



# BEEBITS

## NEWSLETTER

### Next Meeting

Wednesday, March 15                      Time: 7 PM  
 Gateway Centre Suites                    1313 E. Maple St.  
 The Rainier Room, Ste. 301              Bellingham, WA  
 "Bee-giners" session: 6–7 PM Rainier Room

### WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT SMALL FARM EXPO



**Saturday, March 11, 2017, 10am - 3pm**  
**Haggen Expo Building,**  
**NW WA Fairgrounds, Lynden**

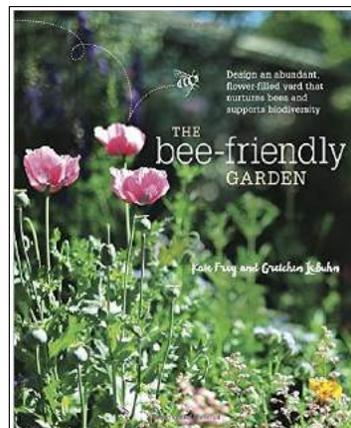
Beekeeping is just part of the agriculture picture in Whatcom County, and this annual event highlights many aspects of that picture.

The open house event will include indoor and outdoor exhibits demonstrating the latest in agricultural technology, products and services, as well as seminars by a variety of speakers. Designed to be an informal meet-and-greet and networking event, visitors will find opportunities to engage with vendors, experts, veterinarians, and other small farmers, as well as discover new resources to help improve and expand healthy crops, animals, pastures and more.

For a complete list of exhibitors and seminars, go to:  
[www.whatcomcd.org/upcoming-events](http://www.whatcomcd.org/upcoming-events)



### BOOK REVIEW



*In case you missed getting down to the Northwest Flower and Garden show to hear Kate Frey, co-author of The Bee Friendly Garden, here is a review and hearty recommendation of her book by very earnest BC beekeeper Janet Wilson.*

### THE BEE-FRIENDLY GARDEN

--Review by Janet Wilson

Like most beekeepers, I began my beekeeping career expecting that over the summer season, bees just naturally feed themselves. I had not allowed for the fact I am trying to keep my bees in a climate quite unlike their ancestral home range, and in addition, I live in an area where bee and pollinator forage volumes are shrinking. Urban sprawl, monoculture based farming and the eradication of hedgerows and wild spaces are steadily removing valuable wild forage sources from the pollinator diet. And the local bee density makes for intense competition for forage sources.

The question most often posed to me by persons interested in bees is "What can I do to help honey bees and pollinators?" I quickly realized the best answer is "Plant, plant, and plant some more!". We are frequently told that one garden will not make "a difference", but I can emphatically disagree with that statement. When we moved into our very manicured neighbourhood over then years ago, I noticed that our yard was devoid of insect and animal life. No bugs, no birds, not an earthworm to be seen: the previous owner (and most of the

neighbours) had sprayed heavily with insecticides and herbicides. I began planting insect and bird friendly plants and enriching the soil. It took three years but our yard has since become a bird and insect haven.

But people needed more than just the instruction to plant: they needed to know what to plant. I needed to become more educated on the topic of pollinator plantings and read every book I could find on that subject. **The best I have found is *The Bee-friendly Garden*, by Kate Frey and Gretchen LeBuhn.**

Frey (a garden designer) and LeBuhn (an ecologist and gardener) have produced an interesting, highly readable book that pays attention to the why's and how's of constructing a pollinator friendly landscape. They explain how various insect populations forage and grow, and then launch into lucid and beautifully illustrated explorations of what to plant, and how to group plantings for various spaces and intentions, including boulevards, hedges and lawn replacements. Best of all, they include wide ranging plant lists suitable for every biozone, with recommendations helpful to any gardener, beginner or expert. I was particularly pleased by the inclusion of tree species, and by the final chapter "Becoming a Bee Activist", which includes information leading to a wide range of resource organizations.

*The Bee-friendly Garden* would make an excellent addition to the beekeeping bookshelf, including the one in your local library or club.

**The best answer to how you can help honey bees is "Plant, plant, and plant some more!"**

**TRIVIA BEE & Silent Auction, Friday, April 21, 2017, 6 pm to 9 pm, at BTC's Settlemyer Hall**

Once again, it's time for the annual Trivia Bee to benefit the Whatcom Literacy Council. (<http://whatcomliteracy.org/>)

In past years, MBBA members have generously donated gift baskets featuring their honey harvest. If you would like to help this incredibly worthy cause, contact the council at (360) 752-8678 for more info.



And here's BEE TRIVIA!  
*Apis Mellifera* "honey gatherer" could more accurately be called *Apis Mellifica* "honey maker," since we all know it isn't honey that's being gathered!



### WSU EVENT

Washington State University is bringing Paul Stamets and Louie Schwartzberg to Seattle to provide education and awareness about mycelium, honey bees and solutions to problems that truly have an impact on our food supply.

They will be hosting an event in Seattle on March 29 at the Moore Theatre, featuring cutting edge research and innovative alternative methods for not only helping the honey bee, but people and the planet as well.

Both Paul and Louie are well known TEDtalk speakers, as well as experts in their fields. We anticipate a sold out venue at the Moore. *All proceeds go to honey bee and pollinator research.*

Buy tickets (\$25.) and get all the attendance info at: <http://bees.wsu.edu/seattle/>



**Beekeeping Mismanagement**

**Causes of most colony failure:**

- Starvation and malnutrition
- Undetected and/or untreated disease
- Controls applied too late or at wrong time
- Poor winter preparation
- No hygienic management practices
- Poor equipment
- Lack of knowledge about the life cycle of pathogen and how it relates to honey bee cycle
- Underdosing/overdosing of drugs or chemicals
- No brood frame replacement program
- Insufficient monitoring

### EXCELLENT WEBINAR SERIES

BC Provincial apiarist, Dr. Paul van Westendorp just wrapped up a four-part webinar series on beekeeping. He focused at first on beginning beekeeping, but also delved into good beekeeping practices and disease treatment. His discussion

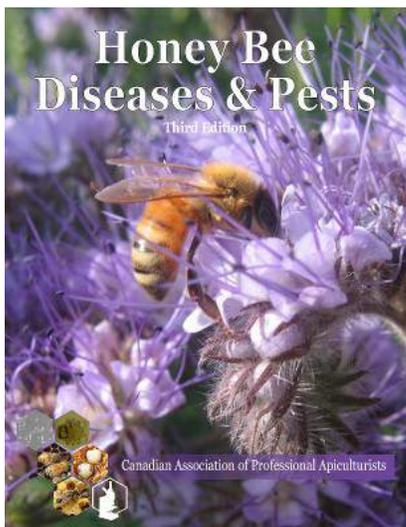
covered all of the mismanagement problems listed above, and he went into detail about proper management. Much of the information can be found at the British Columbia Agriculture site: [www.gov.bc.ca/apiculture](http://www.gov.bc.ca/apiculture).



Dr. Paul van Westendorp, BC Provincial Apiarist

There are many valuable links to beekeeping information on the BC site, and Dr. van Westendorp's contact info is there as well. He is very responsive to questions, even from us Americans, regarding beekeeping issues. He will even accept samples of suspect larvae to determine if you have American Foul Brood in your hives. (See the site or contact him for submission details.) He is anticipating a repeat of the webinar next year, so you might want to check in for that.

An extremely comprehensive reference mentioned in the webinars and highly recommended for all beekeepers is the Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists' (CAPA) publication, *Honey Bee Diseases and Pests* (third edition).



This edition is filled with photographs that help make it easier to identify problems with your bees and it offers control options for dealing with those problems.

The cost is only \$10 from CAPA, but shipping from Canada is prohibitive, so a group MBBA order would be the best option. If you're interested, please contact Gary Clueit, [president@mtbakerbeekeepers.org](mailto:president@mtbakerbeekeepers.org).

Bee Culture sells the edition for \$16.

[store.bee-culture.com/honey-bee-diseases-pests-third-edition/](http://store.bee-culture.com/honey-bee-diseases-pests-third-edition/)

Mann Lake and Dadant offer it for \$17.95.



On the road.

A tidbit from Dr. van Westendorp's webinar:

### **BEE STINGS 101**

The most important thing to do when you get stung is to FLICK the stinger out with a sharp-edged object (think credit card). If you TWEEZE it out, you squeeze the venom in. Then, forget all the home remedies such as toothpaste, vinegar, or the like. Put an ice cube on it.

### **THERE'S STILL TIME TO REGISTER YOUR HIVES FOR 2017**

Registering your hives is a good way to support honey bee research. (Also, it's cheap.) Go to [agr.wa.gov/plantsinsects/Apiary/](http://agr.wa.gov/plantsinsects/Apiary/), download the form, and send it in. (**Deadline is April 1.**) That link also offers some interesting info, such as *10 Ways to Protect Bees from Pesticides*, which is filled with links on pesticide information. You can also click around and find answers to all sorts of questions about beginning beekeeping, and honey bee biology, as well as educational resources.

