Beekeeping in Urban Areas

Where to put your bees!
Check the laws in your area

• Go online
  – Regulations such as distance from property lines
  – Neighbors signatures
Considerations

- Neighbors
- Pools
- Fences
- Dogs
- Children
- Shade
- Water
- Nectar & pollen
Location with in the law
Fences make good neighbors!

- Out of sight out of mind
- Encourages bees to fly high-out of the flight path
Think it through!
What’s wrong with this picture?

- Cement base – good
- Hives facing out – bad
- Children next door
Provide Water

- Pools
- Provide alternate water
  - Feeders
  - Bird bath
Dog Bowls & Birdbaths

- Rough sides work better
Water Gardens

- Provide water
- Respite for beekeepers
Animal Damage

- Protect bees from horses and cows
- Provide easy access
Ponds

• Provide water
• Low areas can cause early morning fog & cool areas
• Provide opportunities for birdwatching
Some Dogs Learn Quickly

- Some learn to make a wide path
- Some never learn
- Some eat every bee that flies by
Children

- Some learn to make a wide berth
- Some never learn
- Isolate the bees
  - High fence or “box”
  - Place out of the walkway
Ideally

- Morning sun, afternoon shade
- Windbreak on north side
- Face hives east or south
Storage Issues

- Sometimes you have to rent a space
- City & Sub Division Ordinances can cause problems
More storage issues

- City & Sub Division Ordinances
Availability of Nectar & Pollen

- Drive around and look at the plants that are out there
Romantic Locations

- Go through a gate
- Get a key from farmer
- High on a hill
- Wildflowers
- Deer
- Lovely pond
- Look at pros & cons
Common Sense Locations

- Easy access, all year
- Minimal amount of gates-key available all the time
- Solid road in all weather, even rainy years
- Honey & pollen plants available
- Water near by
- Windbreak
- Southern exposure
• There is no subject of more importance to the beekeeper, nor is there one that gives him more pleasure, than the study of the honey producing flowers. ------Doolittle
Red Maple

- Early February
- Nectar
- Pollen, tan
Pussy Willow

- February
- Early March
- Nectar & Pollen
- Host plant for Viceroy & Red-Spotted Purple Butterflies
Dandelion

- March to November
- Nectar & Pollen
- Pollen color produces very yellow wax on new foundation
Henbit

- End of March & Early April
- Nectar
- Pollen-red to purple
Redbud and Flowering Crab

- End of March
- Early April
- Nectar
- Spring build up—multiple trees in bloom
Domestic Fruit Trees - Apple

- April
- 2-5 hives needed per acre of trees
- Nectar stimulates brood rearing
- Pollen
Brambles

- Brambles include blackberries & raspberries
- May
- “Blackberry Winter”
- Nectar
Vegetable Gardens

Cucurbita

- Cucumbers – pollen
  - Insects transfer pollen from male to female flowers

- Squash, Pumpkins, Melons - pollen & nectar
Herbs

- Aren’t honey plants but provide minor nectar
- Mints, sages, oregano, thyme, lavender, borage,
Black Locust

- May
- Nectar, light & mild tasting
- Flowers very fragrant
- Short bloom period, 10 days
- Poor weather
  - Usually rains
  - Hails
  - Heavy winds
Alfalfa & Scurfy Pea

- Several cuttings, hay
- Seed Production
- Nectar & Pollen
- Quickly granulates
- Florets have a tripping mechanism
Earliest Clovers

- Many varieties of clover
- Alsike & White Dutch Clover
- Long bloom periods
- Late April-August
- Nectar, very light
- Pollen, brown
Yellow Sweet Clover

- Mid-May through June
- Nectar & Pollen
White Sweet Clover

- Mid-May until Mid-July
- Nectar & Pollen
Red Clover

- Myth
- Very deep flower
- Can be a valuable honey plant in a very dry year
- Or third or fourth cutting
- Pollen
Smartweed (Heartsease)

- August until frost
- Nectar
Annual Sunflower

- August & September
- Amber Honey
- Pollen
Goldenrod

- August - October
- Nectar & Pollen
- Nectar source for butterflies
- Granulates with a coarse grain
- Excellent winter feed for bees
New England Aster

- September to frost
- Nectar
- Granulates quickly
- Very strong smell in hives