

AABA MEETING Minutes – June 15, 2016 AT ARLINGTON ECHO

President Lindsay Barranco welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7 pm. 46 members attended and six people were attending for the first time.

Announcements:

Dave Polk announced that he has sold Free State Bees to AABA member Delia Edelman of Crownsville Gardens. Dave has managed the company since 2005 and has been a great resource to AABA members for equipment and bee packages in addition to helping teach the AABA Short Course for many years. He thanked AABA members for their years of support, and the members wished Dave success in his new ventures.

Arlington Echo Hive Status: Arlington Echo had 3 hives overwinter and 2 packages installed on April 12, 2016, that are part of the Sentinel Hive Project for the University of Maryland (SHP). An additional two packages were installed June 1st for a total of 7 outside hives in the side yard. AE also has 3 observation hives. Thanks were given to Ted and Jessica from AE and Carl Guerri from AABA for their work managing the hives.

At 6:30 before the main meeting, Carl gave an open hive demonstration of colonies #3 and #5 in the side yard. The colonies that started as April packages were getting full and already in 2 deeps each. Carl found queen replacement cups in one hive and plenty of capped brood in both. All seven hives had good activity with bees foraging. Further evaluation will be done during the hive sampling for SHP.

Sentinel Hive Project with UMD monthly sampling – members may sign up to attend hive visits as part of our monthly sampling which started late May and is scheduled once a month for 6 months through October. The next sampling will be late June. A sign-up sheet was in back, or members may contact Lindsay at lbarranco@comcast.net.

If dues are due – Please see Pat Block at the August meeting if you need to pay membership fees of \$5. New members can mail Pat the membership form from the website with a check.

Varroa Sugar Roll Kits – Brian Hagenbuch and Pam McFarland brought more kits for sale for \$10 as a fundraiser for AABA. Thanks were given to Brian and Pam.

Ollie Snyder, our webmaster, has added "Beekeeping How-To" videos on the aabees.org website. Please take a look at the "Video Arcade" under the Photo Gallery Link.

Bee Talk:

– what is happening in our bee colonies now? What to anticipate/what to do?

- Shortened nectar flow due to the 3 week stretch of rain.

- Swarm control. There were so many swarms this spring due to the bees being confined. Providing more room is key to preventing swarms. Colonies are still growing – check for eggs, larvae, try to see the queen if you can. Remove queen cells (if queen-right) and provide more room with an additional brood chamber or super (with frames). Bees are drawing out comb still, but with the nectar flow ending about now, they will stop shortly unless fed.
- Maryland is coming into summer months when there isn't as much food. Feed colonies if they need it.
- Watch for robbing in summer dearth period. Do quick inspections so access isn't given to bees from outside colony.
- Ticks are a problem in many bee yards. Suggestions to prevent ticks from getting on beekeepers (without harming bees) included: using high top rubber boots; tick repellent clothing; and DEET repellent on the beekeeper.
- Mosquito spraying--members were concerned as to what they can do to protect bees from the increased mosquito spraying this summer. Garlic-based mosquito sprays were discussed for personal yards. If possible, cover hives to prevent flying during county or private company spraying. If hives are covered they must be ventilated (and possibly wet with a sprinkler?). Do not use burlap to screen the bees because the bees get caught in the fibers. **From Cybil Preston--the MD Department of Agriculture will be posting the schedule of areas to be sprayed at their website <http://mda.maryland.gov/>.**

Tonight's Speaker – Sam Droege:

Sam is a wildlife biologist with the United States Geological Survey at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center. He has developed native bee survey techniques and has added 100 species to our list of local bees. He has written a book called *Bees: An Up-Close Look at Pollinators Around the World*.

Sam gave a wonderful overview of the complex relationships between plants and bees and spoke about Maryland's 400 species of native bees. There are approximately 4000 species of native bees in the United States with only about 800 species east of the Mississippi. His presentation included many pictures of different bee species that emphasized the great variations among species. He informed us that the Beltsville Bee Lab is open to the public is able to identify native bees in our back yard.

Native bees are fascinating in how different they are than honey bees. Most are solitary bees and while many are generalists (like honey bees) that need a mix of pollen and nectar for optimal growth, others are specialists that will only visit one plant and grow eating only one kind of pollen. Where honey bees live in social colonies containing tens of thousands of bees, many native bees make nests that are single cells in the ground that contain pollen, nectar, and a single egg, with each female only producing about 8 offspring. This low reproductive rate makes native bees, especially the specialists, vulnerable to loss of habitat.

Sam stresses that we need to foster more native habitat which takes conscious effort and a change in aesthetic preferences. We as a culture do not like weedy meadows, but they are necessary for bees and other pollinators. He supports only using grass in small areas as accents to show that the weedy wildflowers areas are planned.

Sam was warmly thanked for his informative presentation. During the coffee break he signed and sold copies of his book with the proceeds to support more native bee research.

Coffee break for snacks and mingling.

Business Meeting:

The minutes from our last meeting in April, 2016 are posted on our web site. Everyone was encouraged to take a look at them and past minutes (and the website). Thanks were given to Debbie Hewitt.

Treasurer's Report: Pat Block was unable to attend but reported that AABA has \$4030.33 balance in the account.

Anne Arundel County Fair: Michael Doyle announced that the Anne Arundel County Fair will start September 14th this year with the entry days being September 11th and 12th from 10 am to 7 pm. He is calling for increased entries this year and discussed plans for a barrier to prevent entries from being stolen, as some unfortunately were last year. Michael will do another short presentation about fair entries at the June meeting.

Pollinator Protection Act passed limiting homeowner use of neonicotinoid insecticides. If you would like to follow more with the Smart on Pesticides Coalition (SOPC), sign up to receive emails at <http://www.mdpestnet.org/smart-on-pesticides-coalition-members/>.

SKS Jar Order – An AABA newsletter was sent to members from Linda Elliott regarding orders for honey jars in bulk which saves us all on shipping. Contact Linda at blueheroncreations@comcast.net if you want to order some bottles.

Mentoring: Lindsay thanked the many members who have offered to serve as mentors to new beekeepers. She said she receives multiple replies to each request for a mentor. Their time and knowledge is greatly appreciated.

Upcoming Events:

Next AABA meeting: Tuesday, August 16th 7-9 p.m.

Anne Arundel County Fair: September 14-18, 2016.

Honey Harvest Festival at Brookside Gardens & Nature Center in Silver Spring, MD on Saturday, September 17th from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Queen Rearing Workshop – Mike Church, who spoke shortly at the April meeting, will be holding a queen rearing workshop on Saturday, October 1st, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center. This workshop is intended for AABA beekeepers who have kept bees for more than 3 years. Registration information will be sent out soon.

Honey Judging Class – The Maryland State Beekeepers Association will be holding a honey judging class the last weekend of October for beekeepers who are interested in judging or just want to know the best way to show the products from their hives. More information will be sent out soon.

The door prize drawing, a telescoping cover, was won by Peter Quinton. Thanks were given to Dwight Fielder for bringing the prize.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40.

REGISTER YOUR BEES WITH THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE!! Applications were available (online). Cybil Preston Maryland State Apiarist. Maryland law dictates that you must register your bees. Please do it now!