

The Shore Swarm

The Newsletter of the Beekeepers Guild of the Eastern Shore – March 2019



From George Brown, President:

"Beware the ides of March." This iconic phrase, made popular by William Shakespeare's "The Tragedy of Julius Caesar," could have just as easily been written by Shakespeare had he decided to write a play about beekeeping. In Roman times, Kalends, Nones and Ides were ancient markers used to reference dates in relation to lunar phases. Ides simply referred to the first full moon of a given month, which usually fell between the 13th and 15th. In fact, the Ides of March once signified the new year, which meant celebrations and rejoicing.

Since Shakespeare, the phrase has been associated with doom. In the play, the soothsayer utters these words to Caesar warning him of his impending assassination. For beekeepers in the temperate latitudes, The Ides of March (and March in general) has always been associated with doom. This is because our bees are coming out of the long dark winter, having likely exhausted their stores of honey. Moreover, the queen has become active laying eggs, meaning pollen is in demand for feeding the young larvae. March here on the shore can be mild and sunny or, as it is today (Friday, 1 March), cold and rainy. A day like today is not one allowing for foraging, so no pollen will be coming into a starving hive.


Due to the unpredictability of the weather and the almost certain need for Honey Bee nourishment, March can be the most difficult month of all for beekeepers. We may be thrilled our hives have made it through the bitter cold, windy days of Winter. We notice longer days and maybe even see some blooming Dandelions. We euphorically yet incorrectly believe "they made it," only to lose the hive unexpectedly.

So, what can you as a beekeeper do? "Beware the ides of March." Pay attention to your hives. Watch for activity on warmer, sunnier days. Open your hives when weather permits and look for young brood and hopefully some stored pollen. And, if your hives are nearly empty of honey, feed, feed, feed!

When all else fails (and it inevitably will one year), get your orders in for new packages or nucs. Sadly, that's what I'll be doing for the first time since 2014.

Beginning Beekeeping Class

*2 Saturdays: March 9 and March 16
8:30 – 1:30, Historic Onancock School*

All members are welcome and encouraged to come and help! 

From Leilani:

March has arrived and that means it's time for our annual New Beekeeper's Class being held on March 9 & 16 at the Historic Onancock School. We have 15 people signed up and are hoping for a few more before the cut-off date which is Friday, March 8. If you know of anyone that might be interested have them sign up as soon as possible so we have an accurate count. For those that signed up to donate food someone will be in touch with you soon.

Where to get Honey Bees

We've been hearing of significant losses of honey bees among our members. If you know you'll be needing new bees this spring, here are some sources that we've researched:

Back Forty Bees

www.backfortybees.com

\$3000 for 25 packages (\$120 each)

Pick up in Williamsburg, VA on 11 April. New member Brenden Kettner has ordered a nuc and will probably be going to pick it up in May/June.

Royall D Farms

www.royallbees.com

Packages (\$100 each up to 31 January) in April, Nucs in May
Must pick up in Quinton, VA just east of Richmond, 4/20, 4/27 or 5/7. Jen Lewis has ordered a package and will be going to pick it up on 4/6, but that date is no longer available for new orders.

Sharon Tanner

lunamoth53@yahoo.com

Nucs for April/May delivery
\$175 each
Pick up in Portsmouth, VA
757-718-3581

Hands On Beekeepers

www.handsonbeekeepers.com

Steve and Kacey Jones
sales@handsonbeekeepers.com
757-408-5201

Pricing and dates TBD but they plan to be at our class on 16 March and at our April 6th regular meeting. Perhaps they could bring the bees if they have them that soon.

Local BGES Members – some members may be willing to split their hives and raise nucs to sell. Timing would likely be May and prices and availability would vary.

Licho – Nucs in early April for \$140 each, a very fair price. Says he will have 700 for sale! Phone or text him at 757-709-8963. Email is lichos@vesabees.com

In addition, we recently received this note:

Greetings fellow beekeepers,

My name is Ann Baker and I am your Southern neighbor in Virginia Beach. I copied your email addresses from your bee guild site to introduce myself and my bees to you. I am working with my business partner, Sharon Tanner and we are selling 5 frame deep bee nucs in weather resistant plastic core nuc boxes. No frame exchange is necessary. Our bees overwinter in South Carolina and are a robust hybrid of Italian/Carniolan with an intolerant attitude towards mites.

We are completely compliant with all state laws and all bees come with the appropriate credentials.

Please have a look at our website;
www.ncvabeenucs.com

Should your area find itself in need for more bees for this upcoming bee season, please consider our company to fulfill any orders that your already in place apiaries may not be able to provide. We are charging \$175 per nuc and will offer volume discount and free delivery for substantial orders. 501C3 bee groups are tax exempt.

Kind regards,

Ann Baker 757-641-4433

Sharon Tanner 757-718-3581

Eastern Apicultural Society Meeting This Summer in Greenville, South Carolina!

Last summer several of our members attended this annual gathering of beekeepers of all kinds from all over the world. It's a hugely rewarding experience, and we recommend it! Please consider attending.



Eastern Apicultural Society 2019

South Carolina
EAS 2019
July 15th - 19th

Healthy Honey Bees,
Healthy Planet

Hilton

GREENVILLE
CONVENTION CENTER

July 15 - 19, 2019, Greenville, SC

www.easternapiculture.org

Dr. Dewey M. Caron
Dr. Kirsten Traynor
Dr. Geoff Williams
Dr. Meghan Mibrath
Jennifer Berry
Dr. Jay Evans

Major Beekeeping Suppliers and Artisans

Friday Night Banquet with Speaker, New EAS President

EAS 2019 July 15-19 Greenville, SC

30 LIVE Hives for on site, hands on training

2 Day Short Course
Different Learning Tracks

EAS Master Beekeeping Program Testing & Certification

Elaborate display of Honey, Food Exhibits, Gadgets & Artwork

EAS 2019 3 Day Main Conference

And closer to home....

Virginia State Beekeepers Association

Spring Meeting

May 31st – June 1st

Fredericksburg Hospitality House

Fredericksburg, Virginia

More information coming later

Save the date!

Bee Losses

Many of us have participated in the “Bee Informed” honey bee surveys each year. This is the best effort possible to track colony losses nation-wide, and to try to establish correlations between beekeeper practices and colony health.

2017-2018 is the most recent survey and its data is interesting. Virginia’s beekeepers participate in a bigger way in this survey than most other states, and we also experienced greater losses last winter than almost any other state. Our loss rate was 59.46%.

At our next meeting in April, we’ll be conducting our own casual survey of bee survival for the current year.

Bee Havens

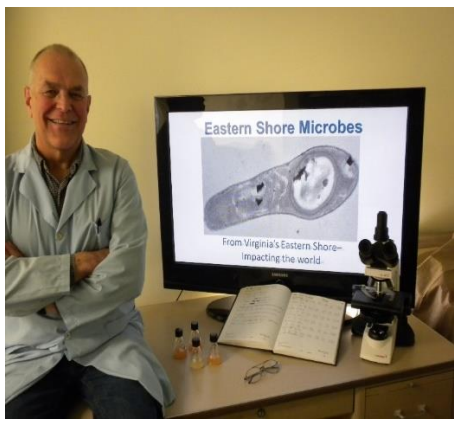
In February, BGES met at the Theater Annex in Chincoteague. It was a great place to meet and our Chincoteague members were very gracious hosts. Our various meeting places are widely spaced on the shore, and attract different members. It’s good to meet so many northern beekeepers.

George showed us something he’s been interested in: using a heat source in a hive to raise the temperature slightly and briefly. At a specific temperature varroa mites can be killed without apparent harm to the resident bees. His prototype for this was ingenious, and it will be interesting to hear more.

Bettina Dembek shared a business idea that she has been developing. A lot of thinking, planning, registering and paper work has gone into an enterprise she calls **Bee Havens**. Bettina invites us to consider participating, especially as our colonies grow strong and have surplus honey. Bee Havens would market our particular honeys as artisanal products to consumers with particular interest in learning more about bees and supporting beekeepers.

Best o’luck to George and Bettina, thanks for sharing your work, and we look forward to hearing more.

And finally, our own Russell Vreeland is also incubating a new business and asks for your support...



Vote For Us

As Fedex Small Business of the year

EASTERN SHORE MICROBES

A Small Business in Accomac County – Virginia's Eastern Shore

PROFILE:

ESM owns the world's only sustainable, green process that cleans and evaporates salt brine. Waste waters to lithium brines all fair game.

CONTACT: DR. RUSSELL H. VREELAND

PHONE:

757 – 387 - 7530

WEBSITE:

www.esmicrobes.com

EMAIL:

Russell Vreeland

Rvreeland.esm@gmail.com or

Scott Pierce

Sgpierce.esm@outlook.com

Our Goals

Over 100 billion gallons of contaminated very salty wastewater are produced each year. I have seen huge lagoons overflowing with disgusting, brine. Other disposal methods damage the environment or need expensive machines. ESM's microbes eat the waste and heat the brine to solve the problem. We use no external energy and no additional building. Raw materials are local but 95% of revenue is from beyond Virginia. We work to help restore the environment while building the economy of our rural home.

HOW WILL IT HELP?

This FEDEX grant will help introduce this green process to more markets in a cost effective manner. We produce large amounts of microbes and nutrients, all of which are bulk shipped to other states and countries. This is a paradigm shifting process that we help non-microbiologist clients understand. The grant and business services will help us educate our clients on a sustainable way to clean up their mess, while also showing people what harmless microbes can really do and how well they can do it!

How to Vote for Eastern Shore Microbes:

You and your friends can: vote once from each email address every 24 hours from now until 1 April! The winners are announced on 29 April 2019.

Paste this address in your Browser; search Eastern Shore Microbes; click the link and vote! You must go through the search each day (they won't do shortcuts to prevent robot voting): <https://smallbusinessgrant.fedex.com/#/gallery>

WE THANK YOU!

