



GREENE BEE NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2026

GREENE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS



Avoid excessive inspections and add screens to prevent robbing.



Knock down varroa numbers as they increase exponentially in late summer.



Support development of “fat bees” for winter by supplementing small quantities of pollen and feed 1.5:1 syrup if necessary.



Remove Section Supers and assure plenty of super space for honey stores.



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GCBA Members Meeting

SPEAKER LIVE: Patrick Higgins of Patrick Goes Native “Growing a Home Prairie for Pollinators”

August 18th, 2026, 7:00 PM

Xenia Community Center, 1265 W. 2nd St., Xenia, Ohio

Patrick started gardening at the age of 11 years when his father turned the garden plot over to him. Over the years he learned what worked and what didn't. He now has a business in Dayton for consulting and working with landowners as to how to transform their properties.

- Transforming turf grass to native plants-
- Grow a prairie-
- Removing invasive plants-
- Using less pesticides-
- Planting for pollinators-



President's Message

August 2026

Now we are into August; time to be ready for winter preparations! No, it is not too early. You should anticipate those over-wintering tasks and prepare for them. Right now, one needs to manage their bee colonies so they stay strong. Colonies may become stressed as temperatures remain high and their food sources begin to diminish.

Also, time is scarce. Balancing beekeeping with other competing late summer events, projects and chores makes for some tough choices. However, what you do now sets the stage for winter preparation and colony survival. I've found that the period from July through mid-September to be a difficult time managing my hives. Do your best to stay on top of keeping your bees.

We had a great meeting in July as Roger Myers brought his bees wax facility and equipment to our meeting via a video that he could pause and comment on. He has a hundred hive operation and tailored his methods to those with far fewer hives. We had a good showing of members with plenty of Q&A.

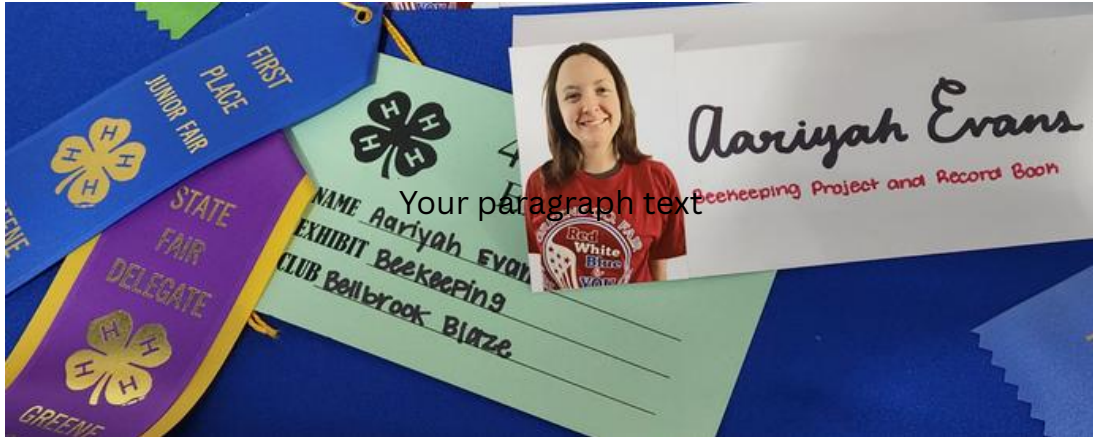
This month we have Patrick Higgins speaking on Pollinator Prairies. He started gardening at age 11 and now provides landscaping and gardening consultation and services with a focus on usage of native plants.

Are you benefiting from your membership? Want to help continue with the good GCBA events or make them better? Now is a good time to ask you, our members, if you are interested in running for a GCBA board position. Or if you are just curious as to what we board members do behind the scenes. Elections are held in November and that may seem like a long way off but that's not so. Any board member can tell you about the board positions and some of the work we share. Should you be interested in possibly running for a board position, please chat with Cindy Olsen. She is the Nominating Committee Chairperson.

Thanks! Go forth and bee happy!!



GREENE COUNTY FAIR 2026



Greene County Junior Fair News

Congratulations to our 2026 GCBA 4-H Scholarship Awardee, Aariyah Evans. She has taken the Ohio 4-H project #641, Beekeeping Project and Record Book, has won a first-place Junior Fair award and was chosen as the counties State Fair Delegate. We look forward to Aariyah sharing her project and beekeeping journey with us at an upcoming members meeting. Thank you, GCBA members for supporting the 4-H projects and inspiring young beekeepers.

Greene County Fair Honey Awards

Showing the community the sweet rewards of bee products by showing at the county fair is another way to support local honey and beekeeping.

The following area beekeepers submitted their wares and won the following awards:

- **Rosemarie Backhaus-**

- o Class 1, Honeycomb: 2nd Place
- o Class 2, Chunk Honey: 2nd Place
- o Class 3, Extracted White Honey: 2nd Place
- o Class 4, Extracted Light Honey: 3rd Place
- o Class 6, Beeswax: 2nd Place

- **Cindy Clelan-**

- o Class 1, Honeycomb: 1st Place
- o Class 3, Extracted White Honey: 1st Place
- o Class 4, Extracted Light Honey: 2nd Place
- o Class 5, Extracted Amber Honey: 1st Place
- o Class 6, Beeswax: 1st Place

- **Cynthia Olsen-**

- o Class 4, Extracted Light Honey: 1st Place

DOWN MY GARDEN PATH: COVER CROPS FOR POLLINATORS

BY CYNTHIA OLSEN

When most people think of protecting pollinators, they picture colorful perennial flower beds. However, incorporating cover crops into agricultural fields or home gardens is one of the most effective, dual-purpose ways to support bees, butterflies, and beneficial insects while simultaneously revitalizing the soil.

The biological benefits of cover crops are extensive. Above ground, they provide critical forage—nectar and pollen—during standard "hunger gaps," such as early spring or late autumn when few other resources are in bloom. Below the surface, their roots work tirelessly to prevent soil erosion, improve water infiltration, break up heavy compaction, and suppress aggressive weeds. When terminated, they decompose into rich organic matter, feeding the soil microbiome and unlocking essential nutrients for future cash crops.



Buckwheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*), is a fast-growing annual, resulting in dark, rich honey.

I mentioned several clover types in our last newsletter; check it out. While clover is a classic staple, a truly resilient pollinator mix relies on plant diversity. A high-performing mix features a variety of structures and bloom times:

- **Buckwheat & Phacelia:** Fast-growing champions that produce a sea of accessible blooms loved by honeybees and native species alike.



Phacelia has clusters of purple flowers, attractive to both honeybees and native bees

- **Winter Pea & Partridge Pea:** Legumes that fix atmospheric nitrogen into the soil while offering nectar-rich blossoms.



Partridge pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*), is a annual native legume, but if left undisturbed can self-seed. The pods are easy to gather to save seeds for subsequent years.

DOWN MY GARDEN PATH: COVER CROPS FOR POLLINATORS

Continued

BY CYNTHIA OLSEN

- Radish: Deploys deep taproots to shatter hardpan clay, eventually producing white-to-purple flowers if left to overwinter.



Daikon radish (*Raphanus sativus*), also known as tillage radish is a great addition to the cover crop mix as the long taproot breaks up compacted and clay soil. Leave the plants to bloom and the bees will love it.

- Ryegrass: Provides structural support for climbing legumes and creates dense biomass to shelter ground-nesting beneficial insects.

For those looking to plant, ready-to-sow pollinator cover crop blends are widely accessible. I've purchased from **Johnny's Seed and Sow True Seed**, purchasing just a few pounds of seed at a time. Specialized online seed providers like **Green Cover Seed**, **American Meadows**, and **High Mowing Organic Seeds** offer pre-formulated regional mixes. For large-scale projects, local agricultural co-ops and native plant nurseries (such as the **Ohio Prairie Nursery**) provide bulk seed or custom blending options to perfectly match your soil type.



Annual rye grass (e.g., Italian ryegrass, which is scientifically known as *Lolium multiflorum*) has fibrous roots that prevent erosion and helps break up soil, while providing organic material. I personally have some perennial, native rye (e.g., *Elymus canadensis* or *Elymus virginicus*) growing in the pollinator garden. This plant is wind-pollinated, but can provide forage to other animals and is supportive of the other plants.

I leave the cover crops in my raised beds and garden over winter, preventing the soil to be bare, decaying and providing nutrition to birds and animals. In the early spring, I turn the soil, burying the remains for soil nutrition and start all over again.



Maybe you can get some buckwheat honey out of it!

My Fleeting Friday Visitor

By Jamie Norris



Friday an insect in my backyard caught my attention. It moved like a honeybee, was hairy like a bee, but the abdomen was red in the sun, yellowish/black/striped, out of the sun. It also reminded me of a common household fly. In certain positions

I thought I was looking at a different bee species. It was an ugly, fat bug. It was incredibly fast.....camera shy, and I thought it might try to bite me. Thankfully, it did not. Curious, I had to know more. It turns out this girl, the Tachinid fly, is kind of a good girl/bad girl. She is good for agriculture, but not so good for pollinators.

Thankfully, she has no interest in honeybees. Shockingly, she loves to place her larvae inside of caterpillars. The caterpillar goes on about his or her day. The caterpillar is unaware that his or her life will be cut short, sadly, right before becoming a butterfly. Tachinid flies will take care of the worms eating the leaves off your tree. They also protect the leaves of beans and corn, which is why farmers like them. Tachinid flies love to devour Asian army worms, stink bugs, and longhorn beetles, (yay!) (Panda, Aradhana, et al, 2026, p.93). Unfortunately, they also like to eat Monarch butterfly caterpillars. For this reason, if I see that ugly little bug tomorrow, I might smash him! Bug off Tachinid fly! Save the pollinators! Except tachinid flies are also pollinators (Panda, Aradhana, et al, 2026). In this case, it's up to your own judgement! Pest control and a pollinator, that is quite the beneficial combination!

Reference: Panda, Aradhana, et al. "Tachinid fly, *Tachina sobria*: A new emerging natural enemy of insects under temperate conditions—first report." *International Journal of Tropical Insect Science* 46.1 (2026): 83-92

The Beekeeper's Library: Expert Tips and Resources



BARB BLOETSCHER SLIDES:

Our speaker series recently included Barb Bloetscher, speaking about “Minor Bee Diseases”. The lesser diseases weaken bees and make the honeybee more susceptible to the serious ones. This PDF is a copy of her slide set with awesome notes and photos worth reviewing and saving.

[CLICK HERE FOR LINK TO PDF](#)

Roger Myers Re-Cap Video on “Cleaning Beeswax”

In case you missed it last month, we had a great crowd attend to hear Roger share with us his techniques for cleaning beeswax. He used this step-by-step tutorial to demonstrate how he cleans his wax on a small to medium scale. Although all the steps may not be necessary for you, the wisdom of using nylon sheers for reusable filters and forming into thin breakable slabs was useful. Revisit this tutorial here:

[CLICK HERE FOR YOU TUBE LINK](#)



Events, Meetings and More!

August

August 11: GCBA Board Meeting by ZOOM, 7:00 PM

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

September

Sept 8: GCBA Board Meeting by ZOOM, 7:00 PM

Sept 11-12: Lithopolis Ohio Honey Festival. Friday (3 PM–7 PM) and Saturday (10 AM–7 PM). 30 E Columbus Street, Lithopolis, OH (held at the Wagnalls Memorial and along Columbus Street).

Sept 17: 6:30-7:30PM, Greene County Master Gardener, Cathy Plum, “Gardening With Native Plants”, no charge, Tobias-Zimmer Barn & gardens at Wartinger Park, 3080 Kemp Rd., Beavercreek

Sept 18: Tuesday. **GCBA Members meeting.** “The Queen Vaccine & New Miticides”, by Tracy Farone DVM, “The Bee Vet”, ZOOM, 7:00 PM. Xenia Community Center, 1265 W 2nd St., Xenia.

October

Oct 10: Mid-Ohio Valley Beekeepers Fun Day. 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, Crossroads Campground 6827 Old St. Mary’s Pike, Parkersburg, WV. Beekeepers of all levels and non-members are welcome, Multiple events, Speakers pending. Free Admission.

Oct 13: GCBA Board meeting by ZOOM, 7:00 PM

Oct 18: Tuesday. **GCBA Members meeting.** “Effects of Agricultural pesticides on Bees”, by Dr. Reed Johnson, ZOOM, 7:00 PM. Xenia Community Center, 1265 W 2nd St., Xenia.

Oct 23-24: Ohio State Beekeepers Association, Fall Conference, will be held at Kent State University – 3300 Lake Rd W, Ashtabula, OH. Starting Friday, Oct 23, at 5:00 pm with presentations and labs. Saturday, Oct 25, at 9:00 am with (4) four tracks of education. This provides educational information for all types of beekeepers. *Pollinator Steward Certification* and *Beginning Beekeeper Certification* tracks are available. Registration required.



Please review our July 2026 Member Meeting Minutes [here](#)

Please review our July 2026 Treasurer’s Report [here](#)

CURRENTLY PAID MEMBERS LIST [here](#)