



# Bee Biz

## Monthly Newsletter of the Coweta Beekeepers

President's Message  
June 2011

First, I would like to thank David Reece for presiding at May's meeting as everyone has commented about his great job. Hopefully, my work in Alabama will be finished, and I'll see you Monday night.

While searching for a topic for this month's newsletter, the mystery of the Waggle Dance, which is the language of honey bees, kept dancing through my mind. I Googled the topic and found various sources and, like any other type of research, contradictory information, but nevertheless, I decided that the mysteries of the Waggle Dance would be the month's theme. The best source I found online was the Nova site and the majority of my information below is taken from Nova. YouTube also has some interesting uploads that you may want to view.

In 1973 Karl von Frisch received a Nobel Prize for discovering the Waggle Dance; the honey bee's sophisticated communication system. It is interesting that the scientific results from von Frisch's study can actually be observed by a naked eye.

The honey bee is the only animal that informs scientists "where it has been" and, in turn, this helps them study how the honey bee measures distances, where they are collecting food, and how they forage for food. Communicating to hivemates via dances and sounds, honey bees accurately describe the location, quality, and quantity of a food source.

Using their olfactory and visual senses to pinpoint the location of the nectar, they take a food sample and return to the hive to give other bees a "taste" of their discovery. Then the bee performs a dance that identifies the distance, direction, quality, and quantity of the food supply.

Several online sources I viewed stated that present belief is the bees only perform Waggle Dance, which is executed in a figure-8 pattern, and that the Round Dance is only an abbreviated Waggle Dance. Nova lists both dances individually and states the differences as follows: Round Dance indicates a food supply that is near the hive (another source stated 35 feet as the dividing point) but no direction, and the waggle dance indicates a food supply that is farther away.

Actual dance execution begins when a forager bee turns in circles alternating left to right. The dance consists of two loops with a straight run in the middle. The direction of the straight run determines the direction of the food source as the richer the source, the longer and more vigorous the dance. The forager bee provides the flowers' scent, which is used by other bees to find the flowers. The rate of looping and duration of buzzing indicate the distance to the food supply.

Honeycombs in the hive are vertical to the ground. If food lies in the same direction as the sun, the foraging bee dances straight up. If it lies in the opposite direction of the sun, the bee dances straight down. If it is to the left, the bee dances at the appropriate angle to the left. The bee's rate of looping becomes faster as the bee nears the food supply. Research shows that the duration of buzzing during the straight run may be a better indicator of distance. The longer the bee buzzes, the farther away the food source.

I hope I have not "Waggled" too long and lost your interest but to me this is another fascinating honey bee fact!

Saving the World, One Bee at a Time,  
Jerry Edwards  
President  
Coweta Beekeepers Association

## **Meeting**

Our next meeting will start at 7:00 pm at the Asa Powell Expo Building. Meeting date is June 13, 2011. Speaker: Dr. Keith S. Delaplane, Professor and Program Director of the [UGA Honeybee Program](#). Subject: The Superorganism and Why it Matters. Refreshments are being supplied by Kevin & Sally Benson and Bobby & Karen Torbush. **Drinks and ice will be supplied by the club!!**

## **2011 Dues**

You can still pay your dues for 2011 to Mike Copeland at a meeting or by mailing them to him at P.O. Box 159, Luthersville, Ga 30251. Dues for the 2011 calendar year starting January 1st thru December 31st, are \$15.00 per family. If you would like to receive your newsletter through e-mail please inform Donna, and give her your e-mail address. Dues are used in the following manner: for postage of this newsletter, supplies for our meeting, and the Christmas Party.

## **Up Coming Events**

The following is from the CBS Atlanta web site.

---

## Fayetteville Home Filled With Bees

### Beekeeper Removes 60,000 Honey Bees

<http://www.cbsatlanta.com/news/28108164/detail.html>

**FAYETTEVILLE, Ga.** -- Judy Ward said she had no idea that honey bees had taken over the closet in her spare bedroom.

60,000 strong and Ward said she never heard a buzz or a hum.

"I never knew they were in there until my neighbor came over and said he saw bees flying in and out of the house through the vinyl siding," Ward said. "They were great guests. They lived with us, and we lived with them. If you don't bother a honey bee they won't bother you, they are not aggressive and will not harm you. If they sting you then they die," Ward said.

A professional beekeeper came out and safely removed the honey bees from the home, taking with him gallons upon gallons of honey.

"You'll see bees at the windows coming in first," said Bobby Torbush. "That is where you will notice them first bees at the windows trying to get out. The best way to figure out if you have a colony of bees is if you see a constant stream of bees coming in and out of your house."

Torbush said it took him nine hours to safely remove the bees using a modified vacuum cleaner home to clear them out. The bees were taken to his home in Luthersville where he has a collection of more than 160,000 honey bees producing honey on his property.

"There was one queen there, and he was able to take her, and isolate her," said Ward. "They are now kept together and he took them over to his home. I just want people who have a bee problem, not to kill the honey bees. There is a way to live with them and taken from your house safely so that they are not killed or anything," Ward said.

Ward said she has lived in the home for 20 years, but never saw a bee in the house and the bees were never aggressive.

Torbush said he was only stung twice removing the bees last weekend. Torbush said it is not rare for homeowners to know they have a bee colony living in their homes.

"They don't leave droppings, they have a pristine house, they keep better houses than most humans," said Torbush. "They are going to keep it clean, they like that house so that is there house."

Ward said she has visited the bees twice since they were taken from the home. But is glad they are gone.

"It was scary, but there were about 60,000 thousand bees in total," Ward said.

Ward sealed up the entrance to her home so no more bees can come in

