

Apis m. Esoteria 35

Traditional Climatology

We might have dodged bullet number one this year (2020). I hope I am not speaking out of turn. There are still a few weeks left.

If you are growing pansies and petunias, you must pay real close attention.

Traditionally speaking here in the North Georgia Mountains there are three late killer frosts. All these events can adversely affect beekeeping.

BLACKBERRY WINTER Frost can attack the blackberry bushes when they are in bloom. This is usually the end of April. Today (12 April 2020) the black raspberry bushes are just starting to set the bloom buds. Black raspberries are 10-14 days ahead of blackberries. It will be interesting to see what happens.

DOGWOOD WINTER There is no specific date for this. When the dogwood trees are in late bud stage or blooming there is frequently a day or two or three of sub-freezing weather. Sometimes just during the night, sometimes all day long. This year (last two weeks of March and up until 12 April) there has not been a frost yet. Has "global warming" impacted us here in the mountains. I think not! The last week of March there were 3 days of very cool night (30°) as the morning low. The temperature probable was below 30° for just 3-4 hours right around sunup. This did not hurt the very young tight dogwood buds. My observations are that the weather pattern has moved 2-4 weeks earlier in the year. Hence, this 3-5 week earlier cool spell might have been "Dogwood Winter 2020" Dogwood winter does not have to occur every year. The night of 21 & 22 April 2021 during full dogwood bloom, the temperature got down to 23°. This ended the bloom for the year. A local expert told me that many of the nursery cultivars of dogwood trees bloom earlier. Hence, watch the woods for the dogwood tree that are "wilder" and bloom later.

THE LAST FROST DAY OF THE YEAR The last killer frost day according to the "Farmers' Almanac" is 13 May. According to the "local" gardeners, "Don't plant any above ground sensitive plants (vines and tomatoes) until after Mothers' Day. You can plant onions, potatoes, spinach, turnips, and lettuce earlier.