

The Bee Line

Beekeepers Guild of Southeast Virginia

AUG - SEPT 2024 EDITION

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Article submissions are
always welcome! Email the
editor, Jennifer Bell, at:
jenniferburdock@gmail.com

Reminder

Guild memberships expire annually on July 1st. Please visit the Guild website to pay your dues, if you have not already done so for 2024-2025.

Virginia Beach Farmers Market Honey Festival

A special thanks to Donnie Norrell, John Hathaway, Kevin Du Bois
and Jen Bell who volunteered on June 22nd.



Extractaganza

July 13, 2024



Butterfly Festival at Norfolk Botanical Garden



Article submitted by Bailey Bunn

Photo by John Hathaway

The Butterfly Society of Virginia hosted their annual Butterfly Festival at Norfolk Botanical Garden on July 17th . The festival was focused on butterflies, but overall highlighted a lot of pollinators and the crucial roles they play in the environment. Unfortunately due to weather the festival was relocated indoors, but that didn't rain on our parade! Guild members manned a table where we were a stop in the passport journey for children around the festival. Armed with an observation hive, PPE, pamphlets, and honey bee life cycle models we shared our collective knowledge and experience with the kids and their interested families. After visiting our table the kids would go to the passport stop to get a stamp, and in exchange they had to share one fact that they had learned about honey bees. A special thanks to John Hathaway, Carrie Brown, A'lauren Gilchrist (a student of Carrie's), Jana Falat, Kevin Du Bois, and Bailey Bunn who helped make the event a success. We handed out many flyers for our beginner courses and fed the curiosities of those who are interested in starting their own hives one day.



The 2024 Virginia Honey Bee Festival

It's time to recognize the hardworking honey bee once again at the Virginia Honey Bee Festival™, the Guild's signature event which we celebrate with our partner, Norfolk Botanical Garden.

Thanks to a staff of gardeners keeping 7,000 species of plants in bloom, Norfolk Botanical Garden is the ultimate 155 acres of bee forage in Hampton Roads AND the perfect venue to celebrate World Honey Bee Day! The event is Saturday, August 17, 2024 located at the Norfolk Botanical Garden, 6700 Azalea Garden Road, Norfolk, VA 23518. Most activities are centered around Baker Hall, the main visitors center at the garden. Volunteers will receive free admission to the Norfolk Botanical Garden. We have plenty of volunteer openings that still need filled to support this event; additional details and sign-up areas can be found [HERE](#).

2024 Maker Fest Portsmouth

Are you a maker at heart? If so, please join the Beekeepers Guild at the Maker Fest on Saturday, September 21, 2024 at the Portsmouth Art & Cultural Center.

From artisanal skills like painting, weaving, and glass blowing to high-tech endeavors like coding and 3D printing, Maker Fest Portsmouth is fun for all ages and skill levels! Come explore “maker culture” with interactive displays, demonstrations, and hands-on activities. Learn from accomplished makers – artisans, technology gurus, and everything in between.

If you can help us pass on our beekeeping knowledge and passion to fellow enthusiasts, please sign up [here](#). Shifts are short, less than 4 hours.

Hope you'll bee there!



FALL GARDENING FESTIVAL

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
10AM - 3PM**

The Beekeepers Guild will be participating in the Virginia Beach Master Gardeners' Annual Fall Gardening Festival. The event will be held at the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center located at 1444 Diamond Springs Rd. Virginia Beach, VA.

Guild members are invited to participate at our booth by educating the public about the importance of pollinators. Members may sell properly labeled honey and hive products.

If you'd like to volunteer, please sign up [here](#).

The rain date for this event is set for Saturday, October 5, 2024.

Creeds Ruritan Fall Fish Fry & Craft Fair

The guild will be participating in the Creeds Ruritan's Fall Fish Fry & Craft Fair to be held on Saturday, October 5, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The festival is located on the grounds of the Ralph Frost Activity Center in the Creeds Ruritan Community Center at 1057 Princess Anne Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23457.

The guild will have a booth selling honey and hive products as part of the Craft Fair. Members may sell properly labeled honey and hive products.

Pre-order your fried fish dinner [HERE](#) for the pick-up at the event. All proceeds benefit the local community.

Set up begins at 10:00 am and the festival opens at 11 am. Shifts are short, only 4 hours. Pre-order your fried fish dinner here for pickup at the event. All proceeds benefit the local community!

Any assistance you can give is most appreciated. [Click HERE to sign up.](#)



BEGINNING BEEKEEPING

Learn about the biology, equipment and management before you start your own beehive!

3 week **CLASS**
with the Beekeepers Guild of
Southeast Virginia

WHEN

Tuesday, August 27
Tuesday, Sept 3
Tuesday, Sept 10
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

WHERE

Norfolk Botanical Garden

COST

NBG Members: \$50
Non-members: \$65

[Register here](#)

Heather Beardsley: Tell the Bees
Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art
July 12, 2024-September 15, 2024
FLEMING GALLERY

Heather Beardsley's *Tell the Bees* is more than an exhibition; it's a conversation. Lean in and whisper your hopes for a thriving environment to the native bees that keep our world green. Beardsley invites us to co-create a sustainable world, one bee at a time.

This journey began with silence. Beardsley became alarmed at the absence of biodiversity and native pollinators in our region. Her response? The creation of bee hotels, each one sculpted from local materials. They are sanctuaries that provide nesting materials to native pollinators. This fusion of form and function is a testament to the resonance between art and ecology.

The centerpiece for the exhibition is *Conversations with Bees*, an interactive sculpture. Here, the artist invites visitors to deliver messages through a hidden microphone to a nearby bee haven on Virginia MOCA grounds. This dialogue is a recognition of our profound interconnectedness with the natural world.

Beyond *Message for the Bees*, a community art project takes root. Members of our community collaborated with Beardsley to create lenticular prints that showcase a powerful vision. These images juxtapose vintage images of Virginia Beach with one that includes a crucial element of a thriving ecosystem. Imagine if the planners had embraced biodiversity—what might the landscape look like today? Witnessing this transformation, community members become drawn into environmental stewardship, active participants in Beardsley's vision for Virginia Beach. *Tell the Bees* isn't an ending; it's a call to action. Immerse yourself in the beauty and purpose of Beardsley's artwork, and leave feeling empowered to make a difference in your own backyard.



The Coastal VA Beekeeper's Calendar



August

- Alfalfa, buckwheat, and goldenrod are in bloom.
- For those not near agriculture, the colony's growth is slowing down. The nectar flow is basically nonexistent. For those near agriculture, cotton and soybean nectar continues until late September.
- Watch out for honey robbing from nearby colonies, yellow jackets, and hornets. Larger colonies will test the defenses of small colonies, so reduce entrances on nucs and weaker colonies.
- Check mite levels and apply Varroa mite treatment as needed once supers are removed.
- Order or begin raising queens for fall replacement.
- Inspect colonies for honey and pollen reserves, queen condition, brood production, worker population, and disease occurrence.
- Feed syrup if low on food stores.
- Protect empty supers in storage and on weak hives against wax moth.

September

- Asters and ironweed are in bloom.
- Remove all excess supers and/or extract after the Fall nectar flow has finished.
- Combine any weak hives with stronger hives.
- Requeen hives with queens older than two years of age.
- Feed syrup if needed.
- Continue wax moth control for stored equipment.

Beehive Distribution Program

Applications for the Beehive Distribution Program will be accepted August 22-September 6, 2024. Recipients of beehive units will be selected at random from qualifying applications. Applications from individuals who were not selected to receive beehive units last year, will not be carried forward to this year's program.

The program provides equipment directly to eligible individuals for the construction of new beehives. Residents of the Commonwealth of Virginia who are 18 years of age or older at the time an application is submitted are eligible to receive up to three beehive units per year. No more than 3 beehive units may be distributed per household. Individuals who submit an application for a beehive unit through the program will be registered as a beekeeper with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Equipment received through the program must be assembled and occupied with a colony of honey bees within one year of receiving the equipment. Honey bees and equipment to manage beehives, such as personal safety equipment and honey processing equipment, are not provided through the program.

Individuals interested in applying should review the [Guidelines & Requirements](#) which provides application instructions. Click [here](#) for more information.





Mite-a-thon 2024

Varroa mites remain a major cause of poor colony performance and winter survival of honey bees. Mites transmit diseases like Deformed Wing Virus and lower lipid levels in adult bees. Sampling for mites in mid-summer is especially important for making timely management decision to prepare colonies for overwintering. Mite-A-Thon 2024 is an effort to encourage Virginia's beekeepers to determine the mite infestation levels in their hives. Sample the bees in your hives for mites and join the Mite-a-thon 2024 survey [HERE](#). Use a standard method (alcohol wash, powdered sugar shake, or sticky board) for assessing mite infestation levels. Enter sampling data in the Mite-a-thon 2024 survey for your apiary location, total number of hives, number of hives tested, and the number of Varroa mites counted from each hive or an average mite load for the apiary. The final few questions in the survey address varroa management used in your beehives. If you have more than one apiary, complete a separate survey for each of your apiaries that are at least 1/2 mile apart. Apiaries within 1/2 mile distances from each other should be combined into responses for a single apiary.

Newly Approved Varroa Mite Control Products

Last year the Environmental Protection Agency registered several new Varroa mite control products (e.g., Amiflex™, Ez-Ox™ tablets, and Varroxsan™). Each product contains Oxalic Acid Dihydrate (OA) for controlling Varroa mite populations in beehives. Amiflex™ is a restricted use product requiring that the user is a certified pesticide applicator. Ez-Ox™ tablets allows for easier application of oxalic acid in using a vaporizer. Varroxsan™ is a slow release and longer acting application of oxalic acid in the honey bee colony. These products are registered with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services for distribution, sale, and use in Virginia. Varroxsan™ registration was approved last week by the Office of Pesticide Services.

Beekeepers using these products or other registered miticides should read the product label and follow instructions for their storage, use, and disposal. The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is required when handling or applying these products.



photos submitted by Kevin Du Bois

Yellow Legged Hornet Traps

A message from State Apiarist, Keith Tignor

Late in 2023 the yellow-legged hornet (YLH), *Vespa velutina*, was found near Savannah, GA. This was the first record of YLH in North America. It is a common pest of honey bees in Europe and other continents where it is found. YLH colonies found near an apiary feed almost exclusively on honey bees consuming nearly 25 pounds of biomass (workers) per nest each year. While it is not known to occur outside of Georgia and South Carolina at this time, surveys for YLH are being conducted among Atlantic Coast states. Late summer and fall are ideal times to survey when YLH colonies reach a peak in population increasing the potential capture of individuals from a nest.

The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) is looking for 100 apiaries to set up and monitor YLH traps over the next few months. Traps are provided by VDACS to beekeepers for setting up in or adjacent to their apiary. This is a Citizen Science Project dependent on beekeepers with a sufficiently sized apiary to make it successful. We are looking for beekeepers with apiaries containing 8 or more beehives. The trap is designed to minimize risk of trapping honey bees and emptied with minimal risk to the beekeeper. It will likely capture other hornets in the area such as the non-native European hornet. Participants are required to check each trap and report the insects captured in their trap(s) every two weeks through November. An online reporting program is available for submitting trapping results.

If you are interested in participating in the survey forward the number of apiaries available and location (county/city) for each apiary you could set up a trap. Trapping locations will be selected from among the beekeepers volunteering to participate. Contact me if you would like more information regarding the trapping and reporting process.

Sincerely,

Keith Tignor

State Apiaries

Office of Plant Industry Services

Virginia Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services

Phone: 804-786-3515

Beehives of Saudi Arabia Thought to be Over 1,000 Years Old



“Maysan governorate, located in the Sarawat mountain range, showcases stunning archaeological scenes of some of the most important and impressive environmental engineering formations. These include approximately 1,200 beehives that were a major source of daily sustenance for the early inhabitants.

The apiaries in Maysan have become a primary source for the production and sale of Saudi honey, which is deeply embedded in the Kingdom’s culture and trade. Abdul Wahab Al-Khudaidi, a history enthusiast, confirmed that the apiaries situated between the Sarawat and Tihamah mountains and are believed to be over 1,000 years old.

These apiaries feature beautiful engineering with remarkable design specifications for honey production. The structures are paved with stones in intricate geometric patterns, spanning up to four levels. The site is difficult to access, requiring navigation through a designated path by an experienced individual. The honeycombs are reinforced with solid stones and columns to support the floors, which are constructed from large, closely positioned stones in balanced shapes...”

[Full article available here.](#)

Honey Peach Cream Cheese Cupcakes

PREP TIME: 20 MIN

COOKING TIME: 20 MIN

MAKES: 12 CUPCAKES



Ingredients

1 1/2 cups flour
1 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/4 tsp salt
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 cup buttermilk
1 cup peach preserves
1/2 cup cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup powdered sugar
1 Tbsp milk
1/2 cup diced fresh peaches
2 Tbsp honey
Sugar crystals, for garnish

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a muffin tin with cupcakes liners.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt.
3. In a separate bowl, beat butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
4. Add eggs and beat well. Stir in vanilla extract.
5. Alternately add the dry flour mixture and buttermilk to the wet mixture, beginning and ending with the dry mixture. Mix until just combined.
6. Fill each cupcake liner halfway with batter, add a spoonful of peach preserves, then cover with more batter until liners are 3/4 full.
7. Bake the cupcakes for 18-20 mins. Let them cool completely.
8. Prepare the frosting by beating together cream cheese, powdered sugar, and milk until smooth and creamy.
9. Frost cupcakes with the cream cheese icing. Top with diced fresh peaches, drizzle with honey and sprinkle with sugar crystals.



Guild clothing is
now available for
purchase!

[Click HERE to order](#)

Future Meeting Dates

August 12th
September 9th

Guild meetings will continue to be offered both virtually via Zoom and in-person at Towne Bank 137 Mt. Pleasant Rd., Chesapeake, VA 23322 at 7:00 pm.

