Utah State University
DigitalCommons@USU

All PIRU Publications | Pollinating Insects Research Unit

1965

Beekeeping for Beginners

William P. Nye
Utah State University

G. F. Knowlton

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/piru_pubs

Part of the Entomology Commons

Recommended Citation
Nye, W. P., and G. F. Knowlton. 1965. Beekeeping for Beginners. Utah State Univ. Ext. Serv. Leaflet III. n. p.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Pollinating Insects Research Unit at DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All PIRU Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact becky.thoms@usu.edu.

EXTENSION 43
LEAFLET 111

BEEKEEPING FOR BEGINNERS

BY WILLIAM P. NYE
AND GEORGE F. KNOWLTON

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION SERVICES

BEEKEEPING FOR BEGINNERS

William P. Nye[1], USDA, Agr. Res. Serv.

and

George F. Knowlton, Extension Entomologist

The best way to learn to handle bees is to put on a bee veil, light a smoker and inspect a colony, assisted by an experienced beekeeper. The beginning should be made on a calm day when bees are actively collecting nectar and pollen. Smoke used at the entrance of the hive and over the combs subdues the guard bees. Extra supers should be removed and stacked on the upturned cover to avoid crushing bee or dripping honey. Combs to be examined should be carefully loosened and removed so as not to roll or crush the bees. Combs not being examined should be leaned upright against the hive body. The comb on which the queen is located should be returned immediately to the hive. Combs should be replaced in their original position unless there is specific reason for doing otherwise. The beginner interested in commercial beekeeping should build up his holdings slowly, or better still, work at beekeeping a season or two with a successful beekeeper. He will learn the habits of bees and what to do with them to best serve his developing interests. He should be familiar with the blossoming times of nectar and pollen plants in his area. The beginner should attend beekeeper's meetings and short courses in beekeeping, or take a home study course on beekeeping given by a college or university. He should subscribe to at least one good beekeeping magazine and become familiar with the literature about bees.

---

[1]In cooperation with the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station.

SUGGESTIONS FOR BEGINNERS ARE:

1. Get acquainted with your county bee inspector. His advice on bee problems will be helpful.

2. Buy strong colonies of bees recently inspected for freedom from disease. Purchase bees only from successful beekeepers or purchase new hives, packaged bees and queens. Learn to recognize American foulbrood disease and keep your bees free from it. Should this disease ever appear, contact your county bee inspector. He will advise you on proper disposal or treatment of infected colonies. In Utah, bees must be inspected for disease by the county or state bee inspector at least once each year.

3. Work in commercial beekeeping gradually. Experience and enthusiasm are essential if costly mistakes and losses are to be avoided.

4. Honey bee colonies should be established in the spring when fruit trees and dandelions are coming into bloom. This assures needed supplies of both nectar and pollen.

5. Have the following equipment in addition to modern hives; bee veil, smoker, bee gloves and a hive tool. As you expand, you will need to secure 28 gauge steel wire, imbedding tool, wax foundation, frames, and an adequate number of supers to use when the honey flow is in progress.

Italian or Caucasian bees usually are best for the beginner. Both races are hardy, industrious and fairly gentle to handle.

Bees must always have an abundant store of honey and pollen. Starvation occurs when they go into winter or into long periods of cold spring weather without adequate stores. If enough frames of natural honey have not been saved for spring feeding, sugar syrup (one part of water and two of sugar by

volume may be fed in "feeder cans" to each colony. This will carry the bees over until natural sources are available.

Persons interested in beekeeping should get a copy of U.S.D.A., A.R.S. 33-10, Information About Bee Culture. Beekeepers should obtain a copy of Utah State University, Extension Services Bulletins 237 and 238 on spring feeding and use of honey bees in pollinating the alfalfa seed crop.

Suggested useful references:

American Bee Journal. Dadant and Sons. Hamilton, Illinois.

Dadant, C. P., 1951. First lessons in beekeeping. Dadant and Sons, Hamilton, Illinois.

Eckert, J. C. and R. F. Shaw, 1960. Beekeeping, MacMillan Company, New York.

Gleanings in Bee Culture, A. I. Root Co. Medina, Ohio.

Grout, R. A., 1963. The hive and the honey bee. Dadant and Sons, Hamilton, Illinois.

Root, E. R., 1950. ABC and XYZ of bee culture. A. I. Root Company, Medina, Ohio.

Cooperative Extension Work in Agriculture and Home Economics, William H. Bennett, Director. Utah State Univesity of Agriculture and Applied Science and the United States Department of Agriculture, Cooperating. Distributed in furtherance of Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. (3M/10-65/BAP)