

The Bee Line

Pineywoods Beekeepers Association

Next meeting April 9, 2026, 6:30 pm

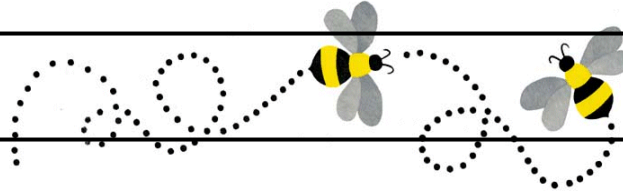
Lufkin VFW Post 1836

1800 Ford Chapel Road, Lufkin

<https://www.pineywoodsbeekeepers.org/>

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APRIL PROGRAM

Ricky Davis and Edward Doucet will talk about biological conditions conducive to swarming and what to watch for in your hives. They'll describe how to make walk-away splits, nucs, or Demaree splits depending upon your goals (more hives, more honey, stronger hives).

SEASONAL TIPS

Robert Jones

April sees the honey flow getting heavier with the continuance of the wildflowers along with the yaupon holly that flows to mid-April and with the privet hedge starting about the time the yaupon stops and flowing to May 1st. This early flow is the first excess honey that can be captured in Deep East Texas. The timing of extracting the honey should be about May 10th. Be sure the frames are well capped before extraction.

Supering and queen evaluation take precedence over possible extraction this month.

- Rule Number One: If you want honey, don't be behind on your supers. Supering after the fact of the nectar flow is just a miss until next year.
- Rule Number Two: After splits, you must evaluate the queen situation in each hive. Whether or not you are using queen cells or live mated queens you must evaluate them about two weeks after their introduction to the hive. Live queens can be rejected and killed at times. Queen cells are always a maybe. You can only know after they return, if they do, if they have been mated correctly. It takes 12 to 20 drones to create a well-mated queen bee. At the first two week mark you will be noting if she has returned and if she is laying eggs (note late queens coming back in the third week will likely be bad). The next time you will note is at the one month mark.

If you are using full box splits with a lot of bees you should want to see a large laid out area at 30 days with minimum drone cells. The larger the laid out area, 6 to 8 frames, the higher the queen quality. If this is what you find, super this colony immediately. This queen will make you honey. However, if the brood area is extremely small and there are no eggs, spotty brood, just drone brood, or the brood just doesn't exist, kill the bad queen bee and replace her. She is a bad queen and will not improve (Note: A

queen will only lay out an area as big as there are nurse bees to cover it). If it is late into the season, you may also stack this super on a good queen for an extra boost on colony expansion and more honey.

Smaller 2- or 3-frame nuc starts should be evaluated based on their bee resource levels. These small starts should have extremely small entrances and, if possible, be kept in a different apiary yard a couple of miles from your main one. (NOTE: If there is a dearth of nectar, small colonies normally are robbed out.)

Package bees ordered back in January will arrive with new queens and will need installation into hives. Swarm control will need to continue during the nectar flow time with extra supers. Keep those bees working. Continue to feed small hives or hives that you are still working to grow for brood production.

WHAT'S BUZZING

Thank you to Jamia Diette for conducting the queen rearing class! She works for Lamb Honey Co. as a queen grafter. Several people told me what a wonderful class this was.

Spring Garden Gala Day – April 11th, 9am-2pm, Pineywoods Native Plant Center. Features hard-to-find, "Texas-tough" plants, including native species, perennials, and shrubs. A link to the plant list can be found at <https://www.sfasu.edu/gardens/events/plant-sale>

Free beekeeping class – 1st & 3rd Sundays at 5:30 pm at Nacogdoches Seventh Day Adventist Church playground April 15th – Nov 15th. Facebook post by Vasiliy Osadchuck from Ukraine with over 40 years' experience. Theory and hands-on for beginners plus advanced discussions for the pros.

At-Home Beekeeping Series presented by the Lawrence Co. Alabama Extension Office. 6:30-7:30 pm. Recordings from this series are available **for only two weeks** after each session on the Lawrence County Alabama Extension Office Facebook page. <https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/bees-pollinators/at-home-beekeeping-series/>

2026 Dates and Topics

April 28 — The Role of Varroa and Viral Dynamics in Winter Honey Bee Losses
Esmaeil Amiri, Mississippi State University Extension

May 26 — Overview of Honey Bee Viruses and Research Efforts to Combat Them
Alexander McMenemy, US Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service

June 30 — Queen Management Essentials
Juliana Rangel, Texas A&M University

Why did the bee go to the dermatologist?
It had hives.

What does the professor bee say when a student asks a question about the course?
"It's on the sylla-buzz."

These and other jokes can be found at <https://www.rd.com/article/bee-puns/>

COMB-GROWN GOODNESS

Grilled Broccoli Salad

<https://www.wyseguide.com/grilled-broccoli-salad/>

2 lbs broccoli cut into large florets to prevent burning
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp kosher salt
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup toasted almonds roughly chopped
grated Parmesan cheese to garnish

For the dressing:

½ cup fresh parsley leaves
1 clove garlic
2 tbsp drained capers
2 tsp honey
3 tbsp fresh lemon juice
⅓ cup grated Parmesan cheese
⅓ cup olive oil
½ tsp kosher salt
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper



Prepare the broccoli: Slice the broccoli into large florets, keeping multiple stems together to allow for easier grilling. Place the broccoli on a sheet pan and drizzle with olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and black pepper. Toss to combine.

Grill the broccoli: Heat the grill to medium heat and add the broccoli. Grill for 2-3 minutes per side or until well charred, then remove from the heat.

Make the dressing: In a bowl or large measuring cup, add the parsley, garlic, capers, honey, lemon juice, Parmesan cheese, olive oil, salt, and black pepper. Using an immersion blender, process until the ingredients are combined and mostly smooth.

Assemble: Slice the grilled broccoli into bite-size pieces, tending toward the larger size. Add to a bowl and drizzle the dressing on top. Toss to combine. Then, add chopped almonds and more Parmesan cheese, and toss again before serving.

Cilantro Lime Chicken

<https://natashaskitchen.com/grilled-cilantro-lime-chicken/>

2 lbs chicken breast (or thighs), (4 small/medium chicken breasts)*
3 Tbsp olive oil
1/4 cup lime juice, (freshly squeezed)
3 garlic cloves, minced
3 Tbsp cilantro, finely chopped, plus more to garnish
1 tsp salt
½ tsp ground black pepper
1 tsp ground paprika
1 Tbsp honey
1 lime, cut into wedges for serving



How to Make Cilantro Lime Chicken

In a bowl, combine oil, lime juice, garlic, cilantro, salt, pepper, paprika, and honey for the marinade. Add the chicken to the mixture and allow to marinate for 30 minutes or up to 2 hours then cook the chicken either on the grill, in a skillet, or bake it in the oven (see instructions below). Once it's cooked, serve with lime wedges and garnish with more cilantro if desired.

How to Grill Chicken

Preheat the grill to medium heat. Cover and grill the chicken for 4-5 minutes per side, depending on thickness, or until cooked through*.

To Cook Chicken in a Skillet

Set a large non-stick, non-reactive skillet or grill pan over medium heat. Add 1 Tbsp oil and saute chicken in a single layer for 4-5 minutes per side until browned and cooked through*, depending on the thickness of your chicken. If your chicken is very thick, cover the chicken with a lid after you flip it.

How to Bake Chicken

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place the chicken breast on a lined baking sheet or large casserole dish. Bake uncovered for about 20 minutes or until cooked through.

*If chicken breasts are uneven in size, set them between 2 sheets of plastic wrap and pound them to an even thickness. This will help to tenderize the chicken and cook it faster and more evenly.

*Chicken breast should be cooked until it reaches 165°F at the thickest part on an instant-read thermometer.

A few pictures from Bee School and Grafting Class

