
THE BEE LINE



The Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

Volume 30, Number 2

March 2005

2005 O.S.B.A. Message Board Pollen Contest Results

by Harry Vanderpool

Randy Flaming is the First Prize winner in the 2005 pollen contest, held on the O.S.B.A. Message Board and sponsored by *Countermansbeesusa*. He will attend the Northwest Corner Fall Conference with his admission covered by Norm Counterman.

In order to win this contest, one must take a digital photo of the entrance of a hive with bees bringing in pollen as close to January 1st as possible.

This picture must be posted on the O.S.B.A. Message board at www.orsba.org. Simply click on the Message Board.

The composition for the photo must be as follows: One bee must be on the entrance, and one still in the air with pollen in clear view. To verify the correct date, a newspaper must be laid in such a manner as for the viewer to be able to discern the date, also. The first photo posted according to these rules after New Years Eve wins!

Second place winner is Julie from Astoria. Her second place prize is paid admission to the O.S.B.A. Field Day, and the next Honey Bee Work Shop!

Third place winner is Richard Snyder from the Spokane area. His third place prize will be paid admission to the next Honey Bee Workshop.

Thanks go to Alex Vold of Tillamook for judging, Thom Trusewicz for maintaining law and order, all participants, and to *Countermansbeesusa*.

New Pheromone Creates Buzz About the Clout of Older Bees

Honey bee social feeding was long thought to involve the exchange of communicative substances, in addition to food. The report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences is the first discovery of a primer pheromone produced by adult worker honey bees that is thought to be transferred via food exchange.

EAST LANSING, Mich. – A recent discovery unveils the chemical secret that gives old bees the authority to keep young bees home babysitting instead of going out on the town.

A hard-to-detect pheromone explains a phenomenon Michigan State University entomologist Zachary Huang published 12 years ago – that somehow older forager bees exert influence over the younger nurse bees in a hive, keeping them grounded until they are more mature, and thus more ready to handle the demands of buzzing about.

The work that identifies the chemical, “Regulation of Behavioral Maturation in Honey Bees by a New Primer Pheromone” is publishing in Proceedings of the National Academy of Science Biological Sciences, Population Biology, Early Edition the week of Nov. 29.

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Oregon State Beekeepers Association

The Bee Line is the official publication of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association and is published ten times a year. Subscriptions are included with OSBA membership.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

OSBA President Kenny Williams is away on a bee pollination trip. His President's Message will return next month.





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EDITOR'S NOTES

by Mary Moss

At the time this issue of the newsletter went to press, most (if not all) of the “usual suspects” who contribute articles and information—including OSBA President Kenny Williams—could not be rounded up. They were trucking bees to the almond orchards in California. So, their erudite and helpful contributions are missing. However, we still have quite a bit of useful information within this issue for our members, and we hope you will find it interesting and maybe even thought-provoking.

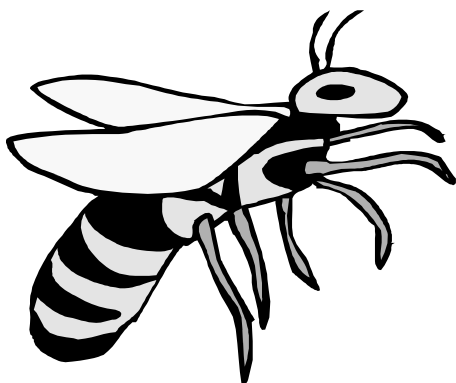
I'm going to make a few comments and observations on the current situation all of us are facing. As a small-time beekeeper (usually under 20 colonies), I've never hauled my bees around to pollinate a crop. Also, I have not sent any of my hives off with a commercial beekeeper who needed more for a load going out to fulfill a contract. Some of my beekeeping colleagues, though, have been and are doing just that, especially this year. Reports of terrible losses due to mites and viruses recently are staggering; some beekeepers have lost 60-80 percent of their hives (which numbered in the hundreds or thousands)! Those who hold pollination contracts with desperate almond orchard farmers are getting premium prices—as much as \$90-120 per hive. That is truly astounding, since the usual “going rate” peaked at about \$45 in 2004. Moreover, the honeybee shortage for the almond crop is so bad this year that bees are being trucked in from as far away as Florida.

Recent articles in the “Capital Press” (published in Salem, Ore) have detailed the situation very well, and are worth reading if more information and details are desired. Their Website is: www.capitalpress.com, and their telephone number is (800) 882-6789.

In view of what I've been reading, seeing, and hearing in the past few weeks, it may be time for me to think about the future regarding the bees. The fact is, honeybees are in short supply. So, should I regard all swarm capture opportunities more seriously? Should I order extra queens now to make splits, and start “configuring” extra hives for pollination next year (keeping to uniform size, etc.). Should I deliberately build up my apiary's strength and be more vigilant in ensuring that *all* of my bees get through the winter in good shape? Maybe I should renew my participation in the local clubs and field days, learning what's new and what's working for other people? It's so easy to become complacent and take a, “Well, that's just how beekeeping goes” attitude.

In sum, would it be best to take it all just a little more seriously, a little less cavalierly, and take the time to not just “do it right,” but do it *really well*? For me, the answer to all of those questions is a resounding, “Yes.”

What will *you* be doing in this new Spring season?



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IOWA STATE INDEX OF INTERNET RESOURCES

(A real time-saver for those surfing the Web for beekeeping news or information)

Apiculture (Beekeeping) and Social Insects

- [Africanized honey bees](#) - Africanized bee information, especially in relation to California. Includes bibliography with over 900 references.
- [All About Bees](#)
- [American Association of Professional Apiculturists](#)
- [American Bee Journal](#) - The Journal has the honor of being the oldest English language beekeeping publication in the world.
- [American Beekeeping Federation](#)
- [Ant Colony Developers Association](#) - fore those with an interest in ant colonies.
- [Apiculture Newsletter](#) - From UC-Davis entomology department.
- [APIS: Apicultural Information and Issues](#) - archive of individual issues of the *Apicultural Information and Issues* monthly newsletter, published by the Florida Cooperative Extension Service.
- [Apiservices - Virtual Beekeeping Gallery](#) - information, products and services for beekeeping, bees and honey. Trilingual site: English, French and Spanish.
- [ARS Insect Locations](#) - includes stock centers.
- [B Eye](#) - see the world through the eyes of a honeybee
- [Bee Alert](#) - using bees to assess environmental hazards. Online video cameras, electronic hive monitoring. Kids' section.
- [Bee Briefs](#) - Short articles on topics of interest to beekeepers. UC-Davis.
- [Bee Genera of the World](#) - Synonymic listing, including type species and subgenera; based on Michener, 2000, with updates.
- [Bee Improvement](#) - from Bee Improvement and Bee Breeders' Association (BIBBA), a UK-based organisation dedicated to conservation and improvement of native honey bees.
- [Bee Research Lab](#) - Beltsville, MD. Research projects and instruction for submission of samples to the diagnostic service. USDA-ARS .
- [Bee Tidings Newsletter](#) - image-rich newsletter for Midwestern beekeepers produced by the University of Nebraska, Marion Ellis, editor.
- [BEE-L](#) - for discussion of bee research and biology. Subjects include sociobiology, behavior, ecology, genetics, taxonomy, physiology, pollination, and many others..
- [BEEBR](#) - Brazilian mailing list on which diverse subjects on bees are discussed (pollination, beekeeping, ecology of stingless bees, euglossine bees and honeybees, etc).
- [Beehoo](#) - world beekeeping directory. More than 1,000 websites about beekeeping, bees, apitherapy, honey recipes, queen breeding.
- [Beekeeper's Reference](#) - regional beekeeping groups, multimedia, books.
- [Beekeeping in Top-Bar Hives](#) - an alternative method of beekeeping. Plans for hives, helpful photos.
- [Beekeeping: The Beekeeper's Home Page](#) - the honey bee, and honey production, beginner tips, photos. Canadian and North American content.
- [BOMBUS-L](#) - mailing list dedicated to discussion of bumblebees. To subscribe, send a message to LISTSERV@umdd.umd.edu with SUB BOMBUS-L in the body of your message. Maintained by David Inouye.
- [Buzzwords and New Zealand Beekeeping](#) - beekeeping news, bees, statistics, honey descriptions.
- [Canadian Association of Professional Apiculturists](#) - beekeeping and pollination.
- [Carl Hayden Bee Research Center GEARS](#) - research on bees and pollination. USDA-ARS.
- [Danish Beekeepers' Association](#)
- [E.H. Thorne \(Beehives\) Ltd.](#) - Wragby, Lincoln, UK. Beekeeping events in the UK, courses for beginning beekeepers.
- [Espacio Apicola](#) - argentine beekeepers' magazine
- [Gruppo di Studio per Gli Insetti Sociali Università di Firenze](#) - Discovering Social Wasps. Study Group for Social Wasps of the Department of Animal Biology of the University of Florence, Italy. Italian and English. Biology and behaviour of social wasps (mainly *Polistes*).
- [Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Laboratory](#) - research to minimize problems that challenge honey bee productivity, and to generally improve bee stocks for beekeepers. Devising solutions based on genetic resistance of bees to mites. Baton Rouge, Louisiana. USDA-ARS.
- [Honey Bee Lab](#) - Penn State University. Research on the immunology, virology, and pathology of honey bees. Includes gallery of insect photographs and drawings.
- [Honey Bees and Pollination](#) - bee information site for those in the Virginia / Mid-Atlantic region of the USA
- [Honeybee](#) - students identify honeybee responsibilities inside the hive, importance of the honeybee to humans, and discover how honeybees communicate. Pre-K to 4th grade.

IOWA INDEX OF INTERNET RESOURCES, continued

- [Insects in Motion](#) - Quicktime video clips of various insects showing feeding behavior and life stage development, including a bee stinging.
- [International Bee Research Association](#) - IBRA aims to increase awareness of the vital role of bees in the environment and encourages the use of bees as wealth creators.
- [International Union for the Study of Social Insects](#)
- [Internet Apiculture and Beekeeping Archive](#) - articles from the Usenet newsgroup sci.agriculture.beekeeping, the logs from the listserv bee-l, FAQ files, and pointers to other beekeeping and apicultural resources, on and off the Internet.
- [Island Crop Management \(beekeeping page\)](#) - articles ranging from the natural history of bees to human history associated with bees and beekeeping (bee constellations, bees and warfare, top-bar hives, etc.).
- [Japanese Ants Image Database](#) - taxonomy of Japanese ants.
- [John's Beekeeping Notebook](#) - observation beehives, cell-plug queen rearing, experiences of a Peace Corps beekeeper in Fiji, top-bar beekeeping.
- [Kangaroo Island and Ligurian Honey Bee Page](#)
- [Korea Beekeeping Association](#)
- [Maine Beekeeping](#) - articles, reports and tips on beekeeping, calendar of events, recommended reading
- [Mexican Bee Database](#) - in FoxPro format.
- [National Beekeepers Association of New Zealand](#)
- [NECTAR](#) - Netherlands Expertise Centre for Tropical Agricultural Resources. Non-governmental, non-profit association of beekeeping experts in the Netherlands.
- [Ohio State University Bee Breeding Program](#) - bee breeding and instrumental insemination of honeybees including procedures, equipment and training.
- [Raising Bees](#) - from the Small Farm Resource
- [SIWeb](#) - Social Insects Web. systematics, phylogeny, distribution, images, literature and conservation of social insects. From Department of Entomology, American Museum of Natural History.
- [Small Hive Beetle](#) - *Aethina tumida*, a new pest of honeybees established in the southeastern U.S.
- [Solitary Bees: an Addition to Honey Bees](#) - use of *Osmia* (orchard bees) for pollination. Includes a list of suppliers.
- [Stridulation Sounds of Black Fire Ants](#) - *Solenopsis richteri* in different situations.
- [The Amazing Beecam](#) - video feed from a beehive.
- [The Bumblebee Pages](#) - life cycle, frequently asked questions, behavior.

(continued next page)

- [The Pollination Home Page](#) - portal to pollination information and images.
- [Torre Bueno's Glossary for Social Insects](#) - entomological glossary.
- [Varroa mites and how to catch them](#) - treatment, drone method.
- [Varroa WWW Hub](#) - A collection of links about the honey bee parasitic mite *Varroa destructor*.
- [Woyke Honey Bee Page](#) - describes genetic expression of body color in different species of honey bees. Warsaw Agricultural University, Poland.



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New Pheromone, Continued from Page One

“If the older ones don’t keep them in check, the young ones can mature too quickly,” Huang said. “It’s kind of the same thing as with people, you need the elders to check on the young, even if the young are physically able to go out on their own, it’s not the best situation for anybody and now we know how it works.”

Huang worked with a team that spanned from the United States, France and Canada to explain how the bees kept an exquisitely consistent balance between the ones that go out to collect nectar and pollen and defend the hive, and those that stay home and nurture the larvae. Huang had documented that this balance is controlled by the elder bees, those that typically spend the final one to three weeks of their five-week lifespan out in the field.

Experiments showed that if a significant number of forager bees didn’t come home, the young nurse bees would mature ahead of schedule and head out to become foragers themselves. If the older bees were kept inside more than usual – as in an extended rain shower – fewer young bees would mature, but instead stick to brood care. But the question was always, why? Pheromones are a chemical signal emitted by animals, insects and humans. Some, called releaser pheromones, are like a quick conversation that changes behavior, such as those that inspire sexual attraction.

Since releasers change behaviors immediately, they historically have been easier to identify. Hundreds of releaser pheromones have been chemically identified, whereas only four (including this new one) have been identified as primer pheromones. Primer pheromones are more difficult to work with because they imparts behavioral changes in a much longer time scale, taking days or sometimes weeks to see an effect.

Huang and his associates spent years futilely searching for a primer pheromone. After many dead ends, the group came upon a crucial difference between forager bees and nurse bees: Forager bees carry a mother load of a chemical called ethyl oleate in the abdominal reservoir in which they store nectar.

That, Huang said, led them to identify ethyl oleate as another kind of pheromone – called primer pheromone.

Forager bees load up on ethyl oleate when they’re buzzing about gathering food, but don’t digest it. The forager bees feed the chemical to the worker bees, and the ethyl oleate keeps them in a teenage state, sort of like being grounded to watch the younger siblings. As the old bees die off, the

chemical no longer is fed to nurse bees. Eliminate ethyl oleate and the bees mature into foragers.

“This provides clear insight into how a bee colony works,” said Gene Robinson, G. William Arends professor of integrative biology and director of the neuroscience program at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. “What’s most impressive about a honey bee colony is it is able to respond to changing conditions and alter its division of labor. When you think of that type of flexibility and adaptability, you immediately think, ‘who’s in charge’? People from many scientific and engineering endeavors are fascinated by localized decentralized decision making.”

Huang said the system makes sense for the health of the hive. Young bees – those in the first two to three weeks of life – are biologically better suited for brood care, thanks to some boosted blood protein. Bees forced out too early aren’t great navigators, and since foraging is dangerous, they risk dying before their time.

“Our idea has never been disproved, but the lack of mechanism drove me crazy,” said Huang. “Now we know the specific chemical that controls the behavior of honey bees for the good of the whole population.”

In addition to Huang and Robinson, the paper’s authors are Isabelle Leoncini, Yves Le Conte, Didier Crauser, Guy Costagliola and Jean-Marc Bécard, of the National Institute of Agricultural Research in Avignon, France; Mianwei Wang, Erika Plettner and Keith Slessor of Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, Canada; and Amy Toth of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The research was funded by the National Institute of Health. Huang’s research also is supported by the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station.

MSU entomologist Zachary Huang. Huang’s home page: <http://www.msu.edu/~bees/> To learn more about honey bees and honey bee research, visit this Website: <http://cyberbee.msu.edu/>

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Queens, Bees, Honey & Pollination

NORTHWEST BEEKEEPING TIPS - March

By Harry Vanderpool, WVBA

Fruit tree bloom starts mid-March through April, although this can vary about two weeks.

*Swarming season starts; be observant on each inspection. Queen cell construction on the frame bottom can be seen from congested brood area, hive confinement, low quality stores, predators or queen over a year old. Remove each queen cell found on the bottom of the frames. Queen cells in the brood area (sides of frames) indicate a failing queen. Requeen.

*Dust your colonies three times at seven day intervals with two-tablespoon portion of Terramycin (TM25) mixed with eight parts of powdered sugar. Sprinkle on top of the brood frames, towards the end bars, being sure not to douse the brood.

*Don't let colony stores get below 15 lbs. (3 full frames on honey). Feed light colonies sugar syrup (1 or 1-1/2: 1 ratio) or diluted (2:1) honey (if no American Foulbrood in honey).

*To equalize stores between the colonies, rob combs of honey from colonies with excessive stores. (Put the empty replacement frames back in the strong colony next to the brood nest, to expand egg laying.) When equalizing brood, do not remove over 20% of the sealed brood per colony. Give special attention to the feeding needs of colonies that donated brood and stores.

*A strong colony can also be placed over a weak colony by placing a sheet of newspaper and a double excluder between them. Use a separate entrance for each hive.

*Unite queenless colonies with those needing bees, unless there are laying workers. If so, smoke well and shake all bees from frames and supers onto the ground 50' away. Leave their hive space empty and most will unite with adjacent colonies.

*Remove mouse guard screens.

*Look for colonies with nosema/dysentery (fecal matter streaked on the hive). Treat with Fumidil B according to label instructions.

*Clean existing bottom boards.

*Place hives on stands about 12-18" above the ground where skunks are a problem.

*Check stored frames for wax moth infestation.

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Willamette Valley

Please see next page

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Membership in the Oregon State Beekeepers Association is open to anyone who has an interest in bees and beekeeping. You do not need to own bees or reside in Oregon to join. OSBA membership is \$20 per person and includes a vote in OSBA elections, discounts on other publications and ten issues of *The Bee Line*. Membership outside the US is \$29.

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<i>American Bee Journal</i>	_____ 1 yr. \$17.20	_____ 2 yrs. \$32.75	_____ 3 yrs. \$46.05
<i>Bee Culture</i>	_____ 1 yr. \$17.00	_____ 2 yrs. \$32.00	Outside US postage add \$15/yr.
<i>The Speedy Bee</i>	_____ 1 yr. \$13.25	_____ 2 yrs. \$25.25	

***If you are a member of an OSBA Branch Association, make your check payable to that Branch and attach this form. The Branch Association Treasurer should submit this form and a check to OSBA, retaining \$1 for the Branch Association. If you are not a member of a Branch Association, make checks payable to OSBA and send this form with payment to: Phyllis Shoemake, 1702 Toucan Street NW, Salem, OR 97304.**

Classified Ads

Classified advertising rates per issue: 30 words, per issue: OSBA members, \$3.00, non-members \$5.00. Copy and payment must be received by editor by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

It's time to get those unneeded items listed here!
Time's a'wasting--if your ad isn't here, it can't make you any money.
(And, where else can you run an ad for such low cost?)

CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL: If the label is highlighted your membership is due to expire and this is your friendly renewal notice. Thank you.

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The Bee Line
Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association
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