

Iron County 4-H Beekeeping News

Iron County, Utah
February 2018

Last month's club activity

At our January 2018 club meeting, we had 1 youth and 2 adults in attendance. We spent the evening discussing:

- Honey bee diseases,
- Pests,
- Medications and alternatives,
- Pesticides,
- Protection from animals, and
- Apiary sanitation.

Next club activity

The next club activity will be on Friday, February 16 from 6 to 9 PM at my home at 714 South 1175 West, Cedar City.

We will cover

- Need and agricultural value of bees
- Colony social organization
- Bee anatomy
- Yearly colony cycle
- Flower anatomy
- Good plants for honey production
- Races of bees
- Careers related to beekeeping



If you want to give a presentation on any of these topics, please let me know.

February in your bee yard

The queen will start to lay eggs in a small pattern this month as the temperatures begin to slowly rise and the days get longer. It will be small and in the center of the cluster but will grow over time as the season progresses. The size of the brood cluster depends on temperature. As it gets warmer, the bees inside the hive are able to move around and utilize their honey stores for the new brood.



As the weather warms and the bees start flying, you may want to take the opportunity to talk with your neighbors about the cleansing flights your bees are taking. Suggest that they don't hang any laundry out on those first warm days to prevent the

inevitable staining. Explaining the need of the bees to take cleansing flights may earn you a sympathetic neighbor, especially if presented with a little honey or honey baked goodie.

During February the bees may consume as much as 2 pounds of honey per day - so make sure your bees still have plenty of honey.

Make sure the hives have enough honey or feed to survive until spring. Either carefully lift the hive and see if it feels heavy or carefully check the hive on a warm day when the bees are flying.

Keep the hive entrances clear of snow.

Identify your needs for the upcoming season - how many supers, frames, bee packages, etc. will you need to meet your needs? Order with plenty of time to pickup, assemble, and paint your new equipment *before* your new packages arrive. When buying paint, remember to ask for returned cans of miss-mix paints, you can usually get these for a better price than new cans and they work just as well.

If you haven't already, it's time to order bees and queens for Spring delivery. Bee vendors are listed at <http://utahbeekeeper.bravesites.com/bees>.

Winter months are a good time to catch up on some reading in books or trade magazines. Identify additional markets for your bee related products for the next year.

Don't open your hives during the Winter unless the winds are light and the temperature is above 50 degrees. Even then close it up quickly.

Elected club officers:

- President - Ethan Hess
- 1st Vice President - Elliott Hess
- 2nd Vice President - Open
- Secretary - Open

Other announcements

The 4-H registration year runs from October through September. If you haven't registered as a 4-H member for the 2016-17 year, please do so right away at ut.4honline.com. If you need help with the process, call the Iron County 4-H Coordinator, Angela Hackwell, at (435) 586-8132.

Make plans to attend the Utah Beekeeper's Association convention in February (<http://utahbeekeeper.bravesites.com/convention>).

Club members are encouraged to set personal goals for the year including keeping a record of the progress of their bees, expenses, lessons learned, and other aspects of their beekeeping hobby. You can enjoy some competition by preparing one or more entries in the county fair such as honey, wax, and candles. All this is part of your workbook (<http://tinyurl.com/c9j72xc>) and can also be part of your 4-H Portfolio (see <http://utah4h.org/html/general-forms/portfolios/>).

When you've completed your beekeeping workbook, please call me to set a date and time to go over your workbook and what you've learned so you can earn your *Iron Beekeeper* certificate.

In addition to the New Jersey 4-H beekeeping manual (<http://tinyurl.com/786xsro>), members are also encouraged to read at least one other book on beekeeping such as *First Lessons in Beekeeping* by Delaplane, *The Backyard Beekeeper* by Flottum, *The Beekeeper's Handbook* by Sammartaro, or *Beekeeping Basics* (free PDF download at <http://tinyurl.com/4mz5d99>) by MAAREC. I have several beekeeping books you may borrow. There are two very good magazines: *Bee Culture* and *American Bee Journal*.

We have a club website at www.ironbeekeeper.org and the Utah beekeepers' Association has a beekeeping webpage at www.utahbeekeepers.com. These websites have links to a lot more online learning opportunities as well as several vendors from whom you can buy equipment and bees.

The club is on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/IronBeekeeper/.

Some free opportunities to learn more about beekeeping:

- A 13-lesson YouTube course in beekeeping is available at www.tinyurl.com/nrzgbe9.
- A short online introductory course on beekeeping at <http://tinyurl.com/6dtsqk5>.
- Another online course is at www.ohiostatebeekeepers.org/beekeeping_class/.
- Long Lane Honey Bee Farms also has some very good online lessons on beekeeping at www.honeybeesonline.com/lessons.html and podcasts on beekeeping at www.honeybeesonline.com/studiobeelive.html.
- Brushy Mountain Bee Farm has some very good videos at <http://tinyurl.com/bldenau>.

The 4-H program offers leadership opportunities for youth at the county level in addition to within our beekeeping club. If you are interested, call Becky Barton at (435) 586-8132.

The Iron County 4-H website is <http://extension.usu.edu/iron/htm/4-h>.

Iron County 4-H Facebook - www.facebook.com/groups/150034192364/.

I am always available to answer questions or to help you with your bees. Feel free to call me any time.

Please share this letter with your parents and interested friends.

Blaine Nay
Club Manager
blaine@nay.org
(435) 590-7569 (cell)
(435) 867-5976 (home)
www.ironbeekeeper.org