



Fort Bend Buzz

May 2024

the monthly newsletter of the Fort Bend Beekeepers Association
fostering safe, responsible, successful beekeeping

The Fort Bend Beekeepers Association meets on the second Tuesday of each month (except December). The May 14, 2024 meeting will be held at 7:00 pm both at Fort Bend County's "Bud" O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd., Rosenberg, Texas. Visitors and new members are always welcome (membership dues are \$10.00 per person, per calendar year). We will be called to order at 7:30 after 30 minutes of social time.



April Meeting Notes

Prior to the meeting, the Intro to Beekeeping Study Group met for session 3 (of 4). Group Leader, Javier Delgado of Apis Pro Farms, gave the presentation Swarming, Queenless colony Robbing, Small Hive Beetles and Wax Moths. 15 Study Group members and 2 non-members signed in for the session and more non-member arrived and sat in after the sign-in sheet had been passed around.

President Danessa Yaschuk opened the meeting at 7:30 and welcomed all.

Vice President Jody Taylor then gave the announcements which included:

- Thank you to Danessa, Mike & Theresa Hruby, and Dan Berry for staffing our table at Lamar Consolidated ISD's Spring Book Festival on Saturday.
- Honey Bee Jubilee in New Ulm is on May 4th from 9am-4pm at the St. John Lutheran Church Festival Grounds. This is a family-friendly event with bee and honey related activities and vendors.



Lamar Consolidated ISD's Spring Book Festival

- BuzzFest at BeeWeaver is on May 25th. If you've been to this event, you know it is a blow-out bee festival. Attendance is limited and if you want a decent parking spot, plan to arrive super early. Tickets are \$7, children 3 and under are free.
- TBA Summer Clinic is on June 25th in Allen Texas, which is just north of Dallas. Tickets are \$110 for TBA members and \$135 for non-members.
- And, the *In the Bee-Yard* tasks for April.

Harrison Rogers then spoke briefly. He thanked all the Fort Bend members who volunteered for AgVenture at the rodeo, and especially thanked SweetNes Honey (Danessa) for providing the bee colonies for the observation hives.

Since everyone is anxiously awaiting nectar flow to start, Harrison told us about the weight tracking he has on one of his hives. With the data, he is able to tell the exact date nectar flow has started and when it has ended for the past few years. For this hive, the earliest start was April 12th and the latest start was May 2nd.

Honey Flow	Start	End	Days
2022 F9	May 2	Jun 1	31
F3	Apr 12	May 4	22
F7	Apr 16	May 29	43
2023 F3	Apr 12	May 5+	23+
2024 F7	Apr 24		
F10	Apr 27		
F20	Apr 25		

(This table was sent to Lynne on May 1st)

Jody then introduced our guest speaker, Kevin Pritts. Kevin is the Mosquito Control Manager with Fort Bend County Environmental Health. His presentation, *Mosquito Control and Pollinator Protections in Fort Bend County*, shared

a lot of good information about the biology of mosquitos and most importantly how it is determined that action (fogging) is to be taken, what products are used, and what action, if any, should be taken by the beekeeper to protect their bees.

Surveillance is the foundation of their program and consists of routine monitoring of both larval and adult vector populations using traps and actively monitoring in the field. The information collected from the surveillance determines if insecticidal treatment is needed.

When conditions require insecticidal treatment, there are four “best practice” conditions that are followed. 1. They use Ultra Low Volume Technology; 2. The timing of spraying is at night when the mosquitos are active and the bees are most likely to be in their hive; 3. Weather conditions, in particular the wind, has to be within the required parameters; and 4. They do not spray within 300 feet of a No Spray Zone.

As of 4/9/24, these are the products used by Fort Bend Mosquito Control:

Products Used and Best Practices

Pesticides and Microbials

- Adulticides Used
 - Perm-X UL 4-4 (Permethrin, Piperonyl Butoxide)
 - Mosquitomist 1.5 ULV (Chlopyrifos)
- Larvicides
 - Mosquito Dunks (Bti)
 - Natular (Spinosad)
 - Altosid (Methoprene)



As members of the public, we should do our part by not allowing standing water to become breeding sites. Where standing water can't be prevented, Kevin highly recommended *Bacillus thurengensis israelensis* (Bti) Mosquito Dunks. This product is readily available at stores and online. It very specifically targets mosquito larvae **and is nontoxic to humans and other wildlife, including bees.**

There are steps you can take to mitigate the effects of spraying to your bees:

- Cover hives at night when bees are at home.
- Keep hives away from the street – at least 300 feet if possible.

- Create a barrier between the street and your hive – e.g. hedge bush.
- Use a sprinkler on bee hives during ULV applications to reduce bee activity and bearding.

To request your address be added to the no spray list, send an email to

EH-MosquitoControl@fortbendcountytexas.gov.

The Subject Line should include Do Not Spray.

Provide the address of the property that is being requested to not be sprayed, and provide a reason for the request (you have bee hives at the address).

It is important to note, if you are in a city, you need to contact your city. Also, some HOA's contract independent spraying, so check with your property management company if you are in an HOA neighborhood.

After the presentation, Danessa and Lynne conducted the door prize drawings. Thank you to those who donated door prizes and congratulations to those who won.

Attendance was 48.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report as of April 30, 2024.

Our reported treasury balance on March 31, 2024 was \$1,299.98. Since then, we received \$140.00 in dues and \$50.00 donation from a Swarm Capture homeowner. Expenses were \$45.99 Network Solutions for renewal of .org domain, and \$15.59 monthly SquareSpace fee. The resulting balance is \$1428.40 (\$1,378.40 in the checking account, plus \$50.00 in cash to make change.)

