

An Introduction to Urban Beekeeping Outline

February 17, 2018

Garden For the Environment

Honey Bee Biology

1. Honeybees & Humans Why Bees, Native Bees, European Honeybees
2. Eusocial Insect Life
3. Honeybee Life Cycle – Worker, Queen & Drone
4. Communication & Language
5. The Honeybee Colony as a Super Organism

Hive Structure and Variations

1. The Langstroth hive: hive body, super, frames, foundation, bottom & cover
2. Other types of hives – Topbar, Warre, WBC, Skeps
3. Equipment for the beekeeper: veil, gloves, smoker, hive tool

Locating Your Hive in an Urban Area - Backyards, Roofs, Community Gardens

1. Consideration of neighbors, and public: avoiding nuisances (new regs)
2. Conditions best for your bees: orientation, sun, wind
3. Beekeeper's needs: room for inspection & moving
4. Planting for a bee friendly garden
5. Bee Stings: what to expect, individual reactions, allergies & Epi-pens

Colony Life Cycle & Hive Management

1. Starting a colony from a package, swarm or nucleus – queen + 5,000 – 10,000 workers in one brood box. 4-6 weeks
2. Maturing colony – 10,000 – 20,000 bees in 2-3 brood boxes. 6 – 12 weeks
3. Mature colony – 20,000 – 40,000 bees in 3 medium brood boxes + honey super(s). 3 Months – until fall
4. Pest & disease treatment considerations. IPM strategies
5. Harvest honey from supers, & preparing for winter

Opening & Inspecting a Hive

1. Best time & conditions for opening a hive. Weather, last visit notes
2. Preparing the visit. Protection & equipment, neighbors, purpose
3. What to look for before opening. Forager activity, drones, temperament
4. Smoking hive & removing cover
5. Inspecting frames in brood area. Start from edge & move towards center
6. Indicators of healthy colony – eggs, larvae pupae in a good brood pattern.
7. Few mites, no workers w/ deformed wings, not too many drones

Bee Responsible – Bee Safe

- Cover skin, wear a veil, gloves, long sleeves & pants, socks, shoes & Epi-pen
- Have your smoker well lit
- Work your bees on sunny, warm days when neighbors are not outside
- Work with a partner, get help if needed