



## GREENE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS



Have enough supplies and jars available; it's time to harvest honey!



Prevent swarming by making sure there is enough room for the bees.



Continue to prevent pests and disease.



Do you have a re-queening plan for each hive?

## GREENE BEE NEWSLETTER JUNE 2026



### Inside This Issue:

- June Tasks p 1
- June Guest Speaker p 2
- Bee Aware: Odds and Ends p 3
- President's Message p 4
- Articles p 5
- Beekeeper's Library p 9
- Upcoming Events p 10

Editor Penny Hogan  
GCBA Communications Director  
Mobile/Text: 9374776457 or pennyxenia44@gmail.com

<https://gcbeekeepers.org>

[GCBA Email](#)

# JUNE 2026 SPEAKER

June 16, 2026; 7:00 PM; In-Person Meeting and Speaker  
Xenia Community Center, 1265 W. 2nd. St., Xenia, Ohio

## BARB BLOETSCHER



Retired State Apiarist and Entomologist with Ohio Department of Agriculture beginning in 2009. Prior she worked 23 years at The Ohio State University Extension. As the Ohio State Apiarist, she oversaw the Apiary Program and addressed questions and issues related to the Inspection Program, honey bees and other pollinators. She also identifies insects and other arthropods submitted from Ohio Nursery inspectors and businesses. Barb has kept her own colonies of honey bees for over 35 years and belongs to several beekeeping clubs as well as The Ohio Lepidopterists and other insect related organizations. Barb will be presenting on “Minor Honeybee Disease”, the non-varroa pests and diseases that we are challenged with. She will provide tips on identifying these problems and solutions for control.



# Bee Aware: Odds and Ends

June 2026

By: Bill Starrett

In a sense a beekeeper is preparing his colonies for next winter when the season begins in early Spring. To make the most of any honey flow whether it is minor or heavy, nothing is better than a healthy colony headed by a young productive queen. A maximum population when the nectar flow begins will result in a good honey crop under the worst weather conditions. And what food reserves the colony has collected by June 15 in Greene County is what they will have available for food throughout the coming winter. Why do I say that when most of the summer is still to come? Because what nectar is typically available after June 15 in Greene County is only enough to maintain daily needs, NOT ENOUGH TO STORE A SURPLUS OR TO DRAW FOUNDATION INTO COMB. If the bees don't have enough by June 15 they don't have enough to winter successfully. What that means from a colony management perspective is that one should join less populous colonies and swarms with stronger colonies (reduces or eliminates summer feeding) to salvage the bees rather than let them probably perish during the winter from lack of food or inadequate population. In other words, take your losses by the fall of the year so you have none in the Spring and the process of completing that begins following the middle of June. When harvesting honey, never leave less than the colony needs to winter successfully. What nectar will be available throughout the remainder of the summer is unknown, unpredictable, and will most likely never materialize based on local honey flow experience. That may be different in other localities or parts of the state where secondary honey flows occur.

The remainder of the summer should be spent consolidating colonies, requeening so colonies have a young queen to produce a large population of winter "fat" bees, treating for varroa so the colony has healthy bees raising healthy winter bees, and to reduce the number of varroa in the colony so in the Spring when bee and varroa reproduction is at their greatest levels there are fewer varroa to reproduce. And of course, upgrading beekeeping equipment.



**CAUTION: BEEKEEPERS NOTORIOUSLY RESIST REDUCING COLONY NUMBERS TO IMPROVE WINTERING SURVIVAL IN FAVOR OF TRYING TO WINTER WEAK COLONIES IN THE HOPES OF HAVING MORE COLONIES IN THE SPRING.**

## President's Message

June 2026



We are now into the month of June; 2026 is almost half over. Bee colonies are pretty large and still growing. Hives are getting heavy with honey. Varroa counts are also growing so keep that in mind.

At the end of April, I had 3 active hives ... one survivor from last year, one split from that colony and one caught swarm. By mid-May I had 10 total hives with 8 from newly captured swarms. My research, planning and preparation to catch swarms clearly paid off. It seems I'll be expanding my apiary.

Now I have 9 older queens given the split plus 8 swarms. The swarms came from Beaver Creek, Sugar Creek, Xenia and Yellow Springs. That gave me a diversified local variety of bee stock to start new "local" queens if I go that route. Or should I purchase some "pedigree" queens in hopes of improving the traits of my bees? Or should I leave the queens alone and let nature take its course? I know that the queens and bees I have now will give me honey this year. While replacement queens will give me

colonies for next year. More decision making and planning. I know that the best time for requeening is the end of June and the beginning of July. It gives the hive the varroa reducing brood break right as they are ramping up their numbers. Last month's speaker was Jamie Walters, OSBA President. His focus was on improving our hives by learning from our hive losses. This month our speaker is Barbara Bloetscher. She is a retired State Apiarist and Entomologist with Ohio Department of Agriculture. She will be speaking to us about the non-varroa bee pests and diseases that challenge us. She is known for her good humor and practical information.

Also in June is our annual Honey Harvest. It will be held on Saturday, June 20th at Camp Greene in Glen Helen. This event is where GCBA both entertains and educates the public on honey bees and beekeeping. So please plan on attending and invite your neighbors, family and friends. We had a great showing last year and would be delighted to see more people attend this year.

Go forth and bee happy!





# FUN FOR KIDS

## HONEY HARVEST FESTIVAL

CAMP GREENE IN GLEN HELEN  
3452 GRINNELL RD.  
YELLOW SPRINGS, OH

JUNE 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2026- SATURDAY  
11:00 AM-3:00PM

Open to the Public  
Free

Food Truck

Kid Games

Educational Tables

Hive Decorating

Raffle

Honey Tasting

Bee Hive  
Observation

Try your hand at  
Extraction

Vendors & Honey  
Sales

Native Plant Sales

Non-Profits on  
Nature

### BRING YOUR FRAMES FOR EXTRACTION!

**TEXT Cindy 937-477-7471**

- Honey should be 85-90% capped
- No small hive beetle damage
- Bring frames in a super or box
- Place the whole in a clean trash bag to prevent dripping
- Bring 2 buckets, preferably food grade
- Have name on all items
- We have all the equipment
- Take your honey home!



# Down My Garden Path: Bee Trees

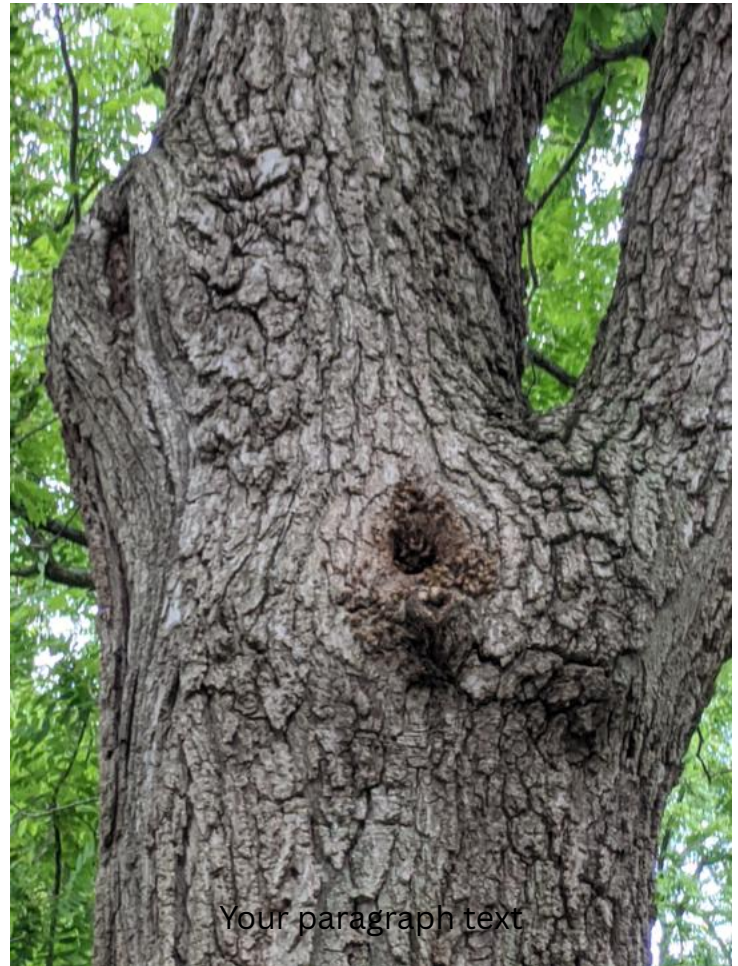
by Cynthia Olsen

I recently went on my annual trip to the beautiful forests at the Arc of Appalachia, in Highland County, where they have some of the largest beech trees you'll ever see. While my hiking buddies are looking downwards as to where to place the next foot without tripping, or seeking rare wildflowers (we find a few), I'm gazing upwards into the canopy of deciduous trees, spying for "bee trees".

These are the cavities in trees that house natural beehives, found by honeybee swarms. "Wild bees" may have originated from managed hives in the nearby farming community, while "feral hives" originated from unmanaged bees, *Apis mellifera mellifera*, the original European dark-colored, hardy honey bee imported

to North America with the early colonists in the mid-1600's, that spread across the continent. Yes, they still exist. I photographed this bee tree hive years ago at Bergamo in Beavercreek and every year look to see if it's still active.

Tom Seeley, of Ithaca, N.Y., has documented the work of bee trees and their properties, helping us understand what housing properties appeal to honey bees. Most any tree will do but the mighty oaks, hickories and maples are usually able to house the colonies. Scout bees look for an entrance opening typically 2.5 sq cm in size that is placed towards the bottom of the cavity, a cylindrical tall cavity of 40 liters volume, which is approximately 20 ft. off the ground. The walls of tree hives on average are 6" thick, compared to our standard  $\frac{3}{4}$ " pine walls in hive boxes. This gives tree hive walls an R-value of 8, compared to commercial boxes at 1; this improves heat retention and winter survival in harsh weather.



Your paragraph text



# TOOLS OF THE TRADE: REFRACTOMETERS

BY CYNTHIA OLSEN

Yeah! It's honey harvesting season, that time when if your hives made it to year two, you might see some sweet reward for your efforts (and your lovely bees' efforts). Whether you choose to de-cap your honey frames and allow them to drip into a pan, crush & strain, or use an extractor, it's important to be able to evaluate the readiness of the frames to be extracted. Honeybees produce more honey than they need. We want to pull enough off to give the bees room to store, not backfill the brood comb, and have plenty for winter preparations. We are in the honeyflow now, so removing ready frames and starting the extraction process now till late summer is acceptable.



Frames that are ready should be full or near fully capped and have a water content of 18%. Nectar itself is at 80-95% water content. Look for

those beautiful full frames. They can be removed and replaced with empty combs or foundation. Store them in your freezer for 48 hours to remove any small hive beetles that can contaminate and ruin them, then place them in a sealed tub.

Honey should ideally have a water content of 17-18.6%. Honey at 20% can result in fermentation and spoilage. If not sealed and stored properly, honey can absorb moisture and spoil. The best way to check your honey is with a honey refractometer, a simple tool that is easily purchased.



The device should specifically be a "honey" refractometer, which features a water percentage scale (usually 12–27%). It should be able to be calibrated at 19.6% with a drop of calibration oil. Only a few drops of honey are needed on the glass prism frame to get a reading, seen through an eye piece. Not endorsing any brand of refractometer, don't consider the cheapest due to quality of results. These can run anywhere from \$22-100 and are a valuable tool.

“How To Use a Refractometer to Test the Water Content in Honey”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KURLbbAeOTA&t=130s>

# GCBA Community Outreach

This year's GCBA 4-H Scholarship recipient, **Aariyah Evans**, presented information about her hive and beekeeping project to her club, the Bellbrook Blaze. Aariyah received a eight frame hive from the club and a club mentor to help her along the way. She's new to 4-H but says she's always been interested in insects with bees being her favorite. We look forward to seeing her project at the Greene County Fair and hearing from her later this year about her bee journey.



GCBA Sponsors new Apiary Signage at GCP&T Russ Nature Preserve

Thanks, GCBA for supporting this public education sign at the Russ Apiary. Check it out.





# The Beekeeper's Library: Expert Tips and Resources



The first article comes to us from Buzz about bees. It is called, “Natural and home remedies for bee stings.” It’s that time of year where bare feet and flip flops can mean stings. Here is a guide for potential treatments. Don’t forget to remove the stinger! Swelling, pain, heat, fluid under the skin, and itching are NORMAL. Serious, LIFE THREATENING reactions are rare, and warrant an immediate visit to your physician, and/or hospital. Not allergic, I grew up holding a sliced onion on it. It always worked for me. While the onion provided immediate relief for me, this is not a substitute for medical advice from your doctor. It’s just an interesting read. [Natural And Home Remedies For Bee Stings](#)

The second article is written by Tobias Jutte, et al. It is titled, “Risk assessment requires several bee species to address species-specific sensitivity to insecticides at field realistic concentrations.” This article is a medium meat read and discusses pesticides and their effects on different species of bees. I found it interesting that there are behavior changes almost immediately. [Risk assessment requires several bee species to address species-specific sensitivity to insecticides at field-realistic concentrations | Scientific Reports](#)

The last article is called an “Adaptable workforce,” written by Randy Oliver. If analogies and bees are your thing....this article is for you! It is basically looking at the colony as one large, living organism, which essentially it is. Get ready for some deep reading about bees! [An Adaptable Workforce - Scientific Beekeeping](#)





# Events, Meetings and More!

## May

---

**May 30-31:** Heartland Apicultural Society 2026 Conference. East Lansing, MI. Multiple talks and hands-on workshops. Registration now open; space limited. [Heartlandbees.org](https://heartlandbees.org)

## June

---

**June 6:** “What’s Bothering my Blooms?”. 10:30-11:30am. GC Master Gardener’s presentation. Carol Graff  
Beavercreek Library- large room; 3618 Dayton-Xenia Road, Beavercreek

**June 9:** GCBA Board meeting by ZOOM, 7:00 PM

**June 13:** Beavercreek Native Wetlands Native Plant Event. 10:00 am-2:00PM. McCoy Middle School  
Courtyard, 1786 Dayton-Xenia Rd., Beavercreek.

**June 16: GCBA Members Meeting.** Barb Bloetscher, “Minor Bee Diseases”, In person & ZOOM, 7:00 PM.  
Xenia Community Center, 1265 W 2nd St., Xenia.

**June 20: GCBA Honey Harvest 2026.** 9:00 am staff set-up; visitors 10:00 am-3:00 pm; clean-up 3:00-4:00  
pm. **Volunteers needed for multiple tasks.**

**June 20:** MEEC Native Plant Sale, 8:00am-1:00pm. Email us at [info@meec.center](mailto:info@meec.center). Cash or checks  
preferred, credit cards (Visa or MasterCard only) accepted.

**June 21:** Greene County Master Gardeners, new members application deadline. In-Person Interviews: Late  
June to early July. <https://greene.osu.edu/program-areas/master-gardener-volunteers/become-master-gardener-volunteer>

## July

---

**July 7:** GCBA Board meeting by ZOOM, 7:00 PM

**July 14:** Greene County Master Gardeners, new members Mandatory Orientation 6:00–8:00 PM

**July 14:** GCBA Board meeting by ZOOM, 7:00 PM

**July 21: GCBA Members Meeting.** In Person & ZOOM 7:00 PM “Wax Production and Uses”, Xenia  
Community Center, 1265 W 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Xenia.

**July 26-31:** Eastern Apicultural Society 2026 Conference in Shephardsville, KY

## August

---

**August 1:** Midwest Native Plant Conference, Artisan and Native Plant Sale. Open to public. Bergamo  
Center, 4435 E Patterson Rd, Beavercreek, OH. 10:00 am-5:30 PM. Parking if free but registration is  
required: <https://www.midwestnativeplants.org>

**August 2-8:** Greene County Fair. 120 Fairground Road, Xenia, OH

**August 11:** GCBA Board meeting by ZOOM, 7:00 PM

**August 18: GCBA Members Meeting.** “Pollinator Prairies”, by Patrick Higgins. In-Person & ZOOM,  
7:00 PM. Xenia Community Center, 1265 W 2nd St., Xenia.



Please review our May 2026 Member Meeting Minutes [here](#)  
CURRENTLY PAID MEMBERS LIST [here](#)