

THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

Volume 11, Issue 1

January 2019

What's the Buzz?

Our next meeting will be on Thursday January 3, 2019 at the American Legion Log Cabin, 20 Veterans Place, San Anselmo, CA. starting at 7:30 pm. The meeting will feature Ramesh Sagili, Oregon State University, Department of Horticulture. His talk will be "Honey Bee Nutrition: What We Know, What We Need to Know"

Upcoming Meetings:

February 7, 2019

[Leo Sharaskin](#), Horizontal Hives, "Natural Beekeeping". Leo will also hold workshops on Saturday, February 9th.

March 7, 2019

[Billy Synk](#), Director of Pollination Programs, Project Apis m, "Supporting Pollinator Habitat"

April 4, 2019

[Rachael Bonoan](#), Post doctoral researcher, Tufts University and Washington State University, "Why Bees Like Dirty Water"

May 2, 2019

[Mark Winston](#), Professor and Senior Fellow, Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue

June 6, 2019

[Tom Seeley](#), Department of Neurobiology and Behavior, Cornell University, "Darwinian Beekeeping"

July

No meeting – Marin County Fair

What You Missed

Our last meeting featured a presentation by Marin Beekeepers Club members of several alternative hive designs.

Hive Designs

Mike Turner – Flow Hive

It is not public enemy number one. It is an 8 frame hive. It mostly looks like a Langstroth. It comes with one brood box. Mike recommends getting a second brood box. To provide enough bees to produce *honey*, it would probably take at least a year for the bees to build up the hive.

Frames are all plastic in two pieces. There are removable pieces on the back that you take off to access the top and bottom of the frames. The bottom of the frames has a trough that catches the honey. There is a tube that attaches to the trough. There is a wrench that you use to split the frame enough to allow the honey to flow into the trough. Honey tend to flow out quickly especially on a hot day.

The flow hive box has lots of pieces. It is mostly a novelty.

See What You Missed continued on Page 2

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**Trying Out a Flow Hive Frame
(Skep Hive in the Background)**

Volker Ackerman – Tanzanian Top Bar Hives

Tanzanian top bar hives have vertical sides. They are compatible with Langstroth parts. They are easy and cheap to build on your own. Volker made his boxes deeper so that bees can build a more natural longer comb. You can make splits by putting in a division board and creating more entrances (makes two or more colonies in the same hive).

Simple equipment but more work to keep bees than Langstroth. Not necessarily for beginners.

Charlie Kennard– Skep Hives

Skep hives are woven out of natural grass/reeds. Charlie's interest in skep hives evolved from his basket weaving hobby. Skeps were the poor man's bee container. They are made out of natural materials that are easy to find. Usually they were covered in cow dung for water resistance or were placed in a sheltered area. They are naturally strong. They can get heavy when they are full of bees and comb. Harvesting the

honey from a skep hive usually entails destroying the colony to remove the comb but it is possible to cut out a portion of the honey comb. You can also shake all the bees out and then harvest the honey.

Skep hives are not legal to keep bees in because the comb cannot be removed for inspection.

Michael Thiele

Arboreal Hives – They are made from a portion of tree trunk. A chain saw is used to cut a hole along the grain of the section of log (soft wood). Michael then finishes the nest with hand tools. The hives are usually about 40 liters in volume. He builds the top and bottom with cork insulating panels. Roofs are curved to drain. He drills several entrance holes and treats the inside with a propolis tincture. Hangs in trees (approximately 10 ft. above the ground) and relies on swarms to populate the log hives.

Website has schematics to build log hives.
www.apisaboreal.com

Beeglobe Hive - A series of round frames of various size to create a ball.

Beekeeping Classes

Classes with Bonnie Morse:

Beginner Beekeeping class series (9 hours, \$119)
Know you want to keep bees? Classroom sessions will include basic bee information, seasonal cycles of a colony, equipment options, where to place your hive, how to get bees and tips on working with your equipment. When the weather warms up, there will be a field session so you can observe and practice working with your tools and bees.

\$30 discount if you already took the Backyard Beekeeping Class. Some of the information will be repetitive, but there's a lot of information, so probably not a bad thing!

Class room sessions: Saturdays, January 26 & February 2, 9am – 12pm (2 classes, drop in fee = \$50/class, if space available)

Field Day: Sat., March 16, 9:30am – 12:30pm, location TBD, tent. San Geronimo (drop in fee = \$60, register in advance to get address and additional information) Rain date March 23.

Register through [The Fairfax Backyard Farmer](#). Limited to 12 people.

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Intermediate Beekeeping class series (9 hours, \$119)

You've got your colony through winter (or not) – now what? Class sessions will include how to clean up your equipment, expanding hive size for spring, swarm prevention- and if that fails, swarm capture, setting up bait hives for swarms, identification of common pest and diseases and management options for them. Topics will also include dealing with special situations: aggressive hives, queen failures, and laying workers. Field day will include information on how to split a colony, pest and disease ID, and swarm prevention.

Class room sessions: Sundays, February 10 & 17, 9am – 12pm (2 classes, drop in fee = \$50/class, if space available)

Field Day: Sat., March 16, 1:30pm – 4:30pm, location TBD, tent. San Geronimo (drop in fee = \$60, register in advance to get address and additional information) Rain date March 23.

Register through [The Fairfax Backyard Farmer](#). Limited to 12 people.

Skep-making workshop with Charlie Kennard

DATE: February 10, 2019

TIME: 9:30 am - 4:00 pm

LOCATION: Marin Art and Garden Center, Ross

We will use a roadside grass, or rush, to begin a bowl-shaped basket, using a skep-making technique. Sleps also make excellent swarm-catchers. In the lunch break, we will have the opportunity to visit Charlie's apiary in the garden.

Participants should bring a water bowl (a 9" round cake pan is ideal for many basket projects), a pocket knife, large scissors, and small wire clippers (optional). Also bring a lunch. If the weather is fine, we may be outside, so bring suitable clothing.

To register, visit <https://magc.org/events/skep-making-workshop-with-charlie-kennard/>

Farm Day

Marin County Farm Day 2019

Thursday, March 21, 2019

9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon

Marin Center Exhibition Hall

For those who are interested in participating at our Marin Beekeepers Farm Day exhibit and like to plan ahead, please mark your calendar.

More information will appear in next months's BEEK. You can also go to:

http://cemarlin.ucanr.edu/Program/4-H_Program/Farm_Day_98/ or contact Steve Lamb at stlamb1@gmail.com.

Hive Tips

By Bonnie Morse, [Bonnie Bee & Company](#)

By now, you've hopefully made sure your hive is queenright and ready for winter. Unless there is good reason (extreme weather events, for example) to do otherwise, it's now best to let the bees alone.

Inspecting hives now will break propolis seals (which will be hard for bees to repair in cold temperatures) and release heat needed to keep the brood warm. If the cluster is small, the latter could prove disastrous as they may have difficulty bringing temperature back up.

For the curious, you can find out a lot of information without opening the hive. Put your ear up to the side and knock gently. What kind of buzz do you hear? Does it sound like a large cluster or a few sporadic bees?

Try to lift one end of the hive. Is it heavy with stores? Or is it light and lifted with ease? If you have a screened bottom board, what do you see on the monitoring board? From debris, can you see if the size of the cluster is the same, smaller or larger than when you looked last? Do you see dark cappings from brood emerging? Or lighter cappings where stored food is being consumed?

The eucalyptis is blooming. If you have a strong hive, they may even make you a little winter honey!



Observing Bee Activity

Membership Renewal

Time to Renew Your Membership

If you have already renewed for 2019 or joined after November 1, you can disregard this notice.

Membership dues remain at \$20.00 for another year. Memberships include all family members residing in the same domicile and are for the calendar year. Those new members joining after NOVEMBER 1 are paid through all of 2019. Renewals are due by the January meeting and delinquent after the February meeting. In mid February, we will purge the Buzz, Swarm and BeekAdmin list subscribers who have not renewed by that time.

The best and easiest way to pay your 2019 dues is online at www.marinbeekeepers.org. You do not need to sign in or use a password. Just click on "become a member", fill out the form and submit. Be sure to complete the payment section at the end, which is via PayPal. You do not need to have a PayPal account to pay using a credit card. There is a small transaction fee added to your dues that is assessed by PayPal.

Or you can mail a check payable to Marin Beekeepers to our Treasurer:

Mary Nordquist
2072 Hatch Rd.
Novato, CA 94947

Of course, you can always renew at the door when you come to the monthly meetings by cash, check, or credit card.

From the Librarian's Desk

Many thanks to the many donors, bidders & buyers at our fundraiser in December. Your generosity resulted in a \$725 donation to Bees for Development. The funds will support their mission of creating food, income & employment through beekeeping in the world's poorest regions. For more information on Bees for Development go to:

<http://www.beesfordevelopment.org/>



Bargain Table at December Meeting

Editor's Note: Kudos to Marina for arranging and conducting the silent auction. Well done!