

Napa County Beekeepers' Association Newsletter - November, 2025 issue #21

Our Mission: Supporting Napa's beekeeping community through educational outreach, treatment-free management, and pollinator habitat advocacy.

A few words from Martin



Greetings to you all. Oh, how the time has flown! Although the weather can't seem to make up its mind, fall is here and with it comes the last of the year's hive inspections. Now is our chance to get one last look inside to see how the colony is doing as the bees prepare for winter. Keep these inspections short, check the forecast, and try to open the hive during a

warm, late morning to give the colony the afternoon to build back any heat that was lost. Placing a feeder box on the top of the hive filled with dried lavender will help pull excess moisture away from the nest over the winter. Now is also a great time to install monitoring boards under the frames if you haven't already.

Thank you to Julius Mueller from the Napa County Ag Commissioner's Dept for his excellent presentation at the October meeting. It was very informative and a lively discussion was had, as well. One of the biggest takeaways was that WE hobbyist beekeepers really need to up our game by participating and registering our hives with [BeeWhere California](#). Per Julius, wait until January to register to get the fee waiver, but do so by the end of February 2026. It's the law, it's free, and we need to walk the walk if we want to have a seat at the bee table! I also cannot stress how lucky our club is to have such a wonderful working relationship with our local Ag department. A very big thank you to everyone else in the department, too!

This month, instead of our regular meeting, we are holding our first NCBA Club Potluck on Saturday, November 15th! Please RSVP to receive the location and directions; see details on page 2. With November now here, we are taking a little breather, hence the short (and late!) newsletter. During the month of December, a full newsletter will be sent out, but there will be no monthly meeting.

In the meantime, take a drive past the Vine Trail Pollinator Garden (picture below, located on Solano Avenue, right before Darms Lane, across from former Silenus Winery) and check out the tremendous growth of the plantings that went in last March, supported by NCBA, RCD and UC Master Gardeners. Enjoy this beautiful fall weather, those last visits into the hives, and we hope to see you at the upcoming Potluck!

- Martin Podell



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Save the Date - NCBA and Local Happenings

NOVEMBER NCBA POTLUCK

Instead of a third-Monday meeting, we'll gather for a celebratory, Saturday potluck!

When: Saturday, November 15, 1 - 4pm

RSVP to: napaco.beekeepersassoc@gmail.com for potluck address and directions by November 14

What: Bring a dish and/or beverage to share, plus your own plate and utensils.

Also: Feel free to bring along family members or other beekeepers who are curious about NCBA, and let's toast to a strong and vibrant beekeeping community that we are co-creating.



DECEMBER: *No meeting in December.*

Bees are staying warm and tucked in at home, and so shall we!

Other Miscellaneous Announcements

Honey Extractor available: NCBA was recently gifted a SAF Natura manual, 3-frame honey extractor. This former beekeeper was moving back to her country of origin, learned of NCBA and graciously offered it to our club.

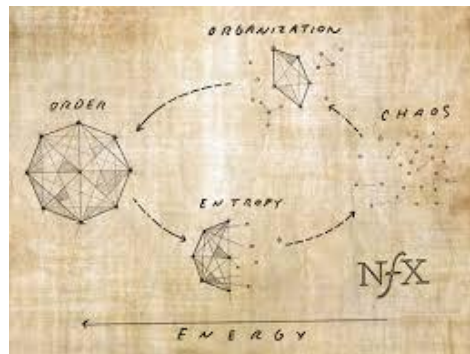
It is in *pristine* shape and available to NCBA members free of charge for their honey extraction. If interested, contact Christine at christinewask.ncba@gmail.com. It may be 'checked out' for up to two weeks at a time. Pick-up and return (cleaned) are the user's responsibility.



In the Pollinator Garden: *'Leave the Leaves'*

(reprinted from Nov 2024 newsletter)

When listening to the podcast below some days ago, Joe Lampl's guest, David Mizejewski (National Wildlife Foundation naturalist) made me laugh. He essentially asked whether any of us, when out hiking or otherwise enjoying the great outdoors, gaze out upon a glorious landscape and find ourselves thinking, *"Boy, what a mess, someone needs to do some raking and weeding!"* He points out that the preconception of a "yard" that many have is one of orderly, manicured tidiness. But, of course, this is not nature. Nature loves entropy - the tendency towards increasing disorder (2nd law of thermodynamics, also relevant to teenagers and their bedrooms). This is the fabulous, complex system of interrelationships that we appreciate when enjoying a natural landscape. Now, while I am not advocating for wild free-flowing entropy in our home gardens (although that would be fabulous, wouldn't it?!), a certain level of chaos is good for us *and* wildlife. Hence the ***"leave the leaves"*** motto that pops up again and again this time of year.



Care about next year's moths and butterflies? How about the backyard bird population that is absolutely dependent upon those caterpillars to rear their young? Insect eggs and larvae, earthworms, salamanders, frogs, toads, bumblebee queens and native bees, and more overwinter by burrowing into the **leaf litter**. Think of it as a warm blanket that ensures the winter survival of your backyard wildlife, to say nothing about its value as FREE mulch and fertilizer for your garden. Millipedes, roly-polys and many other invertebrates are experts at munching those leaves, transforming them into rich compost.

The last crazy piece of info that was new to me is the environmental cost of *throwing away* all those fallen leaves and other garden 'debris'. Each year, 10.5 million tons of yard trimmings (mostly leaves) end up in landfills. Landfills are the 3rd largest source of methane production in the U.S. When leaves are bagged up and sent to a landfill, they get buried underground, and since there is no oxygen down there, the leaves break down via anaerobic decomposition. This creates methane, a potent greenhouse gas that traps heat in the atmosphere. Talk about a lose-lose scenario.



So, dear garden and nature lovers out there, sweep your walkways, clear off the patios, but allow those golden and red and brown leaves to blanket parts of your yard. Spread the leaves, spread the word, spread the love.

Great, quick read: [Leave the Leaves! | Xerces Society](#)

Entertaining, informative podcast:

[Leave the Leaves for Wildlife and the Climate | joegardener@](#)

- Christine Waskowiak

NCBA T-Shirt Orders

Beautifully printed locally by Grapeleaf Graphics with our logo, 100% cotton, available in S/M/L/XL. Choose from short-sleeved (regular or ladies cut, \$25) or *newly available* long-sleeved in grey (\$30). Shirts will shrink a bit, so order a size larger if you like a looser fit. Purchase with cash, check or Venmo (see t-shirt order form linked below).

Send completed [NCBA T-Shirt Order Form](#) to Martin at martinp.ncba@gmail.com or order at an upcoming NCBA meeting.



NCBA Membership - sign up now!

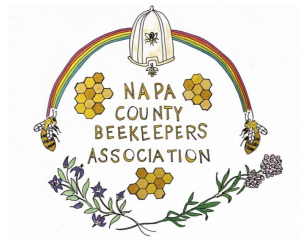
The Napa County Beekeepers' Association has an active membership program. In addition to covering various administrative and website expenses, membership dollars enable us to offer you:

- More guest speakers on a range of topics
- Hands-on educational events & workshops
- Priority access to available bees (via swarms, splits)
- Various swag discounts & freebies
- Individualized mentoring/consultation
- Continued monthly meetings & newsletter

Information on the different membership tiers and application form is available to download here:

 [NCBA Membership Levels & Form.pdf](#)

You may also submit a membership form online at our website: <https://www.beekeepersofnapavalley.org/form>



Napa County Beekeepers' Association

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NCBA Website: <https://www.beekeepersofnapavalley.org/>

Facebook: [Beekeepers of Napa Valley/Napa County Beekeepers Association | Facebook](#)

