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HONEY BEES FACE SHARP DECLINE IN 2025

The Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary is doing their part to promote healthy honey bee colonies in Connecticut.

NEWTOWN, CT – April 1, 2025 – According to entomologists at Washington State University, honey bee colonies in the United States are projected to decline by up to 70% in 2025. Only days ago, the university said in a news release that in the past decade, honey bee colony losses have averaged 40% to 50% annually. But this year, a combination of nutrition deficiencies, mite infestations, viral diseases and possible pesticide exposure during the previous pollinating season led to higher losses, the release said.

With about 35% of the world's food dependent on pollinators, according to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, more people are needed to keep and care for bees across the nation. To do their part, the Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary in Newtown is hosting a series of Backyard Beekeeping classes. Home to over a million honey bees, the sanctuary's apiary is reflective of what's happening nationally with their original fifteen hives shrinking down to two hives since winter. Their 2025 beekeeping classes take new and seasoned apiarists through spring, summer and fall beekeeping with the last class instruction focusing on winterizing colonies. Led by master beekeeper, Ryan Griffeth of Necker's Farm, classes will explore what's happening in the hive, how to provide optimum care for the bees, and how to extract honey. Each session is tailored to what is happening in real time with the sanctuary hives and their bees, ensuring topics stay

relevant to the many variables within each season. The first class is scheduled for April 12 at the sanctuary located at 8 Commerce Road in Newtown.

One of the main advantages of backyard beekeeping is the positive impact it has on the local ecosystem. Bees play a crucial role in pollination, helping plants to propagate and produce fruits and vegetables. By keeping bees in their backyard, beekeepers are contributing to the health of their gardens and the surrounding environment. Additionally, harvesting fresh honey from backyard hives provides a natural and delicious sweetener for families.

As more people embrace backyard beekeeping, a community of bee enthusiasts to share knowledge and experiences is a fundamental part of the hobby. Classes provide a platform for individuals to connect, ask questions, and learn from one another. This sense of community not only supports new beekeepers but also promotes the importance of bee conservation and sustainable practices.

To learn more about Backyard Beekeeping at the sanctuary, visit the events link at CVHFOUNDATION.ORG.

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About the Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary:

The Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary is nestled in the very heart of Newtown, spread over 34 acres of pristine farmland, breathtaking woodlands and rolling meadows. Visitors are welcome to explore the extensive hiking & equestrian trails, savor the 90,000 square foot pollinator habitat or have a quiet picnic at the pavilion. The sanctuary property is located at 8 Commerce Road in Newtown and is open to the public from dawn until dusk.

Created in 2013, the sanctuary pays tribute to the life of Catherine Violet Hubbard, a six-year-old victim of the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. Through educational curriculum and community workshops, and a commitment to land stewardship and conservation, the sanctuary continues to make remarkable strides to keep animals free from harm in homes and native habitats. In addition, the sanctuary's groundbreaking Senior Paw Project supports hundreds of senior pet owners residing in affordable and municipal housing communities throughout Connecticut and Massachusetts by providing monthly pet food delivered direct to door, veterinary well care/prescriptive support, and foster/respite care. From the sanctuary's little lending library, to goat yoga & llama hikes, to free and low-cost educational programs for families and children, it's a destination for all.

To learn more, visit www.cvhfoundation.org.

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