



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Next Meeting: Monday, **September 26, 2026**

Due to MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

Location: **The Lamar Senior Activity Center**
2874 Shoal Crest Ave Austin TX 78705

6:00 PM Doors open. Meet, Eat and Greet

6:30PM Business Meeting

6:45PM Round Table Discussion to set ideas and goals for this year. **BRING SNACKS TO SHARE!**

7:45PM Door Prizes

8:00PM Meeting Ends

Natural Winter Resources for Honey Bees in Austin from Elissa Sexton

Although January is often thought of as a dormant season, Central Texas provides a surprising number of naturally available resources for honey bees. Austin's relatively mild winters allow certain native and naturalized plants to bloom intermittently, offering critical nectar and pollen on warm days. These resources help honey bee colonies survive winter and prepare for early spring brood rearing.

Honeydew: An Important Winter Food Source for Honey Bees

In addition to nectar and pollen from winter-blooming plants, honey bees in Central Texas rely on **honeydew** during January, especially when flowers are scarce.

Honeydew is a sugary substance excreted by sap-feeding insects such as **aphids, scale insects, and leafhoppers** as they feed on trees and shrubs. When nectar sources are limited, honey bees readily collect honeydew as a carbohydrate source.

In Austin and surrounding areas, honeydew is commonly produced on:

- **Live oak (*Quercus fusiformis*, *Q. virginiana*)**
- **Cedar elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*)**
- **Hackberry (*Celtis* spp.)**
- **Pecan (*Carya illinoensis*)**
- **Ashe juniper (*Juniperus ashei*)**

On mild winter days, bees can often be seen foraging on tree trunks, branches, and leaves where honeydew has accumulated. Colonies may store this material as **honeydew honey**, which tends to be darker and more mineral-rich than floral honey.

How Honeydew Fits Into the January Landscape

Honeydew highlights the importance of **trees and urban canopy** as winter bee resources. Even without flowers, Central Texas trees support insect communities that indirectly provide food for honey bees. In years with mild winters and active sap-feeding insects, honeydew can be a significant contributor to winter survival.

A Quiet but Critical Season

The naturally available resources during January support the maintenance of adult bee populations, early brood rearing in strong colonies and pollination of winter-blooming plants. Because bees take advantage of any day warm enough for flight, even small patches of winter blooms can have a meaningful impact on colony health.

Though the landscape may appear still, Austin's plants quietly sustain honey bees through winter. Roadsides, open fields, urban green spaces, and native woodlands all contribute to this seasonal network of resources. Protecting and recognizing these plants helps ensure strong, healthy pollinators as spring approaches.

How to Build a Wooden Beehive Stand and Preserve It with Shou Sugi Ban

From Rachael Lam

A sturdy beehive stand is essential for keeping your hive dry, level, and safe from pests. By building your own stand from wood and preserving it using **shou sugi ban**—the traditional Japanese wood-charring technique—you can create a long-lasting, chemical-free, and visually striking base for your hive. This method is especially appealing for beekeepers who want durability without synthetic preservatives, keeping things more natural for the bees and the environment.

Why Use a Beehive Stand?

A raised hive stand can improve airflow under the hive, prevent moisture buildup and rot, discourage ants, skunks, and other pests and make inspections easier on your back. Pairing this with *shou sugi ban* adds extra weather resistance and longevity.

Materials and Tools

A simple and effective design is a rectangular frame with four legs. Using cedar, pine, cypress, or fir (cedar is ideal but pine works well), cut wood in the following dimensions:

Legs: 4x4s or doubled 2x4s

Frame: 2x4s or 2x6s

Typical dimensions:

Height: 12–18 inches

Width: Wide enough for your hive body (usually 16–22 inches)

Length: Long enough to support the hive fully, with slight overhang if desired

Cut and Assemble the Stand

1. Cut your legs to equal length.
2. Build a rectangular top frame using 2x4s or 2x6s.
3. Attach the legs securely to the inside corners of the frame.
4. Add cross braces if extra stability is needed.

Use exterior-grade screws and pre-drill holes to prevent splitting.

Charring the Wood (Shou Sugi Ban)

1. Use a propane torch to evenly burn the surface of the wood.
2. Move the flame slowly until the surface turns deep brown to black and the grain becomes textured.
3. Avoid prolonged burning in one spot to prevent structural damage.
4. Let the wood cool completely.
5. Apply a thin coat of raw linseed oil or tung oil

The goal is a consistent char, not ash or cracking. Unlike painted or pressure-treated wood, charred wood weathers gracefully and can last decades with minimal maintenance. With basic tools and a little time, you'll have a stand that lasts for years and supports a healthy, thriving



Honey, Mustard, Apple, Arugula & Parmesan Quesadilla

Ingredients

- 1 large flour tortilla
- 1 teaspoons Dijon or yellow mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon honey
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese or 6 Ounces of Brie Cheese
- 1/3 of a medium apple, cored and thinly sliced (tart apples are best)
- 1 cup baby arugula
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste
- Cooking spray or a small amount of butter/olive oil

Instructions

1. **Prepare the Honey Mustard Mixture:** In a small bowl, combine the Dijon mustard and honey (or apple cider) and stir until blended.
2. **Assemble the Quesadilla:** Lay the tortilla flat on a clean work surface. Spread the honey mustard mixture evenly over the entire surface of the tortilla.
3. **Add Fillings:** Sprinkle the shredded Parmesan cheese over one half of the tortilla. Arrange the thin apple slices over the cheese, and top with the cup of arugula and the black pepper.
4. **Cook the Quesadilla:** Heat a nonstick skillet over medium heat and lightly coat with cooking spray or a little butter. Place the tortilla in the skillet.
5. **Fold and Press:** Fold the empty half of the tortilla over the filling to create a half-moon shape. Gently press down with a spatula.
6. **Brown Both Sides:** Cook for about 2 minutes on each side, or until the tortilla is golden brown and crispy and the cheese has melted.
7. **Serve:** Remove the quesadilla from the pan, let it cool for a minute, and cut it into four wedges. Serve warm

IMPORTANT CLUB NEWS FOR THE **NEW YEAR**

Our annual elections were held at the November Club Meeting. Elissa Sexton will continue her role as club President and Rachel lam, Treasurer, until their terms end in December 2026. Joy Mills was re-elected for another 2-year term as Secretary. We want to thank Eddy Monske for his service this past year as Vice President. We are excited to welcome Kellie Sherrill, as our new Vice President. Kellie brings with her a wealth of IT knowledge. You can look forward to several changes in the coming months as we roll out a new WEB SITE design that will include the capability for you to renew your membership online. An easier and more streamlined NEWSLETTER format and an email account are also in the works.

One more new year reminder: **Everyone's club membership lapsed in December.** Understand that your 2026 dues will be due in January in order for you to continue receiving this newsletter. We now have a QR Code below for you to make a payment from the convenience of your home. Cash or check will continue to work too!



16th Annual CTBA Beekeeping School - March 7, 2026



You are invited to the largest bee event in Texas! From the moment you arrive until the last class of the day, you will immerse yourself in the fascinating world of beekeeping. Whether you're a NEWBEE looking to get started or a seasoned beekeeper, prepare for a FULL DAY of instruction featuring OVER 40 UNIQUE CLASSES covering everything from the basics to advanced beekeeping. You will have the incredible opportunity to WATCH as we OPEN A LIVE HIVE right in front of you, giving you an up-close look at these amazing creatures. And to top it off, the day will conclude with LOTS OF DOOR PRIZES
