



Beginning Beekeeping Course

Phil Craft, instructor



Honey bees are very much in the media these days, from nightly news reports, to features on NPR, to the cover of *Time* magazine. Amid concerns for the health of the species and stories about the importance of honey bees to agriculture, beekeeping is growing steadily in popularity. It can be a fascinating and rewarding hobby or a source of supplemental income. How do you get started in beekeeping and how do you know if it's right for you? Whether you'd like to increase the number of pollinators in your garden, want to produce your own honey, or have always thought it might be fun to have your own hives, this one day class will answer some of your questions and instruct you in the basics of getting started. The class will cover:

- **A brief introduction to honey bee biology and behavior:** Beekeepers manage their colonies through an understanding of basic honey biology. The course begins with these fundamentals.
- **How beekeepers keep bees:** Beekeeping is much more than getting a hive and some bees and placing them in your backyard. Even though our grandfathers may have done it that way, modern beekeeping requires management - much like keeping other, larger livestock. Beekeepers must monitor, and sometimes intervene, to keep their bees healthy and productive. This phase of the course offers an overview of what this management involves.
- **An introduction to beekeeping equipment:** The first step in owning your own hive is the purchase of the hive itself, along with protective clothing, and a few other pieces of essential equipment. This portion of the course will demonstrate the equipment and provide information on where it can be purchased, and estimated start-up costs.
- **Getting started as a beekeeper:** Once you know the basics, you'll need to know where to get bees, and how to go about setting up a hive. We'll cover where to locate a hive, where to purchase bees, and how to install them.
- **1st year hive management:** The final section of instruction will be an overview of management issues, including potential problems which may arise in the first year of beekeeping.
- **Question & answer session:** Before we disperse for the day, you will have an opportunity to ask additional questions in an informal question/answer session.

The course will be held Saturday, February 28th from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM at the University of Kentucky's Ecological Research and Education Center (EREC) at 1737 Russell Cave Road in Lexington. Find out more about EREC at <http://darwin.uky.edu/~erec/>.

Course material provided will include handouts, the beginner beekeeping primer *First Lessons in Beekeeping*, by Dr. Keith Delaplane, and Phil's contact information for follow-up questions and opportunities for future instruction. The course fee is \$40; pre-registration is required; class size will be limited to 40 participants. Contact Phil for at philcraftbeekeeping@windstream.net for pre-registration form, or for more information.

At the lunch break, those who wish may go out to eat. Anyone who brings their own can participate in an informal discussion and question/answer session with Phil as we eat.

Phil Craft bio: Phil is the retired Kentucky state apiarist (Kentucky Department of Agriculture), a nationally known beekeeping instructor and lecturer, and author of the monthly question/answer column, *Ask Phil*, in *Bee Culture* magazine. Phil also offers beekeeping advice and assistance through his PhilCraftHiveCraft.com webpage.