

2023 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #2a

What a week. We have had bee flying weather in North Carolina and the bees have been busy hauling in pollen.

I visited the J. C Rulston Arboretum on Thursday to take pictures of plants in bloom. Wow, I was blown away with plants in bloom. I have been examining pollen grains that I collect from my bees and I have some detective work to do.

So far I have one which looks like it comes from the Ulmaceae family -(Elm) but I can find no Elms in bloom. The challenge is so many plants are in bloom right now and my pollen guide leaves a lot to be desired. I might spend several hours just trying to find a picture of a pollen grain that matches what I see in my microscope.

I can say I saw a maple tree full of blossoms -- and pollen grains match up with the samples I have. I will share the picture of that tree and several others in next weeks edition. We did not have a hard freeze last night but it looks like the blooming trees will be exposed to temperatures in the 20 degree range thru early next week.

This newsletter is long. It contains a brief report of a pollen sample taken on 11-28-2022. I narrowed that sample down to *Helleborus niger* (the Christmas rose which by the way was in full bloom when I visited the arboretum on Thursday). For those who live in the northern states, what I see here will be something to look forward to. You can determine and compare blooming time with maple. Maple is just starting here in Raleigh now. It started in the coastal region of North Carolina a week ago. If you check maple trees in your area, you can count the days until you see maple in bloom. That may help you determine the blooming periods in your zone.

I am going thru a learning curve right now. My reference books use latin terms for plants rather than common names. I will be using both when I id a plant.

Not much chance my bees will be out foraging today (1-14-2023).