



WE'RE HAVING A HOLIDAY PARTY, PLEASE JOIN US

An evening of food, camaraderie
and BEE Conversations

MONDAY, December 16 6:30PM

The Lamar Senior Activity Center
2874 Shoal Crest Ave Austin, TX 78705

Sandwiches and Drinks provided
Bring a SIDE or DESSERT



From the **PRESIDENT**
Elissa Sexton



Using your Bee resources HOMEMADE HOLIDAY GIFTS

Beeswax and honey are wonderful ingredients for creating DIY gifts, especially during the colder months when cozy, handmade items feel so special. Here are some ideas for DIY gifts you can make with beeswax and honey:



1. Beeswax Candles

- **What you need:** Beeswax sheets, wick, and a pair of scissors.
- **How to make it:** Cut the beeswax sheets into strips, and then roll them around the wick to create a candle. These can be made in various sizes, and the natural scent of beeswax gives a calming, honey-like fragrance to any space.
- **Why it's a great gift:** Beeswax candles are eco-friendly and provide a warm, natural light.



2. Honey Lip Balm

- **What you need:** Beeswax, honey, coconut oil, and essential oils (optional).
- **How to make it:** Melt equal parts of beeswax and coconut oil together, then add a teaspoon of honey for moisture and a few drops of your favorite essential oils for fragrance. Pour the mixture into small containers or tins and allow it to cool.
- **Why it's a great gift:** Lip balm made with natural ingredients like beeswax and honey is nourishing and perfect for the winter months.



3. Beeswax Wraps

- **What you need:** Beeswax, cotton fabric (e.g., vintage or fun prints), and a hot iron.
- **How to make it:** Melt beeswax in a double boiler, and then brush it onto the cotton fabric. Once the fabric is covered, place it between two pieces of parchment paper and iron it on a low setting to evenly distribute the beeswax. Once cooled, the wraps are ready to use.
- **Why it's a great gift:** Beeswax wraps are a sustainable alternative to plastic wrap, and can be in a variety of fun designs.



4. Honey Body Scrub

- **What you need:** Honey, sugar or salt (depending on the scrub's texture you prefer), and a carrier oil (like olive or coconut oil).
- **How to make it:** Mix equal parts honey and sugar (or salt) with a tablespoon of oil. Stir well and store in a jar.
- **Why it's a great gift:** This exfoliating scrub is a luxurious way to pamper someone's skin while leaving it moisturized and soft.



5. Beeswax Soap

- **What you need:** Melt-and-pour soap base, beeswax, honey, and essential oils.
- **How to make it:** Melt the soap base, add beeswax and honey, and then mix in essential oils for scent. Pour the mixture into molds and allow it to set.
- **Why it's a great gift:** Handmade soap is a thoughtful, practical, and luxurious gift that's perfect for anyone.
- **Why it's a great gift:** Perfect for tea or hot chocolate lovers, it's a warming gift that's both delicious and thoughtful.



6. Beeswax Furniture Polish

- **What you need:** Beeswax, coconut oil, and a few drops of lemon essential oil.
- **How to make it:** Melt beeswax and coconut oil together and add a few drops of lemon oil for a fresh scent. Pour it into a jar and allow it to cool.
- **Why it's a great gift:** This natural polish works wonders on wood furniture and is a great, eco-friendly alternative to commercial products.



7. Beeswax Hand Cream

- **What you need:** Beeswax, shea butter, honey, and essential oils (like lavender or peppermint).
- **How to make it:** Melt the beeswax and shea butter together, then add honey and essential oils. Allow the mixture to cool before pouring it into small jars.
- **Why it's a great gift:** This nourishing hand cream will keep hands soft, especially in the colder months.



8. Honey-Sweetened Jam or Preserves

- **What you need:** Fruit, honey, and lemon juice.
- **How to make it:** You can make a simple jam by cooking down fruit with honey and lemon juice. This preserves the fruit's flavor and adds a natural sweetness without refined sugar.
- **Why it's a great gift:** Homemade jam or preserves with a honey twist is a sweet, thoughtful gift that everyone can enjoy.

From the Treasurer

Rachael

Product Review of B402 CERTAN

On Halloween I discovered the creepiest, most ghoulish surprise in my garage. Wax Moths! There was a wax moth infestation inside and around one of my empty hive boxes. I had placed the box wrapped airtight in a plastic bag with Paramoth to store away for the season. The plastic wrapped box was sitting in my garage for 2 months when I found 1,000 larvae crawling around, laying eggs, leaving droppings and webbing all throughout, including underneath the handles and in every place imaginable. Wax Moths are not only a mess, but they also destroy the hive causing damage to the wood box and wax frames.

Being a new beekeeper, I did not know what to do. I went to The Bee Supply in Round Rock for some advice and help. They recommended a natural solution called B402 Certan that sells for approximately \$35.00. They explained it is similar to a natural solution used in gardening to deter pests.

Unlike the product Paramoth, which is only a temporary solution, you do not need to reapply Certan since it saturates the box and keeps Wax Moths away while in storage. I simply diluted the B402 Certan into an empty spray bottle (1 part Certan to 19 parts water) and sprayed all my frames and boxes, including the ones with intact wax combs. I let everything dry outside for several hours before placing the frames in the boxes and stacking them in the garage. It was so easy, and I didn't even need to wrap them in plastic or anything.

Since the treatment, I haven't had any issues with wax moths. You better believe I will treat all my boxes with B402 Certan prior to storing them every season, and I highly recommend you do so as well!



Contributor

Freddie Benjamin

Should You Check Your Hives During the Winter?

Winter in Austin, Texas, can be a tricky time for beekeepers. While our milder temperatures compared to northern regions offer some advantages, it still raises the question: Should you check your hives during the winter months? The short answer is yes, but with caution.

In Austin, winters can be unpredictable, with chilly nights and mild days. It's important to check your hive only on days when temperatures are above 50°F. Cold weather can stress the bees, so avoid opening the hive unnecessarily. When checking, ensure it's a brief visit to prevent heat loss from the hive. Bees cluster together in winter to conserve heat, usually around the queen. Opening the hive too frequently or for too long can disrupt this natural behavior and disturb the colony. Only open the hive to inspect for critical issues, such as food stores or moisture buildup.

One of the primary concerns in winter is whether your bees have enough food. During mild winters, they may consume stores more slowly, but during cold spells, food consumption increases. If necessary, provide supplemental feeding with fondant or sugar cakes to ensure they have enough to get through the colder months. Winter checks are also a good time to ensure the hive has adequate ventilation to prevent moisture buildup, which can lead to mold and other health issues. Make sure the entrance is clear of debris and that the bees have adequate ventilation.

While checking your hive in winter can be beneficial, it's important to minimize disturbance and be strategic with your inspections. A well-prepared hive in the fall will make winter checks easier and less stressful for both you and your bees.

