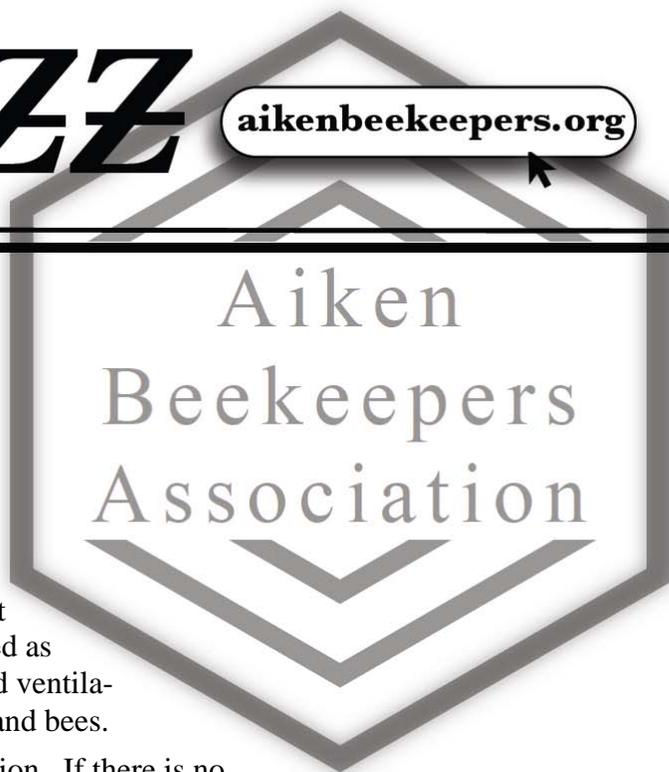


02/24/09

## This Month in the Bee Yard



The first hive examination can usually be made in late February. Select a bright sunny day with calm winds and a temperature of at least 60F for this check. This first check should be kept brief so that the brood will not be chilled. Those items that need to be checked are listed as follows: 1) check that the hive still has adequate upward ventilation, 2) evaluate the food stores and 3) check for brood and bees.

1) Check that the hive still has adequate upward ventilation. If there is no moisture found on the underneath side of the inner cover, that hive has adequate ventilation. If moisture is found during this check, put slightly larger spacers or shims on the topside of the inner cover. This will vent more of the warm moist air to the outside instead of forming moisture on the inner cover. This moisture becomes a problem when it drips back onto the winter cluster. The inner cover must have an open center hole for this method of ventilation to work.

2) Evaluate the food stores. If the bees are still clustered in the brood chamber and the super is still mostly full of honey, the food stores should be adequate for now. If the bees are clustered in the top super, check and make sure that they have at least fifteen pounds of reserve honey. Using three pounds for a shallow super frame full of honey and five pounds for a deep frame of honey can be used to make an estimate of the honey stores. If the colony has less than the above-recommended fifteen pounds of reserve honey, then they should be fed. The easiest way to feed a colony of bees is to transfer a few frames of honey from another hive that may have more honey than they need. Another way to feed the colony is to feed sugar syrup. For spring feeding of sugar syrup, mix one part sugar and one part hot tap water. Use an inside feeder such as a jar or pail with four small holes in the center of the lid. Frame nails are ideal for making these holes. With only a few small holes in the feeder lid, it will be less likely to leak out and flood the cluster during night and day temperature/pressure fluctuations. Place the feeder over the hole in the inner cover or on top of the brood frames directly above the cluster of bees. Then place a super or a hive body over the feeder. Be sure and maintain the opening at the top of the hive for upward ventilation. An outside Boardman (entrance) feeder is not recommended in cold weather because it is too far removed from the cluster.

3) Check for brood and bees. Remove one frame at the edge of the cluster and move each frame over as you work toward the center of the cluster. When you get to a frame covered with bees, check for eggs or brood. If eggs or brood are spotted, the queen is alive and laying. It is not necessary to actually locate and sight the queen during this initial check. This is about all that can be determined from this early check. A more thorough evaluation of the colony can be made next month when there should be more brood and the temperature, hopefully, warmer.

## Upcoming Events

### SC/NC Joint Spring Beekeepers Meeting

The South Carolina Beekeepers Association will host a joint spring meeting with the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association at York Technical College in Rock Hill, South Carolina, on 6-7 March 2009. The meeting will be held at the Baxter Hood Conference Center at York Technical College.

Out of state speakers for the meeting include Kim Flottum, editor of Bee Culture magazine; David Tarpy and Debbie Delaney, N.C. State University; Bart Smith, USDA/ARS Beltsville, Maryland Bee Lab; Stanley Schneider, UNC-Charlotte, Jerry Hayes, Florida Department of Agriculture; and Jennifer Berry, University of Georgia.

The meeting will begin at 2 PM on Friday, 6 March, with a general session followed by a panel discussion. An evening dinner will be held on Friday and will be followed by a keynote speaker. A wire grass band will perform during the evening dinner. Another general session will begin at 8:30 on Saturday morning and several workshops will be offered in the afternoon. The meeting will end at 5 PM.

Contact Mike Hood at 864-656-0346 or email <mhood@clemson.edu> for more information.

## Jan. Meeting Notes

We were happy to announce that we have over **69** people signed up for the Beginning Beekeepers Course! Carey reminded everyone that it is time to pay our yearly dues. Carey also spoke with Mr. Underwood about speaking at one of our meetings about the requirements of a honey house. Jonathan mentioned that it is just about time to do your spring treatments of your hives. He also recommended Bee Culture & American Bee Journal magazines to all the new beekeepers.

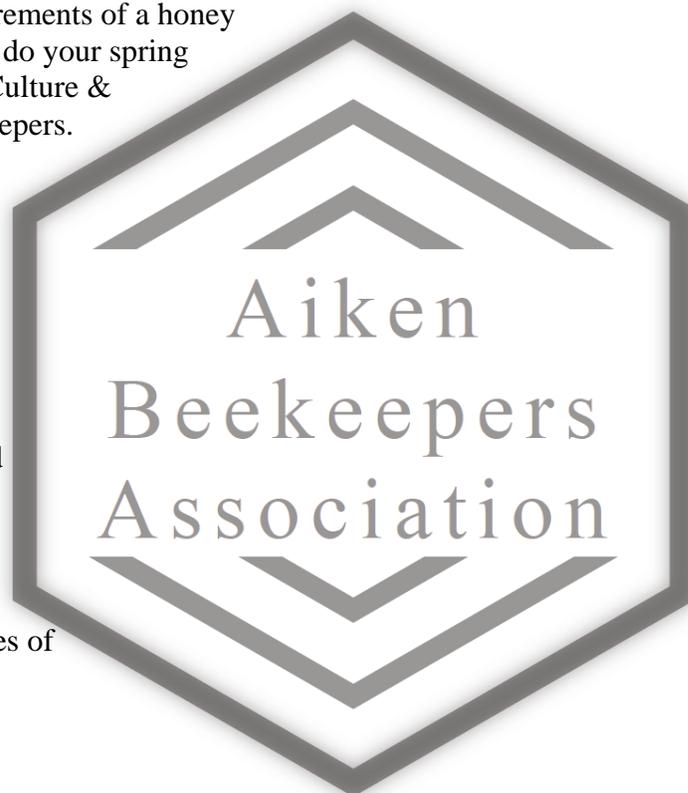
## Nucs from Florida

### ATTENTION MEMBERS!

#### Nucs from Florida

Tommy Thompson, of Midstate Beekeepers Association, is going down to Florida the second/third week in March to pick up five-frame nuc Carniolans. He is generously offering to pick up some for any interested members of our club. This is a great opportunity for those people who are interested in expanding their 'stock' and want to see what other races of bees have to offer.

**Tommy Thompson - (803) 957-3295**



## Mr. Charlie Says

*Deborah Sasser*

January is zipping by at warp speed, with an unusually cold start to the New Year.

When I heard the mercury was dropping into the 20's I thought I should try to help my girls stay as warm as possible during the cold snap. So I scampered off to a fabric shop and found some thick double-sided vinyl material. I created some cute little jackets for the hives. I tied them up with ribbons. I made sure the opening was not covered so the bees could come and go as they pleased. The bees have never had to deal with the record low temperatures and I wanted to do anything I could to help them. With nights reaching record lows I think my girls appreciated their little hive jackets.

Mr. Charlie says....Now is the time to start feeding the bees if you want them to swarm. Start with One part water with one part sugar (ten Pounds) then adds another quart ½ more water. They need to consume the food instead of storing it and turning it into honey. Consuming the food now will make the bees stronger and help them swarm in early March. This is at least 4 weeks earlier than you can buy bees. Your bees get ahead start and are more populous and productive. You get another colony of bees from your own stock. Mr. Charlie has started feeding his bees. As soon as he told me it was time to start feeding my girls I put the food out and they have starting eating like crazy. This is my first winter with the bees I am excited to see what the spring will bring.

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## Cook's Corner

### **Coconut Honey Crunchies**

- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 egg
- 2 cups corn flake cereal
- 2 cups toasted rice cereal
- 1 cup flaked coconut

Combine flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Stir well to blend. Cream butter, sugars, honey, and egg together thoroughly. Add dry ingredients to creamed mixture, mixing well. Stir in cereals and coconut. Drop dough by large teaspoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350F for 7 - 9 minutes or until light golden. Do NOT over bake. Cool on baking sheets 3 minutes then remove and cool completely on wire racks.

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The Association promotes and encourages good beekeeping practices, enhancement in the knowledge base of novice, intermediate and expert beekeepers, production of honey bee products, and public education concerning the honey bee and honey. Any person who has an interest in honey bees and beekeeping is encouraged to become a member of ABA. Membership is open to anyone; novice or expert, hobbyist or commercial beekeeper, and you are encouraged to join us.

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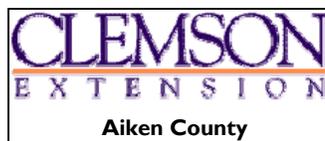
Deborah Sasser, Nathanael Beach



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