

# Days of Our Hives

(THE RIBA NEWSLETTER)

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## *President's Letter January 2017*

“They” say that beekeeping isn’t what it was. In those lazy days of the 70’s you could just grab a swarm off a tree, throw it into a box and Bingo! You were a beekeeper. Of course, back then there were few threats to your hives but only had a handful of resources available to you. You kept bees the same way that your mentor kept bees, which was the way his mentor kept bees with only little variation. Not so for today’s beekeepers...

The beekeeper of today has infinite resources at his fingertips. Which is a good thing because he also has a host of issues that the beekeeper of yesterday didn’t have to contend with. From Varroa and Small Hive Beetle infestations to pesticide poisonings, being a beekeeper is no longer a walk in the park. Mentor and mentee need to continuously learn at what seems to be a breakneck pace.; all the while trying to be prepared for the next threat to our charges. For me, this is the part of beekeeping that intrigues me; nothing is carved in stone. The best method this year might only be in the top three next year.

So how do we as beekeepers stay abreast of the ever changing beekeeping landscape? The answer is right in front of us. We are the answer. The RIBA membership list is filled with many knowledgeable local resources. Don’t be afraid to make use of them.

We are a social club. Seek out and speak with other RIBA members. If you need or want one - find a mentor. Go look at each other’s hives, research, discuss new tools and debate treatment methods. We can thrive as beekeepers and as an organization if we all work together.

Yours in beekeeping,

***Keith Salisbury***



## *Press Release from Greenville Public Library*

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On Saturday, November 5th, members of the Rhode Island Beekeepers Association and the Greenville Public Library came together for a reception to welcome the RIBA Book Collection to the Greenville Public Library. The resources in the collection, which are vital to Rhode Islanders hoping to keep bees or to those wishing to study for the E.A.S. Master Beekeeper Certification, are available through the generous donation of the RIBA board and its members.

The collection has found a home at Greenville Library after RIBA members were looking for an efficient way to access these essential books from anywhere in the state. RIBA previously made the uncatalogued books available to members upon request. By donating the book collection to the Greenville Public Library, the public as well as RIBA members will now have access to these materials. Ocean State Libraries uses LORI, a statewide delivery system provided by the RI Office of Library & Information Services, to carry library materials among its members.



This collaboration also supports RIBA's goal of increasing the number of Master Beekeepers in the state. Scott Langlais, RIBA mentor, was crucial in bringing the two organizations together. "The threats facing honey bees have increased exponentially in the past few decades--new pesticides, multiple parasites, and viruses to name just a few", Langlais wrote. "As a

result, beekeepers need to constantly re-educate themselves with the most current information possible. RIBA is proud to partner with the Greenville Library to provide this vitally important material, the bulk of which was formerly unavailable in the Ocean State Libraries network. We're certain this will help to ensure the future health of honey bee colonies in Rhode Island and the crops they pollinate."

The collection, which consists of 44 books, 1 DVD, and 15 VHS will be available to any Ocean State Libraries card holder. The materials may be requested through the OSL catalog at [catalog.oslri.net](http://catalog.oslri.net). For more information, please contact the Greenville Public Library reference desk at 401-949-3630 ext. 103.

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## ***RIBA Officers***

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### ***President***

**Keith Salisbury**

### ***Vice President***

**Malinda Coletta**

### ***Secretary***

**Stephen Burke**

### ***Treasurer***

**Lori Dobson**

### ***Member at Large***

**Dr. Jane Dennison**

### ***Past President***

**Don Joslin**

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## ***Committee Chairs***

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### ***Bee School Director, Instructor-RI***

**Betty Mencucci**

### ***Bee School Instructor-URI***

**Stephen Burke**

### ***Bee School Instructor-URI***

**Ed Karle**

### ***E.A.S. Director***

**Dr. Jane Dennison**

### ***Newsletter***

**Cynthia Holt**

### ***Photo Journalist***

**Emily Langlais**

### ***Presentations***

**John Rodzen**

### ***Programs***

**Lying Peng**

### ***Queen Rearing Committee***

**Scott Langlais**

### ***Refreshments***

**Lori Hill Joslin**

### ***State of RI Bee Inspector***

**Jim Lawson**

### ***Webmaster (Acting)***

**Lori Dobson**

## ***Volunteers Needed!!!!***

**The queen grant needs at least 30 more people or it won't happen!!**

A great opportunity for first timers to pair with an experienced one. Dr. Jane needs about 20 teams. RIBA is hoping to put 200-300 queens into RI during spring, summer and fall re-queening. If you are a beginner and would like to learn more about bees as well as become more comfortable working hives, this is an excellent opportunity. Or, if you have more experience and happen to have some time to spare, then **RIBA needs YOU!**

Please contact Dr. Jane Dennison if you are interested at [jamdmd@aol.com](mailto:jamdmd@aol.com)

## ***2017 Dues Grace Period Has Ended***

Dues are past due for 2017 for anyone who hasn't already done paid them (this does NOT apply to Life\* Members, or Class of 2017 Bee School Students).

We will soon be doing some housekeeping on our mailing list. Our email host, Mail Chimp, likes us to keep only those folks who want to hear from us. I encourage you to please pay your dues now so you can continue getting these NEW newsletters, stay informed of events, and be included in all benefits and discounts! Click here: <http://ribeekeeper.org/membership>

Many thanks!

**Lori Dobson, Treasurer**

\*Life Member status applies if you are 70 years or older and have paid dues consecutively for the last 5 years; see any Executive Board member.

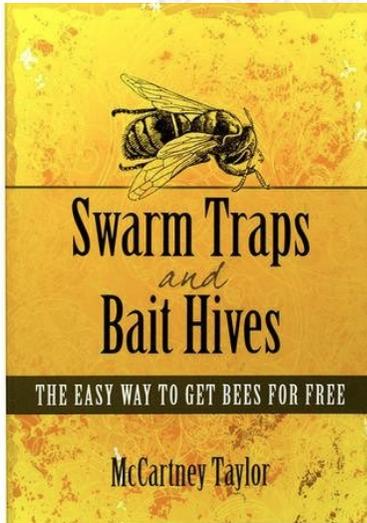


# Notes From The Bee Inspector

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## Bait Hives Are The Answer

*Jim Lawson, RI State Bee Inspector*



Rhode Island beekeepers, even in this miserable weather, are now placing orders for packages and nucs to replace their winter losses or to increase the number of their colonies. Some beekeepers are also hoping to add to the number of their colonies by catching swarms and it's fun to have a swarm (well, most times it's fun). One of the biggest drawbacks of driving out to answer a swarm call to possibly catch that swarm of "a million bees" is that this must be done, of course, during swarm season—the busiest time of year for the beekeeper. During swarm season, healthy colonies are building up rapidly and the beekeeper's goal is to have colonies reach their peak population just when that Spring honey flow begins. If that big populous colony swarms, 30-70% (according to Roger Morse) of the bees leave and that swarm takes with it 100% of what might have been that honey crop of yours. So to keep her potential honey crop during swarm season the beekeeper is reversing brood chambers, equalizing brood in the apiary, or equalizing the adult population by switching the location of a weaker colony with a stronger colony. The goal here is to prevent congestion in the brood chamber so

you can place empty frames of drawn comb (if you have them) between frames of brood. The beekeeper must provide conditions for the bees so that they are thinking about gathering gallons of nectar instead of thinking about leaving home. You must check for swarm cells about every week and if you have them what remedial steps will you take then. Maybe you should have done something before: separation of the queen from the brood (**Demaree**), separation of the brood, removal of the queen, more nectar storage space. All these measures take time but you don't have more time or maybe you could just go out on that swarm call.

Bait hives are the answer. Information Bulletin Number No.187, **Bait Hives for Honeybees** by Roger Morse and Thomas Seeley (RIBA's March speaker) is what you need to read before the weather starts to warm up. I'll bring copies of this publication to the February meeting. **Swarm Traps and Bait Hives** by McCartney Taylor is another publication to read. I can't make copies of this one for you though. I'll also bring a McCartney bait hive that I put together. I am already thinking of changes I want to make to Taylor's design. Hey, I can't help myself. I am a beekeeper!

# Recipes From The Hive

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## *Honey Lime Chicken Skewers*

2 Tbsp honey

3 Tbsp Soy Sauce

1 Tbsp Olive oil

1 lime-Juiced

bamboo sticks for skewers

In a small bowl, whisk all ingredients together until completely blended. Pour mixture into a freezer bag and add in chicken. Reseal bag and shake gently to cover chicken strips. Allow to marinate for 2 hours.

Next, prepare skewers by soaking bamboo sticks in water for 15 minutes. Remove chicken from marinade and skewer onto sticks. Grill on medium to high heat or pan fry for 8 minutes or until juices are clear and chicken is fully cooked.

## *Paw Salve for Dogs*

3 oz beeswax

3Tbs Coconut Oil

3 Tbs Avocado oil

3 Tbs Calendula infused olive oil.

Melt together in glass bowl in a pot of simmering water. Pour into wide mouth jars, tins, large lids of jars or in molds. Allow to cool.

Applying to dogs paws before going out into snow will act as a protectant against salt, chemicals and ice build up.



# Meeting recaps Dec & Jan



**Dec 18, 2016:** Annual Holiday Social. Massachusetts bee inspector Ken Warchol spoke briefly on the topic of late season varroa reinfestation and associated vectored viruses. He stated that this is already shaping up to be the worst season in 10-15 years as far as colony losses over the winter. Viruses, vectored by mites, appear to be the root cause.

It is a particularly insidious problem, because even if your hive is perfectly healthy, and you "did everything right," if your neighbor does not treat and has high mite loads, your bees may rob out their

crashing hive, thus inheriting their mite problem and associated viruses

He related a personal story of finding a rapidly crashing hive in an outyard suffering under a heavy viral load. He relocated this hive to his home for further study, completely forgetting about the danger it could pose to neighboring hives. Sure enough, the two healthy, booming hives next to it soon succumbed to viruses, through robbing and drifting of bees from the infected colony. Though abashed by the outcome, he told this story to illustrate not only the speed and decisiveness with which a healthy colony can be compromised, but also to show that even the best of us can have an occasional lapse in judgment.

The phrase "like American Foulbrood" was uttered several times at the meeting in regards to the mite/virus epidemic--that should be a wake up call! The price of healthy hives is constant vigilance.

After this doom-and-gloom discussion, members enjoyed a potluck holiday social, honey judging, and members selling honey/bee related products.



# Meeting recaps Dec & Jan

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**Jan 15, 2017:** General meeting opened an hour early “strictly for newbies” to have a chance to ask questions outside of the scrutiny of more experience members. Keith Salisbury’s first meeting as president begun with an introduction of elected board members and committee heads. Ed Karle gave a brief recap of the North American Beekeeping Conference in Galveston, TX. Scott Langlais reviewed the progress of the RIBA Queen Yard for 2016 as well as plans for the upcoming year.

Our featured speaker was Nathaniel Ponvert, a Brown PhD student in Pollen Biology (as well as being a beekeeper). He stressed that pollen is *\*not\** plant sperm, rather it is a vehicle for it. Bees, while foraging for nectar or pollen, incidentally pick up pollen grains on their bodies and redistribute them “accidentally” onto the stigma of the next flower, thus accomplishing the act of reproduction. A pollen grain germinates a tube to guide its two sperm cells to the egg. “Beacon cells” help to guide the pollen tube to the egg. After a “molecular conversation” with the beacon cells, the pollen tube explodes its sperm into the egg. A short but informative presentation that got great reviews from listeners.

Finally, RI state bee inspector Jim Lawson gave a short demonstration of bait hives to catch swarms. He recommends using an old deep hive body hung from a tree 15 feet off the ground, in a shaded location but visible. Lemongrass oil can be used as a scent lure. Some debate exists over whether old or new comb should go into the bait hive. He admonished us not to use an empty box or swarm trap as they can be very messy to remove the swarm once bees build comb in them. Jim referenced “Swarm Traps and Bait Hives” by McCartney Taylor as well as Tom Seeley’s research in his talk.

# What's Happening?

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## Upcoming Meetings and Events

### E-Board Meetings

Saturday, Feb 11, 2017  
1-5p Warwick Public Library

Tuesday, March 7 6:30-8:30  
Warwick Public Library

*Board meetings open to all members*

### General Membership Meetings

Sunday February 19, 2017

1-1:45 New Bee Meeting  
2-4 General Meeting with speaker  
Zachery Lamas from Sun Hill  
Apiary, Salisbury, NH [http://  
sunhillapiary.com](http://sunhillapiary.com)

Sunday March 5, 2017

1-1:45 New Bee Meeting  
2-4 General meeting with featured  
speaker Dr. Tom Seeley (see Bio to  
the right)

**SAVE THE DATE!!**

Sunday April 2, 2017 1pm  
Annual Spring Banquet  
Quidnessett Country Club North  
Kingstown, RI  
with featured speaker Kent Williams  
more info to follow...

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## *Congratulations Evelyn!*

Our sincerest congratulations to RIBA member, Evelyn Sayles!! Evelyn has earned her Master Beekeeper certification through the University of Montana. More information can be found at her website <http://summerbeez.com>.

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## *Speaker Announcement*

We are excited to announce that Dr. Tom Seeley is speaking at the March 5 General Membership meeting. After receiving his PhD from Harvard, Dr Seeley joined the faculty at Yale for several years. Since 1986 he has been a professor of biology at Cornell University. Numerous awards, fellowships, and honors have been conferred upon him, including the Gold Medal for Best Science Book (Wisdom of the Hive). In 1997 a species of bee was named after him (*Neocorynurella seeleyi*). Dr Seeley is well known as one of the giants of bee research, specializing in the study of swarm behavior. He is also a highly entertaining speaker, able to present complicated scientific concepts in an easily understood way. His books include *Honeybee Ecology* (1985), *The Wisdom of the Hive* (1995), *Honeybee Democracy* (2010), and *Following the Wild Bees* (2016).

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## *USDA Honey Report*

The link to the monthly USDA Honey Report written by James Prasky can be found here:

<http://marketnews.usda.gov/mnp/fv-home>

# What's Happening?

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## ***The Divelbiss Award***

The Divelbiss Award Nominations are open-This award is presented to a person or couple who has-over a period of years-recked out to the non-beekeeping public to explain the value of honeybees in our lives. Deadline is April 1, 2017 all nominations and letters should be sent to [AwardNomination@easternapiculture.org](mailto:AwardNomination@easternapiculture.org)

## ***E.A.S. News***

EAS has sent out their latest newsletter You can find it at <http://easternapiculture.org>, If you haven't already, consider becoming a member.

## ***Mann Lake/E.A.S. Master Beekeeper Scholarship***

The Mann Lake EAS Master Beekeeper Scholarship is also open for applicants between he ages of 18-25 who are either full time students or currently employed by a commercial or sideliner beekeeper and who is interested in a career in apiculture. The scholarship will provide financial assistance for the individual to attend an annual EAS conference by waiving registration fees and providing up to \$1000 to offset other conference expenses. All applications must be received by April 1st of the year in which the applicant plans to attend the EAS conference. For more information visit the EAS website [easternapiculture.org](http://easternapiculture.org)







