



Thinking about Trying a Flow Hive?

Michael Duchouquette

There seem to be a million opinions out there about the Flow Hive, but I'll offer mine anyway in case other folks are considering trying it.

I started beekeeping relatively recently, just a couple of years ago. Learning about Colony Collapse Disorder and the problems bees were facing made me think hard about how I could help promote and protect pollinators. My parents always had farm animals while I was growing up, but I didn't have the property to do any traditional farming. Beekeeping seemed like a great way to teach my children about our ecosystem and the importance of bees in our food chain, and I liked the idea of harvesting pure raw honey for our family and community as a replacement for sugars and other sweeteners.

At around the same time, I began seeing Kickstarter and Indigogo campaigns for the Flow Hive. A full description can be found [HERE](#), but to summarize: Flow Hive frames fit into a standard Langstroth super, and consist of partly formed honeycomb cells; the bees complete the comb with their wax then fill the cells with honey, before finally capping the cells. When the frame is full, honey is harvested by turning a key that "splits" the cells to create channels for the honey to flow down, so it is literally "on tap."

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Photo: A.B. Bennett

SAVE THE DATE!

September 23, 2017
NMBKA Presents Dr. Dewey M Caron
South Broadway Cultural Center

September 30, 2017
2017 Apiary and Pollinator Garden Tour
Albuquerque & vicinity

THE NEW MEXICO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

is dedicated to informing and inspiring persons interested in beekeeping, and educating the general public.

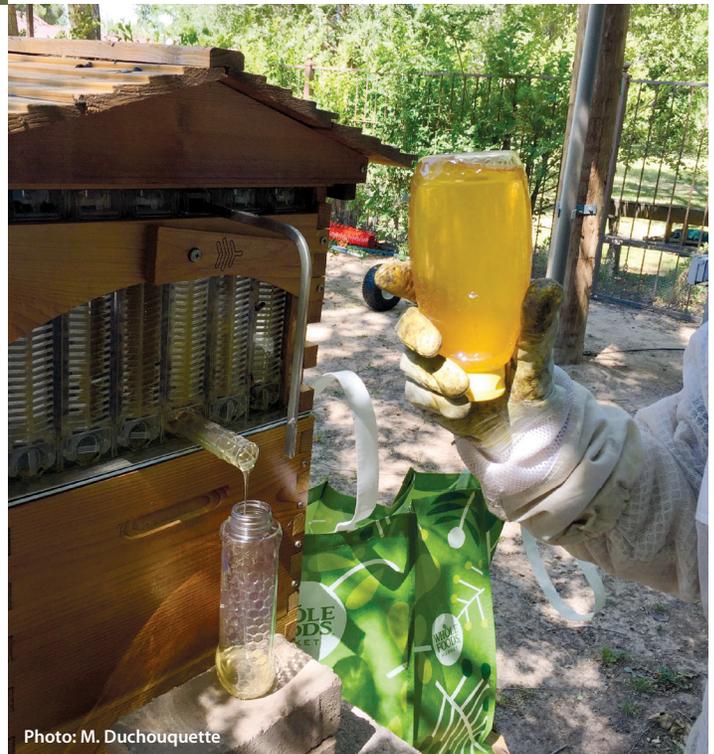


Photo: M. Duchouquette



Message from The President

Howdy!

This is the time of year when we begin traveling around the state of New Mexico testing hives for pests, disease and pesticide loads as part of the [USDA Honey Bee Survey](#). The survey helps beekeepers by providing a full diagnostic of their hives, while also helping the USDA track and understand trends that are harming our bees nationwide.

For me, though, the best thing about these travels is getting to visit with far-flung friends around the state and seeing what beekeeping looks like in this Land of Enchantment. While we are out traveling, I especially want to reach out to the many local bee groups popping up around the state. Let us know what kind of support the New Mexico Beekeepers Association can provide to help your group educate, advocate, and build business opportunities for beekeepers and bee lovers. We envision the NMBKA as an umbrella for other bee groups, so whatever umbrella we build together, I want to make sure that it fills the needs in your community.

Interesting NM Beekeeper fact: A few years back, a beekeeper in Clovis harvested some honey that smelled like dirty gym socks and was really salty! Still trying to track down the patch of flowers that make that special honey treat. What weird honey have you tasted in your region?

Kindly,

Jessie Brown
President

New Mexico Beekeepers Association



Have an idea for an article or feature that you would like to see in the NM Beekeepers Association Newsletter?

Please get in touch!

editor@nmbeekeepers.org

NEW MEXICO BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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At first I was apprehensive, but after they began to ship and beekeepers across America started posting experiences with their new hives, I ordered my first Flow Hive in early 2016. Today my partners and I have six Flow Hives out of the 40 or so Langstroth Hives that we manage. We are still very new to commercial beekeeping, but we think growing our operation to 200-250 hives over the next four years is an attainable goal.

In my opinion, the Flow Hive has some great features that stand out from traditional hives. The viewing window allows you to view the outer frame of the honey super and watch the activity of the bees, see how the bees are progressing, and determine the optimum time to harvest. The back of the Flow Hive super allows you to see the ends of each frame, see when they are filled and capped, and harvest without disturbing the colony or killing any bees in the process. What has impressed me the most, though, is the short amount of time between harvests. We have been harvesting the entire eight-frame super about every 30 days, which seemed almost too good to be true at first.

We are continuing to compare our traditional hives with the Flow Hive to identify other differences or possible advantages. For instance, there is a 10-frame super Flow Hive that you can put onto traditional 10-frames without any modifications, so we are testing this larger super against our traditional hives to see what differences it makes in terms of the amount of time between harvests, the amount of honey harvested, etc.

I do think of the Flow Hive as more of a garden hive. There is a significant upfront cost to owning a Flow Hive compared to traditional hives, but aside from the price, it provides a lower barrier to entry into beekeeping because of the experience you get, the ease of use, and bounty of raw honey that comes with zero processing. Right now it seems too cost prohibitive for my partners and me to use only Flow Hives, but if they hold up and provide consistently over time, that may change.

I know that some folks talk about Flow Hives not being "natural," or think it is too much of a hands-off approach. I think that is something that each beekeeper will have to decide individually. Beekeepers have different goals, beliefs and preferences. Finding what works best with your environment, climate, and skillset may not always match other beekeepers' experiences.

That being said, the Flow Hive definitely lowered the level of fear that I personally had going into beekeeping, and got me excited about a new way of harvesting honey. I would probably still be a beekeeper if it weren't for the Flow Hive, but maybe not at the level I am at today. I think the Flow Hive has opened a new chapter in beekeeping that will benefit all of us in the long run by spreading the awareness of honeybees and other pollinators. People are passionate about their bees, and supporting other beekeepers is in the best interest of all.

Michael Duchouquette lives in El Paso, TX but works with New Mexico beekeepers and co-founded the Paseo del Norte Beekeepers Association in Southern New Mexico. 



Photo: M. Duchouquette

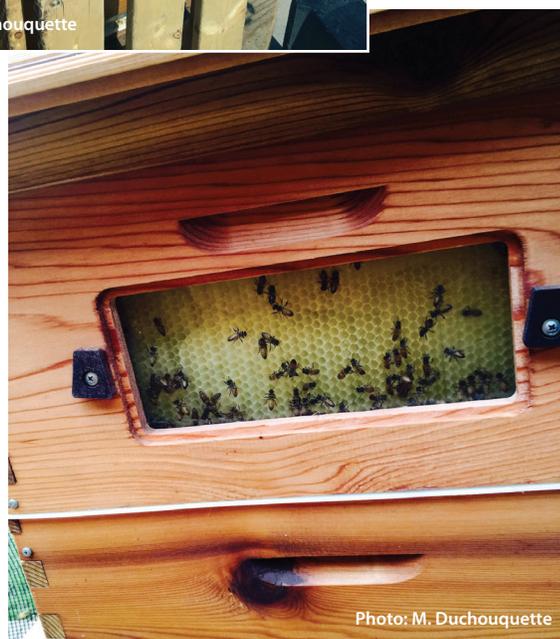


Photo: M. Duchouquette



Supporting and Restoring Pollinator Habitat

Dr. A. B. Bennett

As all beekeepers know, bees and other pollinators provide valuable services to agricultural crops, backyard gardens, and native plant communities across New Mexico. Unfortunately, both managed and wild bees are experiencing population declines, and one factor contributing to the decline of pollinators is loss of natural habitat.

Natural habitats, which contain high plant diversity, provide food and nesting resources essential to supporting pollinator populations. One strategy used to maintain and increase pollinator populations is reconstructing diverse plant communities in degraded agricultural and urban landscapes. In New Mexico, the shortgrass prairie once covered the eastern third of the state, and this plant community included a diverse mix of grass and forb species.

Several programs are available to assist in the reestablishment of grassland habitat for pollinators...



Photos: A. B. Bennett

Non-Federal Programs:

1. Bayer: Feed a Bee

The goal of the [Bayer Feed a Bee program](#) is to establish pollinator foraging habitat in all 50 states. Competitive grants are available in the amounts of \$1,000, \$2,500, and \$5,000. This program specifically welcomes proposals from beekeepers, both individuals and associations. Funding priorities include: 1) establishing pollinator habitat on farms, in community gardens, or on school grounds, and 2) developing education initiatives that encourage others to plant pollinator habitat. Feed a Bee offers a wonderful opportunity for individual beekeepers to establish native habitat on their own property or the opportunity for honey bee associations to organize a community project.

2. Native Plant Society of New Mexico

The [Native Plant Society of New Mexico](#) also offers a small grant program aimed at educating the public about native plants, fostering native plant conservation, and encouraging the use of native plants to support wildlife. For instance, the Native Plant Society of New Mexico could be a natural partner for the New Mexico Beekeepers Association on a project that establishes native habitat for New Mexico pollinators. Grants are a maximum of \$1,500.

3. New Mexico Clean and Beautiful Grant

The [Clean and Beautiful Grant program](#) is offered through the Tourism Department of New Mexico. Its mission is to fund projects that beautify New Mexico's communities. Last year this program awarded \$700,000 for projects that worked to educate, clean, and improve the aesthetics of public spaces. Establishing pollinator habitat in city parks, community gardens, or along New Mexico roads offers an exciting opportunity to improve pollinator conservation in urban landscapes while improving the aesthetics of sites visible to tourists as well as community residents. The Clean and Beautiful grant program could be an opportunity for NMBKA and its members to collaborate with the Tourism Department to advance pollinator conservation in urban landscapes.



Federal Programs:

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) in conjunction with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers several volunteer [conservation programs](#). These conservation programs have several goals, one of which is protecting wildlife habitat. Federal conservation programs offer financial incentives to eligible farmers and



Why Plant Pollinator Habitat?

- **Economics** Crop pollination by bees is valued at \$15 billion annually for US agricultural production
- **Pollinator Conservation** Native flower plantings will support honey bees, native bees, and other pollinators such as the monarch butterfly
- **Pest Suppression** Pollinator plantings support other beneficial insects such as predators and parasitoids which provide natural pest suppression that limits chemical use
- **Soil and Water Benefits** Installing native habitat improves soil quality, reduces soil erosion, and decreases water runoff
- **Other Wildlife** Pollinator habitat will also provide habitat for birds, rabbits, and deer
- **Aesthetics** Native flower plantings are beautiful!



landowners in exchange for sensitive land being taken out of production and converted into conservation habitat. If you do not have land eligible for one of these programs, consider partnering with a farmer or rancher who might have land available. Assisting in the establishment of native grassland habitat not only benefits many wild pollinators, but creates an ideal location for placing honey bee hives. Below is a brief overview of each program. If you are interested in one of the programs below, visit your county FSA office or the [USDA NRCS website](#) for more information.

1. CRP: CP42 – Pollinator Habitat

CP42 is a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) specifically for establishing pollinator habitat. A diverse mix of native grasses and forbs specific to each state are used to establish pollinator habitat. A minimum of nine forb species must be included in the mix with three species blooming during the spring, summer, and fall. Some eligibility requirements include: cropland that meets program requirements, at least 0.5 acre, and a 10-year contract. The financial benefits of this program include: 10 years of rental payments, 50% cost-share for establishment costs, and a sign-up incentive payment up to \$150/acre.

2. CRP: CP38 SAFE - State Acres For wildlife Enhancement

The goal of the SAFE program is to restore habitat in each state that is vital to high conservation priority species. These can include: threatened or endangered species, species that have suffered significant declines such as the

lesser prairie chicken, and economically valuable species such as pollinators. CP38 plantings must include a minimum of nine species comprising at least four grasses, four forbs, and one shrub. To enroll land in the SAFE program, acreage must meet the cropping history requirements and be located within a SAFE geographic area. The financial benefits of this program include: one-time signing payment of \$100/acre, 40% cost-share for establishment costs, and a 10-15 year contract.

3. CRP: CP33 – Habitat Buffers for Birds

While CP33 is not specifically designed to restore pollinator habitat, the mixes available for this program can be created with pollinator conservation as a goal. The purpose of this CRP program is to establish habitat buffers for birds around the edges of crop fields. These buffers must be between 30 and 120 feet wide and planted using a mixture of native warm season grasses, legumes, and forbs. Because the mixes for the CP33 program include forbs, habitat plantings can be designed to benefit both birds and pollinators. In addition, the proximity of the habitat buffers to the crop field is ideal for encouraging pollination services to adjacent crops. The incentives offered for the CP33 program include: one-time sign-up payment of \$10/acre, a cost-share payment of 50% the establishment cost, annual rental payments based on county-specific rental rates, and \$4/acre reimbursement for annual maintenance to habitat buffers.

Additional Resources:

[Pollinators and CRPs](#), [The Xerces Society](#), [Pheasants Forever](#)

Dr. Bennett is the urban integrated pest management specialist at New Mexico State University, where her research focuses on beneficial insect conservation and the provision of arthropod mediated ecosystem services in urban landscapes.





Coast to Coast



The New Mexico Beekeepers Association naturally focuses on the activities and concerns of beekeepers in our state, but there are also national and regional organizations that offer a variety of resources, events and forums that may be of interest to beekeepers in New Mexico, as well as all over the United States and beyond. Many readers will already be familiar with these groups, but here are some helpful links for those who have not yet gotten to know them...

American Beekeeping Federation

www.abfnet.org

The ABF has been around since the 1940s, and “works in the interest of all beekeepers, large or small.” The organization works to protect bees and their habitat through legislative efforts, and serves as a source of information and resources related to beekeeping. The ABF also hosts the annual North American Beekeeping Conference and Tradeshow.

American Honey Producers Association

www.ahpanet.com

The AHPA is “dedicated to promoting the common interest and general welfare of the American Honey Producer” including both larger commercial producers and “backyard” beekeepers. The AHPA address challenges facing honeybees and beekeepers by working with government and members, and hosts its own annual Convention and Trade Show.

Western Apicultural Society

www.westernapiculturalsociety.org

Founded in 1978, the WAS is a “non-profit, educational, beekeeping organization” geared more towards smaller beekeeping operations in the western United States (including New Mexico) and Canada. The WAS issues a quarterly newsletter, and hosts an annual conference. There are also groups covering other regions: the [Eastern Apicultural Society](#) and the [Heartland Apicultural Society](#). 

Library Resources for Beekeepers

Annette Colbert

Your local public library can be a great resource for books about bees and beekeeping. For instance, a quick search of the [Albuquerque and Bernalillo County Public Library online catalog](#) yields how-to manuals, scientific and history texts, books about gardening and urban farming, and children’s books. Different libraries around New Mexico will have different budgets and resources, but there are a couple of tools that should prove useful with almost every library: Interlibrary Loan and “Suggest a Purchase.”

Interlibrary Loan comes in handy when a book is not available in your local library, but can still be requested from another library. Almost all books are available this way, but it may cost the borrower some money to cover shipping and handling and the books are subject to the rules of the lending library (check out time, fines, etc.).

However, if you are looking for an older or out-of-print book, this is sometimes your best—or only—choice.

“Suggest a Purchase” may go by different names in different library systems, but most libraries do invite users to request titles that the library does not currently hold any copies of. If you hear of a new beekeeping book that is not yet in the local system, this is a great resource for making it available to all your beekeeping friends. If you search the catalog for a favorite title and find that all copies are marked “lost” or are long overdue, this is another way to have it replaced.

All library services may be restricted by limits of staffing and budget, and in general one must have a current library account in good standing to access these services. But as useful as the Internet can be for finding information on bees or any other topic, there’s nothing like a good book!

The New Mexico State Library provides an online directory where you can search for a local library by city or county: www.nmstatelibrary.org/directory.

Annette Colbert is a retired librarian and beekeeper living in Albuquerque. 



Photo: Mary Carr

Congratulations to all of the students who recently completed Level 1 of our Certified Beekeepers program, and a big thanks to all of the instructors for making the ongoing program so valuable, informative and fun.

Membership Form



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Join us!

Members receive perks like free admission to events, website listings and newsletters!

CONTACT INFORMATION (PRIVATE)

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FAMILY MEMBERSHIP

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\$30

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\$15

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\$5 PER YEAR

NMBKA MEMBERS CAN ADVERTISE FOR FREE!

if you wish to have your information added to the Bee Services section of our website, please fill out this section:

NAME OR COMPANY

PHONE

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CITY OR AREA

List for swarm capture? YES NO

List as bee educator? YES NO

List for selling honey? YES NO

Do you sell queens or bees? YES NO

Do you sell wax/pollen/propolis? YES NO

Do you sell hive equipment? YES NO

If yes, what kind?

MAIL COMPLETED FORM AND PAYMENT TO:

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PO Box 7188
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Or join online at www.nmbeekeepers.org

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Questions? Email: info@nmbeekeepers.org

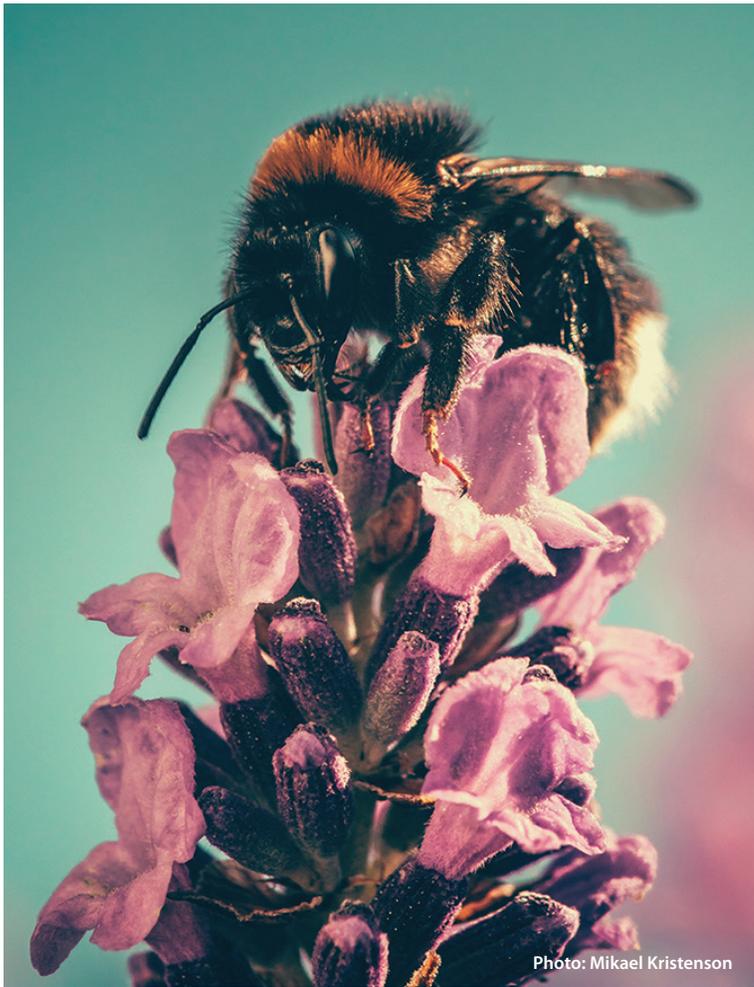


Photo: Mikael Kristenson



New Mexico Beekeepers Association Presents: **Dr. Dewey M. Caron**

Saturday, September 23, 2017
South Broadway Cultural Center
1025 Broadway Street SE
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Join us for an afternoon with Dr. Dewey M Caron, Emeritus Professor of Entomology & Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware, and Affiliate Professor, Department of Horticulture, Oregon State University. Dr. Caron spent 40+ years teaching, doing bee extension and bee research at Cornell University, the University of Maryland, and the University of Delaware. He now spends four to six months each year in Bolivia, where he keeps Africanized bees and teaches beekeeping (in Spanish). His five backyard colonies in Tigard, OR are docile European bees.

Free for NMBKA members, \$15 for non-members
www.nmbeekeepers.org



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