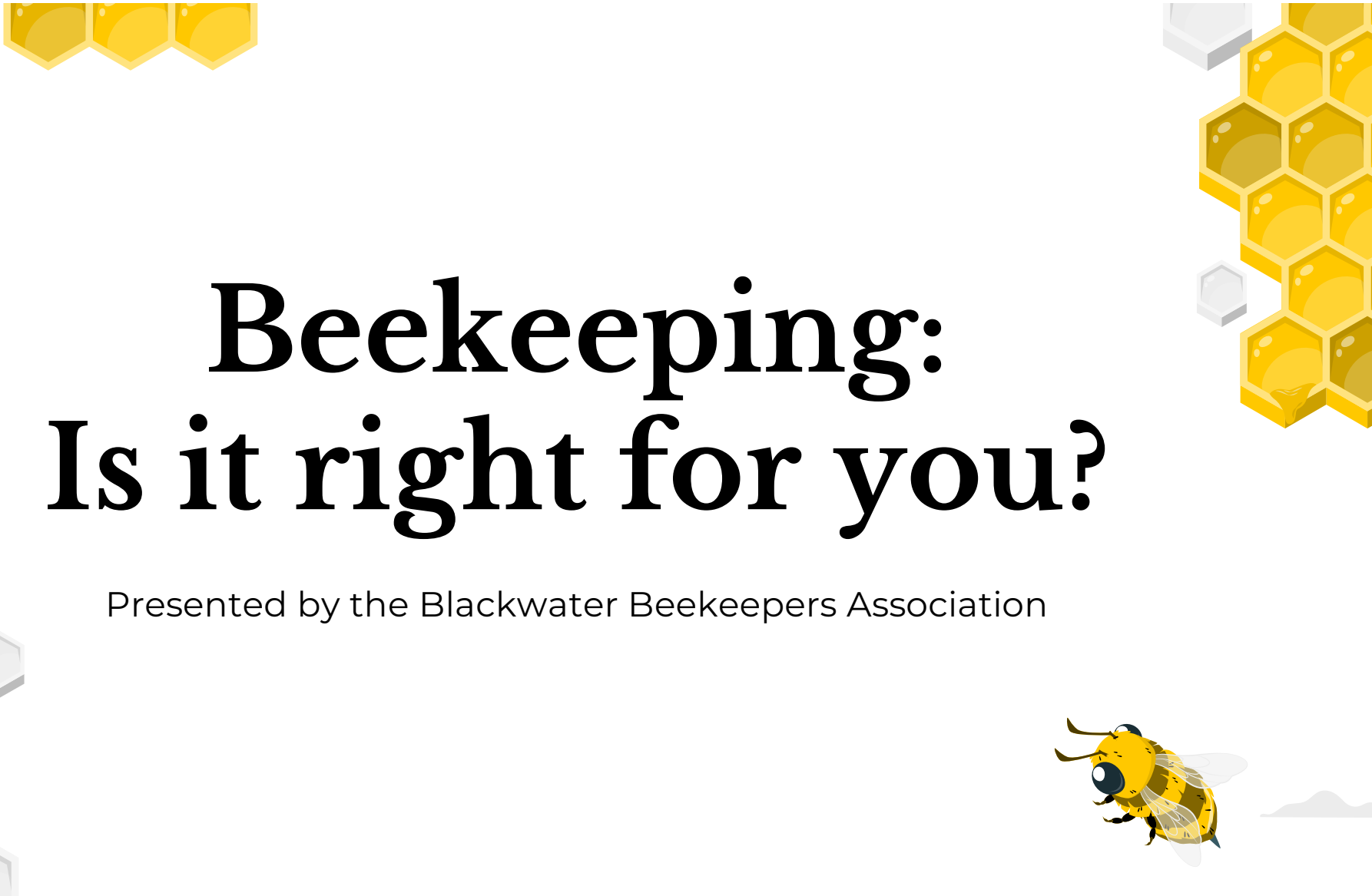




Beekeeping: Is it right for you?

Presented by the Blackwater Beekeepers Association





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Introduction

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<https://www.blackwaterbeekeepers.org/>



The Good, the Bad & the Ugly



Here's a Bee Fact





How long do honeybees live?

	Spring & Summer	Winter
Drone	3 – 5 Weeks	N/A
Worker	4 – 6 Weeks	4 – 5 Months
Queen	2 -3 Years +-	

Source: Hive and the Honey Bee, P. 80





What is Beekeeping?





Beekeeping is:

- Fun and has lots of advantages.
- Understanding how your bees live.
- Taking care of your bees like you would a family pet or a herd of cows.
- Knowing how to keep your bees alive and healthy.



Image Source: George Baker





Bees



Image Source: George Baker

- Are considered livestock.
 - Are something you need to work at understanding.
 - Require an ongoing commitment. Contrary to popular belief you can't just set up a hive and forget it.
- 



**You should strive
to be a beekeeper,
not a bee haver!**



Here's a Bee Fact





~20,000

Species of Bees throughout the world.

3600

Species of Bees in North America and Mexico

8

Species of Honey bees

Sources: <https://www.xerces.org/endangered-species/wild-bees>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honey_bee





Getting Started



Friends and Family



1. Talk with loved ones and friends about your plans.
2. Make sure the important people in your life will be supportive with your life as a beekeeper.



Designed by pressfoto - Magnific.com



Get a mentor!



Image Source: George Baker generated
at Gemini.google.com

A Mentor:

1. is your best friend.
2. is someone who can mean the difference between your bees living and dying.
3. has already made the mistakes, so you don't have to.
4. will only charge you a smile and a thank you.





Why do you need a Mentor?



1. Beekeeping is an art as well as a science.
2. Local knowledge is a necessity.
3. They will save you a lot of money and time.
4. They helps make beekeeping fun.



*Image Source: George Baker generated
at Gemini.google.com*



YouTube is not a mentor

Starting out you'll want to learn all you can as fast as you can. YouTube can be a great resource for that, but you need to be careful.

1. Remember, beekeeping is hyper-local.
2. What works in one area might not work in yours.
3. For at least your first year or longer, follow your mentor's lead rather than YouTube.



What else will you need?

1. Bee Hives
2. Bees
3. Protective Gear
4. Other Items



Image Source: George Baker



Startup Cost??



Image Source:

<https://pixabay.com/illustrations/seedling-coins-jar-glass-pant-grow-8810123/>

~\$1000+

to get started

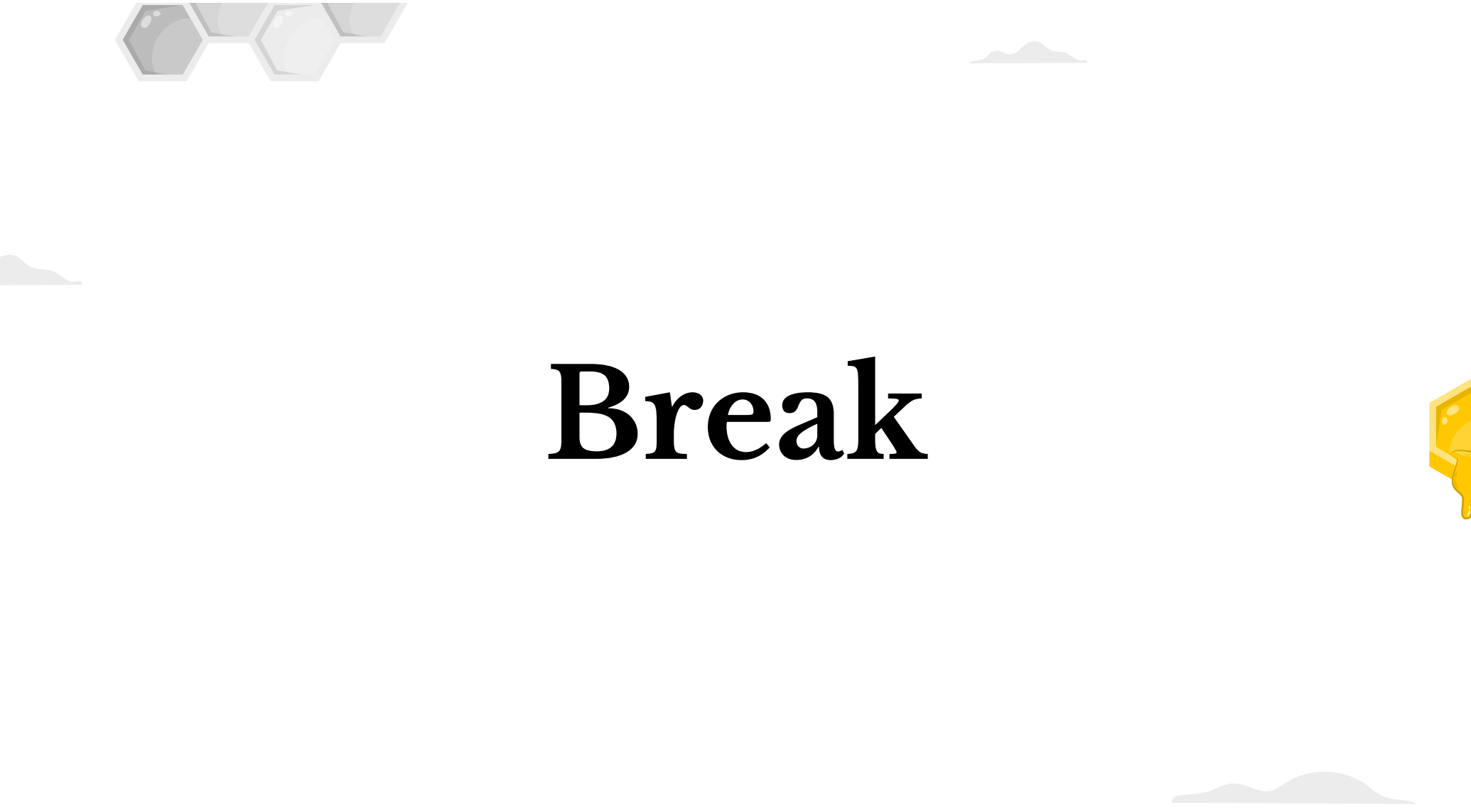




Ongoing Yearly Expenses



1. Hives
 2. Supers
 3. Feed
 4. Treatment
 5. Replacement Bees
 6. Etc.
- 
- 
- 



Break



Here's a Bee Fact





1/12 Teaspoon

Amount of honey a bee makes in their lifetime.

64

Number of teaspoons in a pound of honey

Only one

The honeybee is the only insect that makes food for humans.



Sources: <https://www.honeyassociation.com/about-honey/honey-trivia>
<https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/manateeco/2023/07/11/honey-bees-of-the-world/>





4

Benefits of Keeping Bees



Pollination



Image Source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/bee-honey-bee-insect-fauna-bloom-7413333/>

1. Commercial pollination – (almonds & more).
2. Your garden.
3. Honeybees can't pollinate everything. (*Eggplant and tomatoes for example*)
4. Without pollination, many foods that we have today would not be available.





Honey

1. Sell it
2. Give it away
3. Can help you cover your costs
4. Won't make you rich



Image Source: Cyndi Baker





Beeswax



Image Source: Cyndi Baker

1. Candles
2. Lotion
3. Lip Balm
4. Soap
5. Salve
6. Use it in your hive





Raise Bees & Queens

1. Expand your apiary
2. Sell them
3. Replace dead outs
4. Replace failing queens



Image Source: George Baker





Improve your mental well-being

1. It's relaxing
2. Teaches patience



*Image Source: George Baker generated
at Gemini.google.com*



Here's a Bee Fact





Honey Bees in US

1. 2.5 million colonies in US.
2. Estimated 150,000 beekeepers.
3. US Beekeepers lost 40% of their bees from April 2025 to April 2026.*
4. North Dakota produces almost three times the honey of the next largest state, California.

Sources:

<https://extension.psu.edu/beekeeping-honey-bees>

<https://apiaryinspectors.org/US-beekeeping-survey-25-26>

<https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/honey-production-by-state>





Pests and Diseases





Varroa Mite



Image Source: By Gilles San Martin from Namur, Belgium - Female Varroa destructor on the head of a bee nymph Uploaded by Jacopo Werther, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=24610951>

1. First in US – 1987.
2. It's not the mites that kill; it's the viruses they vector.
3. Currently the honeybee's worse parasite in the world.
4. Best way to control is to have a care plan, including monitoring and treatment.



Small Hive Beetle & Wax Moths

1. Are scavengers
2. A strong healthy hive can control
3. Not as prevalent as Varroa.
4. Generally, does not kill a hive but is a symptom of bigger problems
5. Will destroy your wax if not controlled



Yellow-Legged Hornet (YLH)

1. A bee predator
2. They starve out your colonies
3. Not in this area yet but are in SC
4. Need to stay vigilant



Source: Allan Smith-Pardo, Invasive Hornets, USDA
APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org



Other Pests



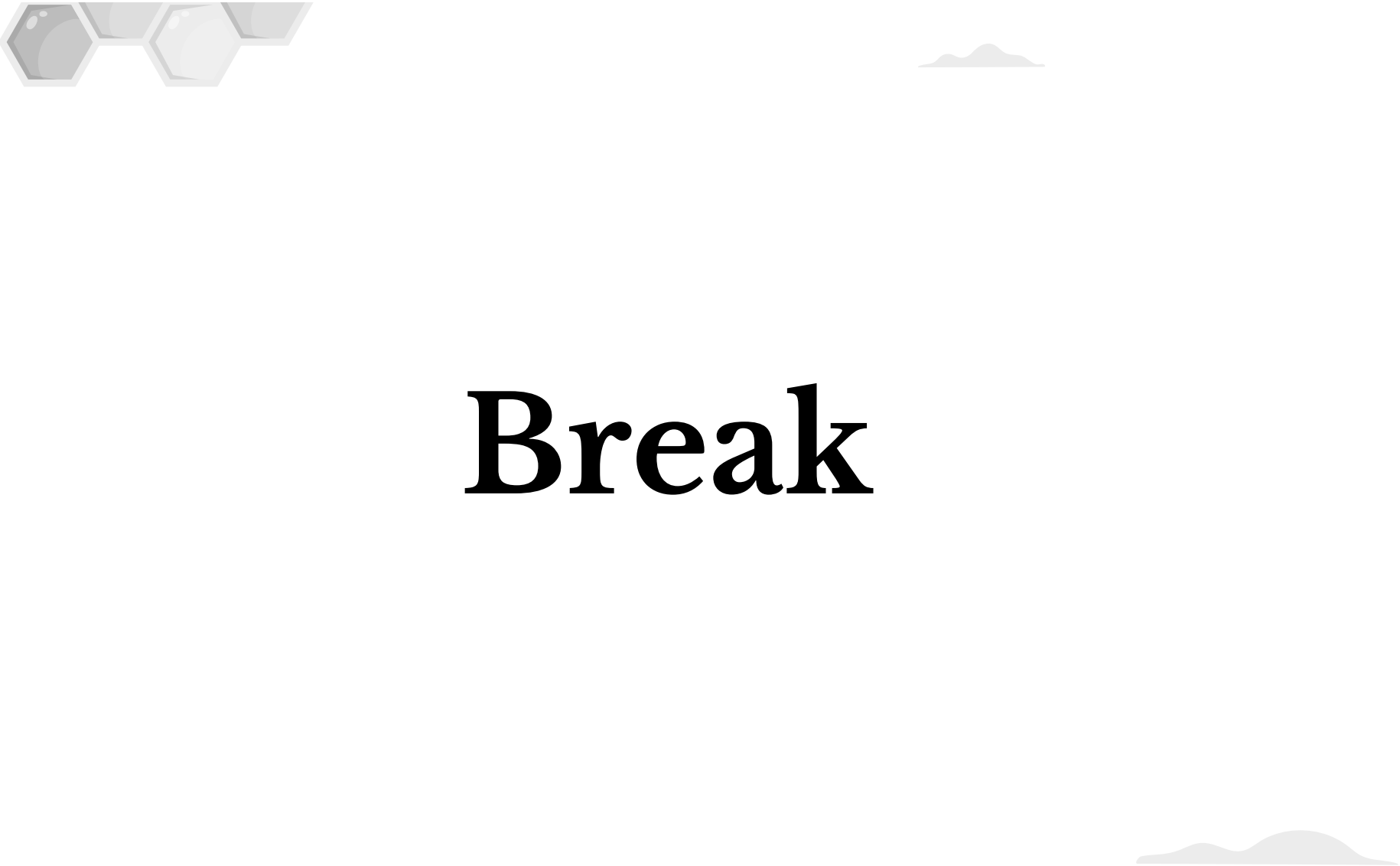
Bears

Raccoons

Mice

Yellowjackets





Break



Here's a Bee Fact





Bees are very local

1. Bees normally travel up to two miles for water, pollen and nectar.
2. Your bees may be experiencing a dearth while your friend's bees across town have plenty to eat.
3. What works in one area doesn't always work in another.





A Beekeeper's Year

Adapted from: <https://scstatebeekeepers.com/beekeepers-calendar/>





Late Summer

August – Mid September



Image Source: George Baker

1. Your year really starts in August.
2. Check mites and treat if necessary.
3. Feed colonies that need it.
4. Balance hives.
5. Requeen if necessary.
6. Inspect hives.





Fall

Late September – Mid November

1. Feed If needed.
2. Add empty supers if needed.
3. Continue inspections.
4. Combine weak colonies.
5. Check mites and treat if necessary.



Image Source: George Baker





Early Winter

Late November – December



*Image Source: George Baker generated
at Gemini.google.com*

1. Repair, purchase and build equipment
2. Feed colonies that need it
3. Read and learn about bees
4. Treat for mites
5. Order bees & queens if necessary for spring.





Late Winter

January – Early February



*Image Source: George Baker generated
at Gemini.google.com*

1. Assemble Equipment.
2. Keep close watch on resources - Most likely to starve from early February till end of March
3. Clean up dead outs.
4. Start planning for season.
5. Keep an eye out for early blooming.





Early Spring

Late February - March



1. Monitor for and handle swarms.
2. Check for and treat for mites.
3. Monitor blooms.
4. Watch resources
5. Inspect hives.



Image Source: George Baker generated at Gemini.google.com





Late Spring

April – Mid June

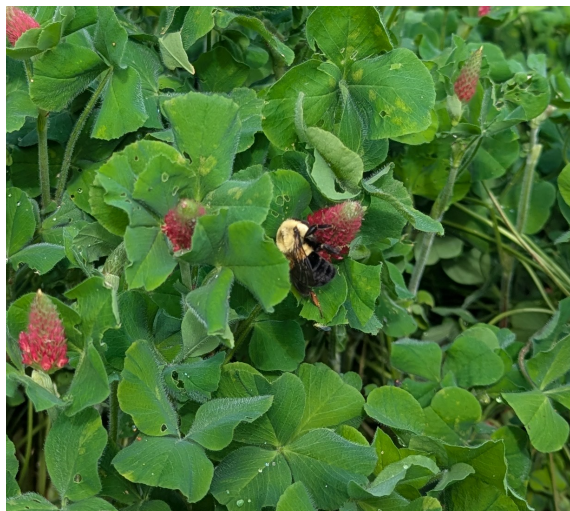


Image Source: George Baker

1. Requeen, if necessary (Late March early April).
2. Continue monitoring for swarms.
3. Add supers and replace colonies as needed.
4. Inspect hives.
5. Bees are making honey.





Early Summer

Mid June - July



1. Pull supers and extract honey. Leave some for them to eat later.
2. Inspect hives.
3. Requeen if necessary.



Image Source: Cyndi Baker





Next Steps

1. Talk with Friends and Family
2. Join a Beekeeping Association.
3. Sign up for a Basic Bee Keeping Course.
4. Find a mentor.
5. Read as much as you can.
6. With mentor's help, order bees and equipment.



Image Source: George Baker generated at ChatGPT.com





How to have a successful first year as a beekeeper



1. Keep your bees alive.
2. Don't fret if you lose bees, everybody does. Learn from it.
3. Have fun.





Remember!

1. Beekeeping hyper-local
2. Get a mentor



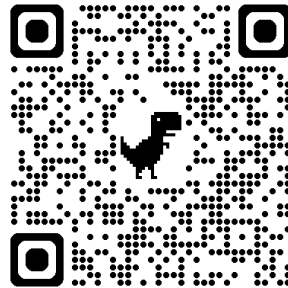
Quiz Time





QUESTIONS?

Download this presentation



<https://www.threeriveroaksfarm.com/honeybees/>





RESOURCES

Where to find more information

- [Blackwater Beekeeping Association](#)
- [SC State Beekeeper Association](#)
- [SC State Beekeeper Association Local Association Lookup Page](#)
- [Bee Culture Magazine](#)
- [The American Bee Journal Magazine](#)
- [Georgia State Beekeepers Association](#)
- [North Carolina State Beekeepers Association](#)
- [American Beekeeping Association](#)
- [Clemson Apiculture](#)



References

1. By Gilles San Martin from Namur, Belgium - Female Varroa destructor on the head of a bee nymph Uploaded by Jacopo Werther, CC BY-SA 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=24610951>
2. Kroll, G. eagle. (2024, May 31). *Small hive beetle (aethina tumida)*. iNaturalist. <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/219443552>
3. By Sarefo - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=2891248>
4. Gemini – <https://gemini.google.com/>
5. ChatGpt - <https://chatgpt.com/>
6. Pixabay - <https://pixabay.com/>
7. Allan Smith-Pardo, Invasive Hornets, USDA APHIS PPQ, Bugwood.org <https://www.insectimages.org/browse/image/5571274>
8. Magnific.com - https://www.magnific.com/free-photo/selfie-happy-friends_5400678.htm

