NEWSLETTER VOL 6 **Austin Beekeepers Association** AUGUST 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Next Meeting: **MONDAY, AUGUST 19**

Location: The Bee Supply

1205 Round Rock Ave #119, Round Rock, TX 78681

Doors open: 6:00 PM

Meeting Begins: 7:00PM

POT-LUCK MENU

"Dog Days of Summer"

Bring fixins' for Hot Dogs or Salad or Dessert

From the PRESIDENT

Becky Barajas

Do you love your club? I know I do. I have been part of a club since my first year in beekeeping. Way back then, I joined a club to learn how to be a better beekeeper. Today, attending local club meetings gives me new insight on local activities and information along with ideas or methods that renew my excitement in beekeeping. Through the years I've taken on many volunteer positions with my local and state organizations. I find that as a volunteer I get to talk and see friends but also learn and teach what I know to others. I have implemented some crazy ideas over the years in my bee yard and offered some of these ideas to my club. It was very encouraging to have them heard, executed or discussed. I gain so much from meetings I feel it's only right to offer my time or knowledge back to them in a large or small way. It does not take much to volunteer- a couple of hours at most each week. People say to find your tribe. Well, I found my colony.

Volunteer, share your time, thoughts and ideas and you can ***find your colony too!***

Contributor

Freddie Benjamin

Summer Management of Varroa Mites

Summer is a critical time for managing varroa mites in backyard bee colonies. Varroa mites can significantly weaken hives if left unchecked. Begin with regular monitoring using a method like an alcohol wash to assess mite levels. If thresholds are exceeded, consider treatments such as oxalic acid vaporization, which can be effective even in warmer temperatures. Combining chemical treatments with integrated pest management strategies, such as drone brood removal, brood breaks. and maintaining strong, healthy colonies, will help keep varroa populations in check throughout the summer.

Summer Management of Small Hive Beetles

Small hive beetles (SHB) can become a significant problem in the summer, especially after a very wet July. To manage SHB, maintain strong colonies with good bee-to-comb ratios, as robust hives are better at defending against pests. Regularly inspect hives and remove any infested combs. Use beetle traps placed in the hive to capture adult beetles. Ensure the hive is well-ventilated and kept dry, as SHB larvae thrive in moist conditions. Reducing hive entrances can also help bees better defend against beetles. Combining these strategies will help minimize SHB impact on backyard hives during the summer months.

Slow Cooker Chipotle-Honey Chicken Tacos.

From Julia Gartland for The New York Times.

Total Time
3 to 5 hours

These may be the easiest tacos you ever make, but you'd never know it. The recipe hinges on just two ingredients: canned chipotles and honey, which slowly caramelize together for a glossy and incredibly tasty sauce. You may hesitate because there's so little liquid in the slow cooker with the chicken, but don't worry. That's how it's supposed to be. It allows the sauce to get a little sticky, which is exactly what you want.

- 1½pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 3tablespoons honey
- 1teaspoon onion powder
- 1teaspoon garlic powder
- ½teaspoon ground cumin
- 1teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 to 4chipotles from a can of chipotles in adobo, finely chopped, plus 2 tablespoons adobo sauce
- 1(15-ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained
- Juice of 1 lime
- Warmed tortillas, for serving
- Pickled onion, for serving
- Sliced or cubed avocado, for serving

Step 1 Combine the chicken, honey, onion and garlic powders, cumin, salt and chipotle chiles and adobo sauce in a 5- to 8-quart slow cooker. Stir well. Cook for at least 3 hours and up to 5 hours on low. If it's more convenient, you can let the slow cooker switch to warm after 5 hours. The dish will hold on warm for about another 3 hours before the chicken starts to become quite dry.

Step 2 Using two forks, coarsely shred the chicken in the sauce. Stir in the black beans and lime juice. Cover and let the beans warm through, about 5 minutes. Taste and add more salt or lime juice if necessary. Serve in tortillas with pickled onion and avocado.

From the V. PRESIDENT

Elissa Sexton

How to Stop and Prevent Robbing

During a period when there is a shortage of nectar-producing flowers in the area where the bees forage, called a *dearth*, we as beekeepers need to be aware of robbing. Robbing happens when a larger hive attacks a smaller or less aggressive hive to take their resources. This can cause devastation to the weaker or unprotected hive.

One way to prevent this from happening is to keep similar sized hives together in the same yard. Try not to have a smaller hive in a yard with larger hives. Grow all your hives so that they are equal in size and can hold their own against the hives in the same yard.

Secondly, it is important that you do not do full inspections during a dearth period. This can encourage robbing. As frames are set aside during inspection, robber bees can descend on these frames. When you return the frames to the hive the robber bees are now within the hive. They can communicate with their own hive via a waggle dance where to invade.

Third, reduce entrances so the bees have less area to defend. This doesn't mean reducing air flow, especially when the temperatures are extreme as we have in Central Texas. Instead, add a robbing screen.
It is important to feed your bees during a dearth period but be careful. Often when you feed smaller hives the larger hives may come for that food as well.

If you notice a hive being robbed you can try to help by throwing a wet towel over the hive, or spray the bees with water from a spray bottle. This can help to dissipate the bees and stop the robbers. Keep in mind that the robber bees may already be inside.

Once robbing starts it is much harder to stop so prevention is always the best practice. However, even with good practices things can go wrong so it is useful to have some of these ideas available for the future.

From the Secretary

Joy Mills

Coming up Next: Texas Honey Sample Collection

Texas Beekeepers Association (TBA) is partnering with The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) to contribute samples for our Texas Local Honey Biological Activity Level (BAL) Project. Join the HONEY Pathway students of UTSA in unraveling the bioactivity of Texas local honey!

Honey's diverse therapeutic potential stems from its rich biological and chemical makeup, influenced by factors like region, climate, and nectar source. By analyzing honey samples from across Texas, we aim to understand their unique bioactivity profiles.

Thank you for your support!

To participate in this joint venture, fill out the information in the form at this link:

https://forms.gle/hQ5N4pZwR9yCCnzQ8.

You can bring an 8 oz jar of your honey to our July Meeting where it will be collected and delivered to UTSA by a club member.