what bees are all about! ☺