



Environmental News

SEMS



Do you know the difference? *by Pia Amberger*

POLLUTION PREVENTION

OUR SEMS GOALS FOR THIS YEAR

1. Improve communications and awareness for reuse/recycle
2. Conduct building audits to survey their sustainability and find areas for improvements
3. Promote a plastic bag-free garrison
4. Create a bee meadow at Soldiers Lake

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTERESTS:

New Environmental Officer (EO) Training Link:
<http://imcom-e.eo-training.com/login.asp>

Visit our share portal:
https://army.deps.mil/army/cmds/imcom_eur-usag/ansbach/SitePages/Home.aspx

The honey bee needs a body temperature of 95°F (35°C) to fly. The same temperature is also necessary for the development of their brood (offspring) and is optimal for wax production. In winter, honey bees become immobile and stop flying when the outside temperature drops below 50°F (10°C). To survive in their hive during the cold months, they crowd together to form a “winter cluster”. The worker bees huddle around the queen on the inside, producing heat by shivering with their wings and flight muscles. This



way, they are able to heat the inside of the cluster to up to 93°F (34°C) if necessary. The outer bees form a roof-like, insulating layer and have a body temperature that is always around 2-3 degrees higher than the rest of the hive. The bees routinely rotate from the outside to the inside so that no bee gets too cold. If the center becomes too warm the bees form rigid chains creating corridors that enable the overheated bees in the middle to climb out and also allow air circulation throughout the

whole cluster. If the outer layer drops back to a critical temperature level of 55-62°F (13-17°C) the bees climb back in through the corridors, sealing them.

Compared to the honey bee, we do not need to crowd together during winter to stay warm. Radiators make sure that our homes are warm and toasty when it gets cold outside. The standard temperature for living quarters on post is 72°F (22°C). In order for our radiators to achieve this cozy room temperature, before turning on the radiators, residents need to complete these two tasks at the start of the cold season:

Clean off the dust that has accumulated on them during the year. A layer of dust can lead to a loss of up to 30% of the radiators capacity, and can smell once heated.

When first turned on in winter, radiators often make bubbling sounds and don't get very warm. There is air trapped inside the heating pipes, preventing the water from flowing evenly through the system. As a consequence the heating power decreases and we lose energy and money. To remove the trapped air, the radiators need to be purged regularly even if they don't make any sounds yet. On Post, call DPW for help if you do not know how.

It is also important to

Upcoming Events

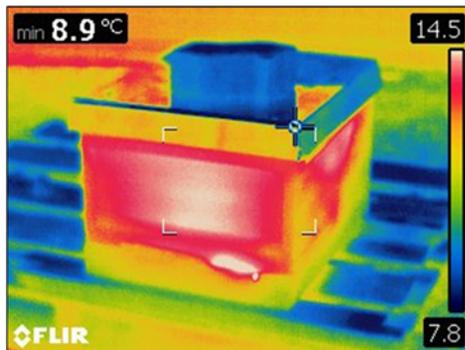
Thanksgiving

November 22nd 2018



properly heat and ventilate your homes in winter. Opening the windows in winter is a bit of a foreign concept for most Americans, however, it is important as German homes are not built with extensive ventilation systems and are fairly airtight. In order to save on energy costs, improve indoor air quality and prevent mold, follow the steps shown below. You should air out your space several times a day, especially after showering, cooking and mopping floors.

The honey bees need to consume between 15-50kg of honey or glucose syrup each winter to produce the necessary heat in their hive to survive. This means that during one winter a honey bee hive burns 2 million joule or 0.56 kWh to stay warm. As a reference, if we would leave an electric heater with a rating of 1,500W running 24/7 for a whole month, it would use 1,080kWh of energy.



Thermal heat photograph of bee box

Steps to Properly Heating & Ventilating Your Home

1. Turn off the heat completely
2. Open windows fully
3. Air at least for 5 minutes
4. Close the windows
5. Turn the heat back on



Environmental Education Center



Bluetit eating home-made bird-food¹



Bird on dried up sunflower²

Urlas, Soldiers Lake - Deputy Garrison Commander Kathleen Gavle officially opened the U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach Environmental Education Center on Friday, 14 September. The center is intended to be a place where interested parties can inform themselves about the native plants and wildlife found at Urlas and especially the three beehives that were installed there in August. In the future, the Environmental Management Division is planning to invite classes from the Ansbach Elementary and Middle/High School on field trips to the Education Center to learn all about honeybees and the environment. The opening ceremony also represented the graduation of the Garrison's first twelve official German and American beekeepers. Norbert Hauer of the Ansbach Beekeeping Club, who has led the training during

the last six months, presented a certificate to each new beekeeper. At the end all guests experienced the inside of a busy beehive up close and were able to taste two different types of locally produced honey. For early spring of 2019, a new beekeeping training will be available for any interested ID-Card holders.

If you or your family are interested in becoming a beekeeper, contact the Environmental Management Division at DSN 467-3424 or drop by Bismarck Bldg. 5843B to sign up for the next round of beekeeper training.

By Pia Amberger



Green Corner: Sustainable Bird Food by Pia Amberger



Soon winter will be knocking on our doorsteps again, and for birds that stay here during, the colder months means looking for food in our gardens. This endeavor can be quite hard sometimes, which is why people choose to help by offering bird food. But not all food is suitable for birds. It is important to use products that are harmless to the animals. If you want to help birds in an environmentally friendly way, you should pay special attention to the ingredients of the food you offer. Any spiced or salted foods are unsuitable for birds. Surprisingly, even bread is not recommended as it swells in their stomachs and provides little nutrition.

In general, birds are of two types when it comes to food: the soft-food eaters and the grain eaters. Pure soft-food eaters like robins, blackbirds or starlings prefer to eat their food on the ground. They eat insects or only very fine seeds. Offer them oatmeal, poppy seeds, bran, raisins and fruit. Grain eaters include finches, sparrows and buntings. They are equipped with powerful beaks and can eat sunflower seeds, hemp and other seeds from feed mixtures. The more flexible of the soft-eaters like chickadees, woodpeckers and nuthatch are considered omnivores and also accept these types of seeds. You can make fat-grain mixtures in the shape of dumplings or rings to hang from the trees. Most pure soft-food eaters, however, prefer to eat these mixtures when they have crumbled to the ground.

In winter, fat is an important source of energy for birds. The fat in the bird food replaces the animal food (insects) that is available in the summer. In addition, the fat protects the grains from moisture, so that the food does not spoil as quickly. You can easily make them yourselves if you don't want to buy any prefabricated food. Melt around 250g coconut oil or unsalted vegetable fat, add 150g sunflower seeds, 150g oat-

meal, and some unsalted peanuts. Allow the mass to cool until it is malleable and then form it into a ball or squeeze into an empty coconut shell or an open pine cone. Let it harden, then hang it on a tree branch. For the soft-food eaters simply use berries and bran instead of the hard grains.

If you're on a budget, go on a nice autumn walk with your family and collect any natural bird food, such as wild hawthorn, elderberry, sea buckthorn, and blackthorn berries or the seeds of burs, stinging nettles, thistles, and dandelions that you find along the way. Don't collect the berries near roads or fields that are freshly sprayed with pesticides. Make sure not to harvest everything in one area as the birds nesting nearby will lose their natural food source. Dry the berries on a radiator for several days. The dried bird food is ready when the berries feel like tough leather. You can also wait to pruning shrubs in your garden until the end of winter. That way the fruits are preserved for birds over the winter months. Don't cut down any dried sunflowers; whatever seeds are left behind will be eaten by the birds.

If you choose to buy bird food, make sure that it is marked as ambrosia-free or ambrosia-controlled. Most of the ingredients for bird food that can be bought here comes from Eastern Europe. In Hungary, ambrosia is one of the four most widespread weed species, so its seeds are almost inevitably included in any harvest. Their pollen can cause particularly strong hay fever and asthma. So any of these seeds in bird food aids in spreading the invasive weed around. Also, avoid buying bird dumplings in plastic nets and use special re-usable grid constructions. Birds can get tangled in the nets and injure their legs. Additionally, the empty nets become trash, where they pose a threat to many wild animals.

¹bz-berlin.de; ²gartenjournal.net