

"If it's on the internet, then it must be true."

— Albert Einstein

Last month I gave you some suggestions for [midwinter reading](#). I assume you've already gone through all of those book suggestions but winter isn't quite over. If your brain isn't full yet, I've got some more educational offerings for you, this time via the internet.

I normally tell beekeepers, "Don't get your bee knowledge from the internet!" (especially You-Tube and Facebook). All it takes to be an "internet expert" is a laptop and an opinion. There is far more utter nonsense out there than well-informed information. Not only is it true that the popularity of a website has no relationship to the validity of the information on it, there are lots of extremely popular lunatics in the beekeeping realm. All that said, there are academic, government and respected-institution resources that we should take advantage of if we want to keep abreast of the ever-expanding facts about our pastime.

No reading necessary

For folks with long daily commutes, I've got a treat for you. NCDA&CS Apiary Inspector Lewis Cauble, one of North Carolina's most informed, respected and helpful apicultural specialists, has recently begun producing a beekeeping podcast where he interviews the best and the brightest within apicultural and api-science circles. Thus far his guests include Dr. Jamie Ellis (University of Florida), Dr. Gloria DeGrandi-Hoffman (USDA Apicultural Research Laboratory), Dr. James Masucci (Bayer Bee Health), Dr. Katie Lee (Bee Informed Partnership/University of Minnesota) and Dr. Wally Thurman (NCSU). Each episode is about 45 minutes to an hour, just enough for a round-trip commute to the salt mines. Called "[The Well Managed Hive](#)", you can find and download episodes from any podcast app.

Cutting edge research updates

North Carolina beekeepers are extremely fortunate to have NCSU and its world-renowned apicultural research program. Normal people



NCSU Apiculture Program's quarterly newsletter, "Wolfpack's Waggle", keeps us up to date on the latest research projects in Dr. Tarpy's bee lab.

are probably not aware of the prestige and impact that Dr. David Tarpy's team at NCSU has in honey bee research, but any attentive beekeeper should recognize that we have an incredible resource right down the road. Not only does their research work toward solving our most pressing problems, but their faculty and staff are some of the nicest and most helpful folks you'll ever meet.

Unless it appeals to the general public and gets splashed across the front page of the N&O, we don't often hear about what is being accomplished through university research. Fortunately, the NCSU Apiculture Program publishes a quarterly newsletter, "Wolfpack's Waggle", that summarizes what they are up to. Information on how to subscribe is here: <https://entomology.ces.ncsu.edu/apiculture/wolfpacks-waggle-newsletter/>

Upside down news

Did you know that people keep bees in other parts of the world, and sometimes those folks have something they can teach us? An extremely interesting newsletter, BeeAware (<https://beeaware.org.au/>), is produced by our funny-talking friends in Australia. The Aussie government is involved in a lot of cutting-edge research regarding nutrition, Varroa mites and other topics that we need to know about. Plus, they face interesting imminent threats that we don't have (yet), such as the potential incursion of the Tropilaelaps mite.

A fun thing about the Australian newsletter is that, despite the fact that the words seem deceptively familiar, it comes from a very distant land. For example, when they write about the spread of the dreaded AHB, they don't mean "Africanized Honey Bees" (*Apis*



Australia's BeeAware newsletter contains helpful information on topics that affect beekeepers everywhere.

mellifera scutellata); they mean "Asian Honey Bees" (*Apis cerana*). Similar problems, different bee. Even more obvious clues that these folks are topsy-turvy are references to January as "summer" and July as "winter"; we must translate to North Carolinian English so that their management recommendations make sense.

Yum yum!

The National Honey Board's monthly e-mail newsletter has something for everyone (<https://www.honey.com/newsletter>). It includes fun facts about honey and recipes for any occasion. Past recipes have included honey-almond-banana sushi, balsamic honey BBQ chicken, Korean honey cheese sliders, egg and potato Buddha bowl, honey mocha-almond bubble iced coffee, etc. Basically, you can add honey to anything and it makes it better!

Lurking allowed

If you'd like to sit in on well-informed e-mail discussions carried on by bee journal contributors Randy Oliver and Peter Borst, academics such as University of Montana's Jerry Bromenshenk, commercial beekeepers from around the world and other "people who know", you can do so on the BEE-L listserv. This is not the place for beginners to ask basic questions or for kooks to have a ready-made audience. Instead it is where people with a lot of experience throw around ideas and argue about the latest theories. Posts by knuckleheads aren't treated kindly. But lurking (following the threads without making posts) is welcomed. Directions for subscribing are here:

<http://www.lsoft.com/scripts/wl.exe?SL1=BEE-L&H=COMMUNITY.LSOFT.COM>.

Your local beekeepers' association listserv

An under-valued resource is your local county beekeepers' association e-mail Google Group/listserv. There are national and international hobbyist Q&A forums but why bother with those? Not only do you not know the credentials of posters, but their answers to questions may be completely inappropriate for Piedmont North Carolina. Local club e-mail interchanges are relevant to your area and also can be followed up with a phone call or apiary visit.

What if everybody in your club is a lunkhead (except for you, of course)? As mentioned in September 2017's "[Local Beekeeping Associations: A Whole Lot of Bang for the Buck](#)", feel free to join several associations. Then you can draw knowledge from more than one pool and bring it back to share with your home club. The expression, "A rising tide floats all boats" applies here; the more we can learn and share, the more we ourselves will learn as others share back with us. Look at September 2018's "[Mentoring as a Defensive Strategy](#)" for more thoughts on that topic.

Lest I forget...

Beekeeping supply houses usually have e-mail newsletters and sales flyers. One large national supplier sends out a sales notice at least once a day. Others are more respectful of your inbox.

The best ones give you a bit of knowledge along with their sales pitches. Depending on how you accessed this article, you may or may not know that they are produced every month. My friends at Bailey Bee Supply (BBS) in Hillsborough are kind enough to provide the hosting platform where every single one of them for the past seven years can be accessed. The BBS monthly newsletter gives a brief description and link to that month's article. You can sign up for their newsletter at the bottom

of the main page of the BBS website (<https://baileybeesupply.com/>).

Internet filter

As mentioned at the beginning, e-mail lists and the internet spew out lots of stuff on beekeeping. One of my favorite gems is found in a Wiki-How article on how to easily find the queen in a colony. The “helpful” advice is, “worker stingers are barbed whereas queen stingers are not.” Remember that the next time you pull out a frame and are searching for the queen! Be sure to bring your microscope with you to the bee yard. (You may also want to read June 2017’s “[Where’s Waldo? A Dozen Tips for Finding the Queen](#)”).

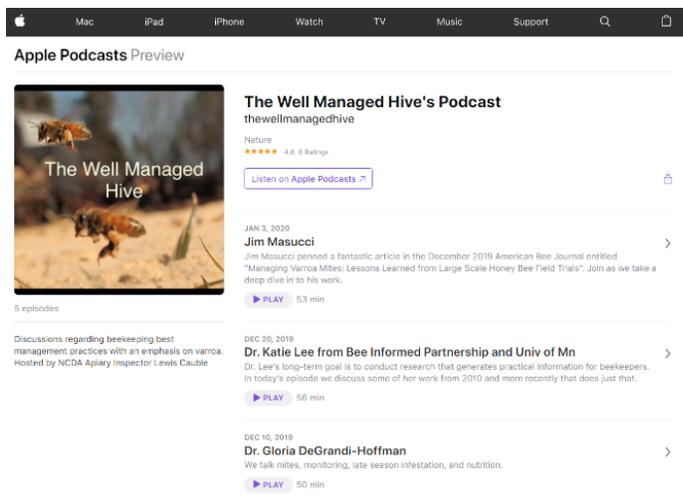
How can we tell the difference between the right stuff and the stuff that’s left? First, is the information consistent with what the folks at NCSU and NCDA&CS Apiary Services tell us? Second, do experienced beekeepers in your area (folks with ten or more years’ experience keeping bees alive and productive) agree that the information or practice is valid? This litmus test isn’t foolproof but it will weed out a lot of the nonsense.

Tread carefully, take nothing at face value and have fun learning!

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Note: All previous articles are archived at https://baileybeesupply.com/educational_resources/

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NC Apiary Inspector Lewis Cauble, tireless champion in the war against Varroa mites, has begun a fact-filled podcast to help beekeepers keep their colonies alive and productive.