

The 2018 Annual North American Mite-A-Thon

A Citizen Science Initiative

www.pollinator.org/miteathon

Saturday, September 8 to Saturday, September 15, 2018

Mite-A-Thon is a national effort to collect mite infestation data and to visualize *Varroa* infestations in honey bee colonies across North America within a one-week window. All beekeepers can participate, creating a rich distribution of sampling sites in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Their *Varroa* monitoring data will be uploaded to www.mitecheck.com.

The parasitic mite, *Varroa destructor* (*Varroa*), and the viruses it vectors is a significant driver of this honey bee colony mortality. Yet, indicators suggest that many beekeepers are not monitoring honey bee colony *Varroa* infestations and therefore aren't able to connect infestation to colony loss.

- OBJECTIVE:** 1) To raise awareness about honey bee colony *Varroa* infestations in North America through effective monitoring methods.
2) Management strategies will be made available for discussion within bee organizations utilizing Mite-A-Thon partner developed information and outreach materials.
- DATE:** The week of September 8, 2018, with a practice test during summer 2018
- PARTICIPANTS:** All beekeepers in North America are encouraged to participate
- COST:** There is no cost. You can create your own test materials or kits can be purchased online and at your local bee supply store.
- OUTREACH:** Promotion of Mite-A-Thon will be accomplished through local bee clubs, state beekeeping organizations, and national associations (see partners for examples)
- DATA COLLECTION:** Participants will monitor the level of mites (number of mites per 100 bees) using a standardized protocol utilizing two common methods of assessment (powdered sugar roll or alcohol wash) and then enter data, including location, total number of hives, number of hives tested, local habitat, and the number of *Varroa* mites counted from each hive. The published information will not identify individual participants.
- SPONSORS:** Sponsorships are being solicited to underwrite costs and scholarships, as necessary.
- CONTACT:** Miteathon@pollinator.org or 415 362-1137
- TO DO:** Determine your preferred method of testing for mites and commit to a day for testing, either individually or through beekeeping organizations, and report your data (see above). Visit <http://www.pollinator.org/miteathon> for resources.



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