

The Serious Beekeeper: Becoming an EAS Master Beekeeper

The Eastern Apicultural Society's Annual Conference is held each summer sometime between July and August. Any beekeeper who is serious about expanding their beekeeping knowledge and skill set should plan to attend this event. It has an enormous amount of workshops and educational opportunities for all levels of beekeeper, from beginners to extremely advanced apiarists.

This is also where EAS certifies Master Beekeepers. It involves an application process (including recommendations of candidates by Master Beekeepers or recognized professionals in the field of apiculture), as well as a four-part test. The test includes a written examination, a lab exam, a field exam (hive inspection), and an oral exam. The test is comprehensive and very demanding. Candidates often sit for the exam multiple times before passing. Fortunately once one section is passed, it need not be re-taken.

With the recent increase in the number of backyard beekeepers in Maine, we have a clear need for more involved mentoring beekeepers and the Master Beekeeper program is designed to meet exactly this need. There is certainly demand for at least double the amount of bee schools being taught in our state. An increasing number of backyard beekeepers has also increased nuisance complaints. We need a strong population of Master Beekeepers to help ease some of these bottlenecks for our bees and beekeepers. Maine currently has 14 Master Beekeepers. To find out more about the program, go to the [EAS website](#).



Master Beekeeper Erin MacGregor-Forbes at an Eastern Apicultural Society Conference