It’s a safe bet that you spend a lot of time thinking about the health of your bees, but how much do you think about your own health when you are at work in the bee yard? Our July 20 meeting featured Corey Greer, Owner of Foothills Bee Company and a paramedic in Catawba County, with his presentation *Medical Emergencies for the Beekeeper.*

**Allergic reactions**

Corey began by talking about allergic reactions to stings. An allergic reaction happens when the body becomes hypersensitive to a substance, such as food, medication, or bee venom. Most reactions to stings are localized, meaning they cause a red welt at the sting site and perhaps some swelling. However, a reaction can become systemic, meaning it affects parts of the body away from the location of the sting. In the worst case, it can cause anaphylaxis, which is life threatening.

Corey explained that wasp venom contains a protein that is not present in honeybee venom. In his experience, due to this difference, wasp stings are more likely to cause a serious reaction than bee stings. Wasps can be a hazard in the bee yard, as they may be interested in getting into a hive or robbing honey during an inspection. He also touched briefly on fire ants, which we also might run across in the bee yard.

*Figure 1: Corey Greer demonstrates Epipens*
Treatment for a Bee Sting

If you are concerned about a sting, Corey suggested that it is fine to take Benadryl, but it is a good idea to do so quickly, since if you do develop a systemic reaction, less of this oral medication will be absorbed. A systemic reaction is characterized by blotchy red skin or hives away from the sting site, including the chest or back (Figure 2), respiratory distress, and/or low blood pressure, which can make you dizzy or feel faint. Corey suggested that if you develop these symptoms, you use an EpiPen, if you have one, and call 911. If you can, take a picture of the skin redness to help the paramedics understand what happened.

Using an EpiPen

An EpiPen is a device that automatically injects epinephrine, a hormone that improves breathing, stimulates the heart, and raises blood pressure. Use it by pressing the tip against the outside of the
upper thigh, pushing until it “clicks” to start the injection, and holding for a five count to ensure the medication is injected. Then remove and drop the injector and rub the injection site to promote absorption of the medication. The EpiPen is a rescue device that temporarily halts a life-threatening allergic reaction. There can be a rebound reaction, so always call 911 after using one. And, yes, it will hurt!

You need a prescription to buy an EpiPen, and keep in mind that children should receive a smaller dose via a special EpiPen Jr.

Environmental emergencies
Any discussion of emergencies in the bee yard this time of year should mention heat dangers. We need to think about heat exhaustion and heat stroke all summer in Charlotte, but suiting up to work bees increases the risk, especially if you need to wear a full suit. Corey recommended staying hydrated with both water and electrolyte drinks (two waters for every one electrolyte drink) and using wet, cold towels to cool off. Anyone who experiences symptoms of heat exhaustion (dizziness; heavy sweating; cool, pale skin; rapid, weak pulse, or muscle cramps) should take a break, hydrate, and go to a cool place. Call 911 if someone stops sweating; has hot, red skin; has a rapid, strong pulse; is confused; or loses consciousness. These are the symptoms of heat stroke, which can be life threatening.

Also Heard
Duke University is conducting a study to evaluate how tire dust becomes mixed with pollen and ends up stored in comb. This is a precursor to future insecticide studies of pollen. They are looking for beekeepers who can collect and submit pollen samples. Sample kits will be sent out in September, with individual results available by year end. To request sample kit(s), send your name, email address, phone number, mailing address, and number of kits needed to laura.givens@duke.edu.
Beekeeping Mistakes #57

What do you do when the hive stand accidentally falls over? Incidentally, I also had this happen in February one year when a hive stand broke. It was also bee school equipment day, and I heard the crack but didn’t check it out until hours later. And this was a cold February. Not a warm one like we had this year. That day all I could do was put the pieces back together. The bees had made it through the day, and they came into spring and did fine that year.

But what happens when a stand gets knocked over by a riding mower? First, the bees are more interested in what they are going to do to fix it than they are taking it out on the lawn mower. But bees are all flying in the air and all around trying to figure it out. Very entertaining to watch the first time.

Kind of like watching a swarm. Very entertaining. But in this case the longer you wait and the later in the evening it gets the more you will get stung. So go park the mower, grab the veil and hive tool and smoker with something easy and quick to light. Start putting things back together without jostling the bees any more than needed. Once a bottom board is back in place, they'll know where to go. Usually all the parts on the ground can be figured out what fell from where, so it's not to bad to put them back up. In the case of this picture, there were 4 hives on the stand at the beginning, but one had died and I didn't know until that happened. So there were only 3 at the end. There are easier ways to find dead hives.

Be careful mowing. And if the shrubbery behind is getting in the way of the mower then maybe its time to cut it back a little bit. A good task in the winter. Wayne
Beauty Berry Bush

From the Mint Family

Link To
https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/callicarpa-americana/

Link to
https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/pycnanthemum/

Photo of Mountain Mint by Michael Entrekin
Pokeweeds
Phytolacca americana

By Sherron Badour

So, I had this plant growing in the natural area of my yard last year. I was admiring it, wondering about the plant, until it was about three feet tall. All of a sudden it was gone. My husband had weed whipped it. I complained, told him I was trying to figure out the plant name. It grew again and about three weeks later it was gone again. The plant returned, did not get weed whipped a third time, but did not grow much that I recall, and it was later in the season.

In my admiring phase I had determined it was Pokeweed. The plant returned this year, I threatened my husband, and now it is over 11ft tall. It is starting to flower and eventually will have what I call Pokeberries.

I thought there might be some interest (or was it just a coincidence?) when a friend mentioned this huge plant in her yard. I offered to look it up on the iNaturalist app and did once she sent me a pic. It is Pokeweed.

Pokeweeds are a native plant and blooms early summer to early fall. Birds eat the berries but I could not find evidence that the Honeybee works the plant. Today, with the nectar flow waning and Bees working my empty Supers, I checked the Pokeweed. Sad to say that there are no Honeybees on the Pokeweed flowers. It is also considered invasive. I am not sure if that is official, but when my friend was inquiring, she had someone else say to her, “They are invasive. I’ll come pull it up out of the ground.” She is now protecting her plant from the neighbor. As I do, she wants to see what happens as the season progresses.

We are both interested in birds. Curious about what birds will come to eat the berries? Sherron
Tickets Go On Sale August 17th.
At Our Next Monthly Meeting

Christmas Flow Hive Give-away!!

$10.00 per ticket

Enter For A Chance To Win A Flow Hive

Flow hive with bees ready to make honey to be awarded at our Christmas Party December 2023

Flow Hive to be awarded at our Christmas Dinner, Dec., 2023 and winner can pick up the Flow Hive in March or April 2024 with bees ready to make honey.

Help NCSBA
Five-year fundraising campaign to reach the goal of a distinguished professorship

*value estimated at $800

All proceeds go to The NC State Distinguished Professorship Fund

Three Frame Flow Light Package on an eight frame Langstroth hive. Has 3 plastic Flow frames with 4 Langstroth deep frames in super and 8 Langstroth deep frames in brood box to make a single deep with super combination. Several options are available to expand. Visit honeyflow.com for instructions
A fun fact:

Collective Noun for Bees is a Bike of Bees

It’s amusing to imagine a swarm of bees flying in bicycle formation, but the real reason this is a collective noun for bees is because the word “bike” is an old English word which means a colony, nest, or swarm. Follow the link for more amazing collective nouns

https://www.jellyfish.com/en-gb/training/blog/collective-nouns#::text=A%20Bike%20of%20Bees&text=It%20s%20amusing%20to%20imagine%20a%20colony%2C%20nest%2C%20or%20swarm

From our NCSBA State meeting in Flat Rock, N.C. there is Frank, George, Libby, Gerry, and Jeanie.
Our Next Monthly Meeting Will Be
August 17th. 2023

Our monthly meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at The Providence Baptist Church, 4921 Randolph Rd., Charlotte, N.C. 28211 And starts at 7:00 P.M.

Our next meeting is Thursday, August 17, 2023 and our speaker will be Andrew Thiessen  Topic: How to Reliably Achieve ZERO Winter Loss
Breakfast at the Tryon House Restaurant
Located at 215 Exmore St., Charlotte, N.C. 28217
Just off Woodlawn Rd.

What a wonderful breakfast we had. So many new stories and experiences were shared. We talked about the Flow Hive that will be raffled off and awarded, with bees at our Christmas Party. I want to thank Wayne and Senia Owensby for their help in planning the raffle. Hopefully there will be other prizes added in the future. Hope to see you at our next Bee Breakfast on August 12th, 2023. You do not have to be a member to attend and all are welcome.

From L. To R. are Wayne, Lee, johnny, Linda and Senia
Hello Fellow Beekeepers, I am really looking forward to helping the winning beekeeper of the Hybrid Flow Hive get set up. I want to thank Wayne and Senia for their help with the signage and raffle. The Hybrid Flow Hive was given to me by Jeanie Frye, Thank You Jeanie. I am donating the hive to Mecklenburg County Beekeepers Assoc. to be raffled off and all proceeds go to the NC State Distinguished Professor Endowment Fund.

Our bee breakfasts at The Tryon House are a hoot. If you have any pictures of your hives, bees on flowers, a story to tell, ideas, comments, mail them in to meckbeesbuzz@gmail.com

And as always, Thanks for reading

All pictures, articles edited and published by johnny p.