

Grant County Beekeepers

Meeting Notes

11 July 2018



In attendance: 15 beekeepers and “friends of bees.”

Meeting start time: 6:00 P.M.

Guest speakers:

Tom Maxfeldt and Rowena Cardoza, beekeepers:

Tom and Rowena each brought Langstroth hives to explain the various parts and functions: frames and foundations, supers, brood boxes, queen excluder, and “bee space.” They answered questions and shared their knowledge of beekeeping using Langstroth hives, the type of hive most often used by commercial beekeepers, as well as hobbyist beekeepers.



Karen Prevost, beekeeper:

Karen brought a top-bar hive to explain the various parts and how the bees create honeycomb on the “top bars.” Although T-B hives are not used widely throughout the United States, many New Mexico beekeepers choose this type of hive. Karen answered questions and shared her knowledge of beekeeping using top-bar hives.



To learn more about T-B hives, the book *Top-Bar Beekeeping: Organic Practices for Honeybee Health*, by Les Crowder and Heather Harrell, is essential. The book is available in the Silver City Library and online.

To read more and see videos with Les: <https://www.chelseagreen.com/product/top-bar-beekeeping/> .

Plans for building your own T-B hives can be found on the New Mexico Beekeepers Association:

<http://nmbeekeepers.org/topbar-hive-plans/>

Report from WNMU Grounds Director Kristi Dunn, as presented by Susan Clair:

Because the scheduled presenter, Kristi Dunn, was unable to attend owing to unexpected family circumstances, Susan Clair communicated with Kristi, via phone and text messages in the previous two days, to obtain the status of WNMU’s progress in making the campus a more pollinator-friendly natural environment, in preparation for becoming designated as a “Bee Campus USA” university. For the full report, see Appendix A on p. 3 of these meeting notes.

Alysha Shaw, representing WildEarth Guardians: A Force for Nature

(<http://www.wildearthguardians.org/site/PageServer#.W05WKLhMFPY>)

Alysha spoke about the contract Grant County Government has maintained with WildLife Services for the past 18 years, that the contact wastes tax payers’ money, harms wild life (remember, bees are “wildlife”), and upsets the balance of nature. She encouraged us to contact our County Commissioners, and urge them to not renew the current contract. For her talking points, see Appendix B on p. 4 of these meeting notes.

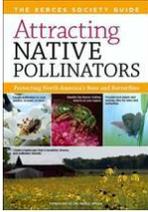
General discussion and announcements:

- Ken Sexton agreed to contact Vickie McCauley, about the possibility of the Grant County Beekeepers hosting a booth at the Grant County Fair, in Cliff, on Sept. 21–22.
- Next beekeeping-mentoring session: Sunday, July 22, at 10:30 A.M.
Tom and Barbara Maxfeldt will host this session at their home and hives in the Arenas Valley. Please contact Susan Clair, if you’re interesting in attending (clair@nmia.com).
- Master Gardener and “Friend of Bees,” Marguerite Flanagan, contributed a large number of starter pads for prickly pear cacti; all were happily taken.

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- ***Attracting Native Pollinators: Protecting North America's Bees and Butterflies*** by The Xerces Society, published by Storey Publishing.

Ken Sexton brought this informative book to the meeting.

At 380 pages, this book provides dramatically expanded breadth and detail, reflecting the latest understanding about creating and managing pollinator habitat. The book contains hundreds of color photographs and dozens of specially created illustrations.

To read more, click here: <http://xerces.org/announcing-the-publication-of-attracting-native-pollinators/>

- The fundraising hat was passed around, to collect money for our use of the facility. Because our group is relatively new, we had been excused from paying the fee from August 2017 through February 2018. Since March and from now on, we need to cover the costs of using the facility.

Thanks, everyone!

\$3.50 left over from the hat collection at our June meeting

+ \$27.19 collected at this July meeting

\$30.69 total

- \$30.69 deposited into The Commons donation box, in a marked envelop from our group

\$0.00 remaining cash



Next meeting – August 8 at 6:00 P.M.:

Presentations:

Because honey-harvesting time is approaching, presenters Rowena Cardoza and Susan Clair will demonstrate honey harvesting from Langstroth and top-bar hives, respectively, as well as straining and bottling harvested honey. We'll also have plenty of time for your questions and answers.

Location: The Commons (Volunteer Center) - 501 E. 13th St. (at Corbin).

Note: Because we're in "honeybee season," our meetings will have a substantial portion of time devoted to hive health, working the hive, beekeepers' experiences and observations at their hives, best practices of beekeeping, and Q&A from attendees. We'll love to hear from you, to make these information-sharing sessions interesting, useful, and lively. Come join us!

Deferred action item:

- Contact David Esperanza at Esperanza Winery, in Mimbres; he likes to work with small groups and might have suggestions for collaborations.

We invite everyone to visit our website. Become a member—it's free! www.grantcountynmbeekkeepers.org

Meeting adjourned: 7:30 P.M.

Respectively submitted,

Susan

Susan Clair

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APPENDIX A

Report from WNMU Grounds Director Kristi Dunn, received via phone call and text messages, and presented by Susan Clair

Efforts toward becoming a designated “Bee Campus”: Kristi is still on board with it, but needs to speak with Phyllis Styles, founder of *Bee City USA*, which recently has come under the nonprofit umbrella of the Xerces Society, the foremost pollinator-protection nonprofit, since 1971 (<https://xerces.org/>).

Pollinator-Friendly Plantings on WNMU Campus

- a) College Avenue - Cutouts in sidewalk and pollinator-friendly plants were chosen specifically for our local area:
 - Bradford pear tree – nonfruit bearing, white flowers, early blooms
 - Chinese pistache
 - Purple leaf plum – blooms after the Bradford pear; infrequent fruit but lots of blooms.
 - Lavender, Rosemary, autumn sage (type of salvia), Indian Hawthorne, gaillardia (also called ‘blanketflower’ – see photo at right).
- b) Bowden Hall (next to Light Hall)
 - Replacing dying honeysuckle with a pollinator friendly *Pink Parade*® yucca with pink, long-lasting blooms.
- c) Harlan Hall, back area
 - Yes, to the tile pollinator mural; she’ll need to direct some of the design, not just leave it up to the MRAC students.
 - Still a few years out, as money allows.



Reducing Use of Toxic Chemicals

- a) They have reduced spraying on campus where they can at this time.
- b) She’s working toward a set integrated-pest management (IPM) program, but it isn’t in place yet. (I told her the Town of Silver City, via Councilor Lynda Aiman-Smith, informed me it’s not using the toxic neonicotinoid pesticides; she asked whom I spoke with.)
- c) I sent her a list of organic, nontoxic weed-killer products.
- d) They have used corn gluten as a fertilizer and for weed control:

Corn Gluten offers a nontoxic, yet effective alternative to chemical-based weed and feed products for weed control in lawns and gardens. Organic nitrogen fertilizer (8-0-0) with natural preventative pre-emergent weed control properties. Non-GMO corn gluten meal.

 - Organic fertilizer feeds lawns naturally
 - Helps build strong turf
 - Use for pre-emergent weed control
 - Apply by hand or using a spreader
 - Safe and environmentally friendly

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APPENDIX B

WildEarth Guardians - <http://www.wildearthguardians.org/site/PageServer#.W05WKLhMFPY> Alysha Shaw's Talking Points

- Wildlife Services wastes our tax dollars killing native wildlife in our backyard. The program litters our public lands with the most dangerous lethal arsenal: traps, snares, and poisons, which injure children, kill family pets, and wreck nature's balance.
- Science shows that lethal wildlife management is ineffective in the long term.
- In 18 years of contracting with Grant County, Wildlife Services has submitted only one very brief report, explaining how they're using public money.
- Last year, Grant County authorized an \$81,158.96 contract, responding to \$1,608 in verified losses (according to Wildlife Services' single report, submitted about its previous year's activities); \$24,000 of that money was contributed by Grant County from a Taylor Grazing Act Farm and Range Improvement fund and could be used for other needed purposes such as secondary road construction and maintenance, soil and water conservation, and nonlethal wild-life management.
- This year, Grant County is considering a \$25,000 contribution to an \$82,159.95 contract that is funded by Taylor Grazing Act FRIF funds and our federal tax dollars.
- Based on the single report offered last year to Grant County by Wildlife Services in 18 years, we know they are using aerial gunning, M-44 sodium *cyanide* bombs, and traps on public lands.
- From 2010–2017, 43 dogs were killed in New Mexico by M-44s, as reported by Wildlife Services.
- During that same time period (2010-2017), 338 animals were unintentionally killed by M-44s, as reported by Wildlife Services.
- At the www.trapfreenm.org website, you'll find many stories of victims of trapping in Grant County—people and dogs. It's impossible to know, in most cases, who laid these traps on public lands. Note: all traps on public lands pose a major public-safety risk.
- Recently, in Idaho, a young boy and his dog encountered an M-44 placed by Wildlife Services on BLM land just over the property line of their backyard. As a result, the dog died, and the boy is still dealing with chronic health issues.
- WildEarth Guardians is asking that Grant County either let its contract with Wildlife Services expire without renewal or reform the contract. The commission will vote on July 19 to prioritize the use of nonlethal means of managing wildlife, prohibit the use of M-44s, aerial gunning and traps on public lands, and require quarterly reports documenting the use of funds. Please contact your county commissioner.