

# CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPING ALLIANCE



Mission Statement: In the San Luis Obispo County, California bio-region, to foster the health and well-being of honeybees by supporting best beekeeping practices through networking, education and raising public awareness.

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## Club Updates

### -Become a Member!

\*See final page for more information  
See fill out [this survey](#) (~3 minutes)

### -Register your hives

[SLO County Apiary Registration](#)

It is \$10.

“Per the California Food and Agriculture Code, all beekeepers operating within the state of California must register annually with their chosen home county.”

### -New leadership

\*Have an hour or two a month to help out? Send us an [email \(slocoba@gmail.com\)](mailto:slocoba@gmail.com) or attend the next meeting.

\*Upcoming meeting to discuss the future of the club.

*Editor--Ryan Alaniz*

## Upcoming Events

### Start thinking about purchasing queens and nucs!

Our recent speaker, Jeremy Rose with the [California Bee Company](#), is taking orders now.

### February:

Club Meeting

Thursday February 15: Time: 6pm

Santa Margarita Lion's Club

Theme: Spring hives and swarm management

Saturday February 17: Time: 12pm

Lena's Barn

Theme: Low cost BeeVacs construction Workshop

### March:

Club Meeting

TBD

CONNECT WITH US

Email:

[slocoba@gmail.com](mailto:slocoba@gmail.com)

Website:

[www.centralcoastbeekeepers.net/](http://www.centralcoastbeekeepers.net/)

Facebook:

[facebook.com/groups/ccbaslo](https://facebook.com/groups/ccbaslo)

## What to expect in your hive in January and February?

The following is drawn from [Jeremy Rose's](#) book "Beekeeping in Coastal California" with permission.

### What the bees are doing?

- Queen increases egg-laying
- Expanding brood nest during warm weather
- Forming a tight cluster around the brood as the temperature drops
- Foraging on early nectar and pollen sources between rain events
- Rapidly consuming honey
- In February can double or triple in size (may need to add boxes)
- Drawing out foundation

### What the beekeeper may want to do (based on a two-deep brood box hive)

- Do not to disturb hives unless necessary during inclement weather
- Monitor hive weight and adding [sugar syrup](#) (click to see how) and pollen supplements if needed.
- Ensure clean water is present
- Observe brood for signs of [disease/pests](#), (K-wing, nosema, varroa mites, or stress)
- Insert empty drone brood frames, Removing full drone brood frames (February)
- Review health by looking for solid (good) or spotty (not so good) brood patterns

### Common Problems

- Starvation
- Condensation under the lids and drips on clusters
- Varroa mites cause parasitic mite syndrome
- Spotty patterns due to a lack of nutrition, virus, and/or mite problems



*1 Winter cluster*

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*Mice in beehives**Wax Moth*

Have a hack you would like to share? Please send to: [slocbba@gmail.com](mailto:slocbba@gmail.com)

## #beekeepinghack

# Caring for your equipment over winter

### Caring for your equipment

On the Central Coast, we do not have to worry about snow or significant rainfall (like the Northwest). This allows us to avoid certain problems of mold and equipment damage.

However, our temperate climate invites other invaders such as mice, wax moth (see photos on the right), and ants. Below we will review how to protect our equipment from these nuisances.

### Mice

Mice create the most damage by finding a way into abandoned hives and creating a nest inside. They will eat food stores in the comb, chew upon the wax, and leave feces throughout the box. In short, if you re-use the frames and box, your bees will have a tremendous amount of work to do to fix the problems left behind by mice.

The most efficient way to avoid mice issues is to place either an immovable entrance block or a queen excluder so the mice cannot reach the frames of comb. If stored indoors, traps can also help lower the population.

### Wax Moth

Unlike mice, wax moths can find ways into seemingly everywhere no matter your best intentions. Wax moth lay eggs in the wax comb where pollen has been or is stored. These eggs turn into larvae that eat through the wax in search of more pollen. Nineteen days after hatching, the larvae spins a cocoon and exits as a moth.

A strong hive can protect itself from a wax moth infestation although a weaker hive, or an empty hive will likely be taken over. Spiderweb-like substances, feces, tunnels in your comb and even holes in your frames (they chew through wood) can create a disgusting new home for your next swarm.

Two of the most common ways to prevent wax moth is by making their environment inhospitable through the use of chemicals or leaving your boxes out with adequate airflow. Paradichlorobenzene (PDB) is common and can be purchased often at a local hardware store. Please note that this is a fumigant and should not be used with protection, in live colonies, or if there is honey present for human consumption. A simpler way is to leave your boxes without a bottom board and stack them crosswise. This leaves airflow and light to enter preventing the wax moth from wanting to make a home. Other ways to combat wax moth can be found on this website:

<https://beeprofessor.com/how-to-treat-wax-moths/> .

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### Ants

Ants, Argentine ants in particular which live mostly in south county, can also be a major problem. Ants can find tiny cracks to enter and will quickly consume honey stores. If you added sugar syrup or granulated sugar, they will also find ways to eat these reserves.

You can treat ants just as you do in your home. Commercial ant traps placed near the legs of your hive are effective. Similarly, putting the legs in a tuna can of water or oil creating a moat, which prevents the ants from being able to cross and climb into the hive. Vaseline or “Tanglefoot” can also be placed around the legs of the hive, although over time dust will accumulate and the material will have to be reapplied (personally I don’t recommend this method). Finally, avoid any spillage of sugar syrup on the hive or dropping comb near the hives. This is a clear invitation to the ants.

Generally, ants will not kill a hive, but they will cause problems. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. See the [July/August 2023](#) newsletter for more information on dealing with ants.

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**Become a CCBA Member for 2024**

Want to support your local beekeeping club? Here is an easy way to make sure we have the funds to continue serving SLO county beekeepers and the community.

We have two requests:

- 1. Fill out [this survey](#) (~3 minutes) so we know who you are and can update the contact list.

(<https://forms.gle/MpxV6YKqbJ3YoHdY7>)

- 2. Pay \$20 annual membership fee. This is per household.

All funds go toward supporting CCBA activities (e.g. renting meeting space, speaker honorariums, materials for shared projects, etc.). CCBA is a volunteer run organization and no board member receives any type of compensation.

Fee can be paid via:

- Venmo (see below)
- Check--Make payable to Central Coast Beekeeping Alliance; PO Box 42, Templeton, CA. 93465
- Cash--at our next meeting.



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