



Beesearch: A Continuing Education Seminar for Experienced Beekeepers

Goals: This seminar course is for experienced beekeepers (overwintered bees 2 or more years) who wish to improve their understanding, skills, and success with bees. The course aims to assist beekeepers making their management practices more effective and sustainable through research, discussion, and hands on work. In lieu of tuition, students earn club support credits by providing support and leadership for LCBA's educational and community outreach programs. Students will also share their research with the LCBA membership through talks at monthly meetings and/or developing materials for the website, newsletter, club fair exhibits, or publishing a beekeeping article in a magazine or journal.

Dates: **Target start date March 2020 – finish February 2021.** The class would meet once a month for two and a half hours. The March meeting would be an organizational meeting with information about research resources. The class would meet 1st Thursdays of each month.

Location: Bob Harris has offered us a room at Peace Lutheran Church (at Bishop/Yeats/Jackson Highway intersection in Chehalis); the room has internet and computer access.

Enrollment: Tentative course limit of 12 so that the seminar presentation of research is manageable in ten meetings of two and a half hours each. Priority would go by seniority of membership.

Facilitators: LCBA Education Coordinator Peter Glover & Secretary Susanne Weil (WASBA Journeyman beekeepers, 2014)

Course Requirements for LCBA Certificate of Completion (*n.b.*: this certification would not serve as prerequisite for WASBA's Master Beekeeper level):

- Be an LCBA member current on dues throughout the course
- Attend monthly class meetings
- Research and share answers to questions about specific beekeeping topics
- Complete 50 club support credits [see below]
- Write up findings from at least one research topic to post to LCBA website and/or share at a monthly meeting and/or develop for LCBA's Fair exhibits
- Conduct a home hive inspection with course facilitators

Textbook: No formally required textbook, but participants would be strongly urged to read Dewey Caron's *Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping* (2nd edition with color illustrations) and/or Dadant's *The Hive and the Honeybee*.

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Club Support Credits: Service in Lieu of Tuition: To earn the certificate of completion, participants must help with the work that makes LCBA function by meeting the club support credit requirement of 50 service credits; no more than 20 points in any one category except for serving in a Board position.

Categories include:

- Serving and completing a two-year term as a board officer (50)
- Mentoring new beekeepers (up to two; 10 points per mentee)
- Volunteering on the Club Apiary management team (10 points)
- Serving on organizing committee for LCBA's Fair exhibits (10 points per Fair)
- Serving on organizing committee for LCBA's potlucks (10 points per potluck)
- Giving talks on beekeeping topics to local groups (schools, libraries, garden groups; 10 points)
- Helping judge honey at the Southwest Washington Fair (10 points)
- Developing and coordinating an educational workshop for members at the club apiary (10 points)

Course Objectives: Participants who complete the course will be able to:

- Develop and effectively use professional beekeeping vocabulary to enable reading and explaining original research when necessary
- Test the truth of information about beekeeping in popular media, separating fact from fiction
- Explain how bees' anatomies function and how this knowledge affects beekeeping practice
- Explain the life cycle of queens, drones, & workers and how these affect colony management
- Explain the array of parasites, diseases, environmental challenges, including pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, and shifting climate, as well as other factors that endanger bees
- Develop one's own, informed seasonal management plan, including testing and treatment
- Explain honey bees' importance to agriculture and develop a forage plan to support one's bees
- Explain how honey and other bee products are produced and judged
- Explain how federal, state, and local laws affect honey bees and beekeepers

Study Topics: These are broad categories; subtopics will be developed jointly by facilitators and participants at the organizational meeting, along with an overview of research resources & methods for hobby beekeepers to assess accuracy of online information.

- Honey bee anatomy, pheromones, and how both affect bee behavior
- Worker/drone life cycle, castes, races: how they affect management for PNW beekeepers
- Queens – life cycle, races, genetic bottleneck & attempts to resolve it, queen rearing
- Spring Management Best Practices
- Summer Management Best Practices / Honey Production
- Fall/Winter Management Best Practices
- Varroa: what is known and what can be done
- Nosema and other disorders: what is known and what can be done
- Pesticides/insecticides/herbicides/fungicides: what is known and what can be done
- Forage and Climate in the PNW: developing a plan for one's apiary
- Equipment choices: pros and cons
- Bees and the law