

The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers' Association

Volume 32, Number 3

April 2007



Connie Petty with the bees.

Oliver Petty

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Front story: As we move into bee season, opportunities for beekeepers to hive swarms are likely to increase by the day. How does one deal with a colony established in a cracked chimney of bricks laid at angles to one another? If there's a will, there's a way!

HIVING A COLONY OF CHIMNEY BEES

Lisa Brenner

During hot weather this past summer, I noticed a large number of honey bees coming into my Portland yard for water. Following the stream of bees, I saw cracks in my neighbors' fireplace chimney where the bees had established an active hive. Being in sympathy with the bees and missing the hive that my husband, Tom Stibolt, and I had once kept in the country, I talked to Bev Koch about saving them. I also searched the web for ideas. An excellent article by Paul Hooper, first published in the February 2001 issue of the newsletter of the Beekeepers Association of the Australian Capital Territory, presented a "how to" remove without breaking into the chimney. Bev referred me to Glen Andresen for help, and, after looking at Paul's article, Glen took on the task of helping get the bees out alive. (This was despite Paul's article ending with, "Would I do it again? Only as a very special favour.")

We followed Paul's advice and used "an 'escape method' along the lines of one described in Chapman-Taylor and Davey's 1981 book *Beekeeping for Fun*. Essentially, the plan was to remove the bees, then to use those same bees to rob-out the honey from the old hive, and finally to fully seal the chimney and let wax moth destroy the comb. The intended time-scale was six weeks."

Not doing well with heights, I enlisted Tom to help. Before Glen came over, Tom sealed as many holes in the bricks as he could find and placed a cover on the top of the chimney (which proved to be unnecessary).

Fortunately, the roof had perfect supports which allowed for installation of a temporary board ledge. Glen and Tom lifted a foundation box to the ledge.



First steps to the bee source.

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The Bee Line

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

Please send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as corrections, letters, comments, photographs and stories (old and new), interviews, and requests for advertising to the Editor, *The Bee Line*, PO Box 42363, Portland OR 97242; thebeeline@comcast.net.

Advertising Costs Per Issue

Business Ads:

Business card	\$10.00
Quarter page	\$25.00
Half page	\$50.00
Full page	\$100.00

Classified Ads (30 words):

Members	\$3.00
Nonmembers	\$5.00

Please submit all copy by the 10th of the month prior to publication. The next issue will be May 2007. Contact the Editor for any additional information. Thank you!

MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

The morning sun pours in my window as I look out over the dew-covered daffodils. This brilliant sight reminds me that spring time is here for the bees. The bees are beginning their normal housekeeping chores of cleaning out the winter litter of dead bees and old cappings, and laying large quantities of brood. As is true for most beekeepers, spring is my favorite time of the year. I could sit beside the hive for hours (if my wife would allow it) on a sunny 60-degree day in spring and be totally mesmerized by the hum as bees come and go with legs heavy with pollen. (Life doesn't get much better than this for old beekeepers.)

I hope that all of your bees made it through winter well. Normally, apple blossom time is when you first put on your honey supers. This is also a time to assess the condition of your queens. If you are planning to replace hives, make divides or begin new ones, you had better get your orders for queens, package bees, or nucs in as early as possible. Early April is when most people start hives.

Currently, most commercial beekeepers have their bees in California pollinating the almonds (they bloom February 10th–March 15th). This year the almond growers have had the best pollination weather that they could have hoped for. The bees are building up very well and every beekeeper is in a good mood.

But not all is well in the beekeeping world. You may have heard of some beekeepers experiencing large losses. They are calling these phenomena *CCD* or *colony collapse disorder*. You also may have heard that our own George Hansen of Colton OR (and past president of OSBA) was elected the Chairman of the Board for the Foundation for the Preservation of the Honey Bees at their annual meeting in Florida this February. As such, he is actively involved in the study of CCD. He is working with scientists and researchers from four USDA-ARS labs, five universities, apiary inspectors from two states, and dozens of beekeepers to research causes and possible preventions of this disorder. He is slated to give us up-to-date information at the OSBA fall conference. Mark the dates November 1–3 on your calendar now! The meeting will again be at the Agate Beach Resort in Newport OR. We have a mix of nationally and locally acclaimed speakers with presentations for the beginner and hobbyist beekeeper as well as the commercial beekeeper.

The sun just came out and so I will sign off for now and get some hives painted before it rains!

Mark

CONNIE PETTY

June 11, 1926—March 8, 2007

Darla Petty

Connie Petty, 80, of Albany died Thursday of natural causes at her home.

Born Loretta Gloria Vaughan in Los Angeles, she was the 10th of 12 children born to Frank Cleveland and Margaret Alice Schalles Vaughan. As a child, she received the lifelong nickname *Connie* from her brother, Ronnie, who gave nicknames to all his siblings. Hers came about while she played with a Japanese friend named Koniko, and Ronnie called them Connie and Koniko.

She was raised in Los Angeles and in the Riverside County communities, and graduated from Inglewood High School in 1944. Later, her family moved to Ojai, Calif., where Connie worked for the local gas company and met Oliver Wendell Petty, who was an apprentice beekeeper to George S. Biggers. They were married at Santa Barbara Christian Church on April 2, 1950.

Within a month, Connie and Oliver moved to Albany with bees purchased in California. After a bumper crop of honey, they purchased property. On Nov. 1, 1950, they moved into their first and only home on Gibson Hill Road, where they raised their five children: Sylvia, Walter, Dean, Douglas, and Martha.

Connie created the name of the beekeeping business, Fairview Apiaries. It was sold in 1980, and they opened Gibson Hill Honey Farm, which remains in existence today. Along with her family, Connie attended Hill Street Church of Christ, where she remained a member until her death.

Over the years, Connie was involved with the League of Women Voters, American Field Service Student Exchange Program, Boston Mill Historical Society, Albany Regional Museum, Friends of the Library, Going to Pots fundraiser, Albany General Hospital Auxiliary, Red and Purple Day (a celebration for her women



Dean Petty

friends), Arts and Letters Gallery, Albany Civic Theater, and the Oregon Press Women. Some of her hobbies included an international honey pot collection and bee memorabilia, a collection of poppy flower memorabilia, photography and attending Boccherini's Book Club, which meets at Boccherini's Coffee & Tea House, where Connie spent many hours during the last years of her life.

Connie discovered a love for writing during high school while working on the school yearbook. She began writing at the *Democrat-Herald* as a temporary assistant to society editor Ianthe Smith in 1965. Her first published article was about taking her children to Dever-Conner, near Jefferson, to pick pole beans and earn money for school clothes. She later joined the newspaper's staff as a reporter and photographer. She was best known for her People page features and stories about the arts. In December 1991, she officially retired as a full-time employee of the *Democrat-Herald*, but continued working for the paper as a freelance writer and photographer.

Connie never lacked time for her eight grandchildren. She was often seen at local art shows, theater productions, park events, and parades with one or more of them in tow.

Traveling and writing articles of her travels was one of Connie's loves. She never met a person on a train, ship, or bus who did not become her friend. As someone who never took a plane flight, Connie became an expert on alternative

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OREGON STATE BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION RESOURCES

OSBA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Columbia Basin: Debbie Morgan
3800 Benson Rd, The Dalles; (541) 298-5719

Eastern Oregon: Jordan Dimock
2635 Mitchell Butte Rd, Nyssa; (541) 372-2726

Metropolitan Area: Doug Woods
14285 S Union Hall Rd, Mulino

North Coast/Webmaster: Thom Trusewicz
90041 Logan Rd, Astoria
(503) 325-7966; ccbee@intergate.com

Southern Oregon: Pat Morris
1333 Rogue River Hwy, Gold Hills
(541) 855-1402

Willamette Valley: Harry Vanderpool
7128 Skyline Rd S, Salem; (503) 399-3675
shallotman@yahoo.com

OSBA REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS



Central Oregon Beekeepers
Meets 6:30 pm, third Tuesday, Bend
Deschutes Public Library, Hutch Rm
President: Dennis Gallagher
(541) 389-4776; haymakeroo@yahoo.com
Secretary/Treasurer: Glenda Galaba
(541) 383-1775; galaba@msn.com

Coos County Beekeepers
Meets 6:30 pm, third Saturday (except Dec)
Olsen Baxter Bldg, 631 Alder St, Myrtle Pt
President: Thomas Kyelberg
(541) 297-4017; usvi@charter.net
Vice Pres: Spike Richardson; (541) 267-4725
Secretary: Marda Burgdorff; (541) 888-5695
Treasurer: Jane Oku; (541) 396-4016
jane_oku@hotmail.com

Lane County Beekeepers
Meets 7:30 pm, third Tuesday, Eugene
EWEB Meeting Rooms, 500 E 4th Ave
President: Morris Ostrofsky
(541) 685-2875; ostrofsky@pacinfo.com
Vice President: Judy Scher
judy_scher@catdreams.com

Secretary: Barbara Bajec; (541) 767-9086;
mbartels@bbastrodesigns.com

Treasurer: Nancy Ograin
(541) 935-7065; woodrt@pacinfo.com
web site: www.lcbaor.org

Portland-Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7 pm, second Thursday, Oregon City
Hous Auth Clackamas Bldg, 13930 S Gain

President: Kerry Haskins
(503) 632-8448; kh251@aol.com

Vice President: Peter Forrest
(503) 236-7787; pdxpete57@msn.com

Secretary: Paul Hardzinski; (503) 631-3927
Treasurer: Barbara Derkacht
(503) 631-3063; bderkacht@yahoo.com

Southern Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 pm, first Monday, Central Pt
So Or Res & Ext Ctr, 569 Hanley Rd

President: John Jacob
(541) 582-BEES; oldsol@jeffnet.org

Vice President: Floyd Pawlowski
415 Pompadour Dr, Ashland

Secretary/Treasurer: Suzanne Davis
suzanne@mighty.net

web site: www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org

Tillamook County Beekeepers

Meets 7 pm, first Thursday, Tillamook
Forestry Building, 5005 Third St

President: Bob Allen; (503) 322-3819

Vice President: Terry Fullan
(503) 368-7160; tfullan@nehalem.tel.net

Secretary/Treasurer: Wayne Auble

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 pm, last Friday, Beaverton
OSU Ext, #1400, 18640 SW Walker Rd

President: Andrew Schwab
(503) 537-0506; pyr4ausi@verizon.net

Vice President: Todd Balsiger
(503) 357-8938; toddbalsiger@comcast.net

Secretary: Preston Gabel
(503) 530-1436; preston@gabelhaven.com

Co-Treasurers: Michael and Brigitte Hendrickson
hendricm@ece.pdx.edu

Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 pm, fourth Monday, Salem
Chemeketa Comm College, Bldg 34, Rm A

President: Richard Farrier; (541) 327-2637

Vice President: Harry Vanderpool
(503) 399-3675; shallotman@yahoo.com

Secretary: Mike Rodia
(503) 364-3275; drodia@yahoo.com

Treasurer: Susan Rauchfuss
(503) 391-5600; smokfoot@cyberis.net

AROUND THE REGION

Lane County Beekeepers

Ken Ograin writes that the February meeting was overwhelming with 120 attending. Was it the Costco goodies? Or the need to pay dues, to sign up for Bee School, to pick up meds, or to listen to Reviewer/Inspector John Foster of Oregon Tilth talk on the organic certification process? Or was it maybe to say thanks to Mike Harrington, the outgoing president, for his years of service to the association? (The group is not letting him go too far. Mike will remain on the board as past president.)



Mike Harrington will continue on the board.

Ken thinks the turnout was probably a combination of these things. And, of course, the buzz about CCD was a hot topic. Everyone who lost a hive was sure that it was CCD. In general, most members reported fewer winter losses than last year, though it may be a little early to tell. Sampling by members is showing a reduced need for medication, and many are hoping to get some early spring maple honey.

Speaker John Foster gave some history of organics in Oregon and with the USDA. The bottom line is that organic honey is not impossible here, but it is not very practical. Two things stand out in the process: (1) the five-mile radius free of pesticides, GMO crops, and identifying water sources going back for three years, and (2) the need to feed with only organic feed and organic medications. Just because a product says it is organic, it is not organic in the eyes of Tilth if it does not have the Oregon Tilth logo. John is open to questions and can be reached at Oregon Tilth, 470 Lancaster Dr NE, Salem OR 97301 or (503) 566-3010.

The group's Bee School has been sold out again this year. Ken says that many have asked why they do not add additional classes. He can only

respond, "They have never put one on." The March issue of the group's newsletter will be available on their web site soon.

Portland-Metro Beekeepers

Kerry Haskins notes that the group will be hosting their annual Bee Day for both new and experienced beekeepers on Saturday, April 21st. The motion at the March meeting to rename the event in honor of Bill Ruhl, lifetime member of the club who passed away in January, was unanimous. Bill was a great contributor and mentor to many in the beekeeping community at both the local and state levels. During past Bee Days at Foothills Honey Farm in Colton, Bill could be found instructing participants on such topics as how to find the queen. The theme of this year's event is *Mentorship* with instructors George Hanson, Chuck Sowers, Dr. Lynn Royce, Harry Vanderpool, Doug Woods, and Thom Trusewicz. The request to fill out the registration form (see page 12 or the OSBA web site) and mail it by April 14th is to allow for time to better estimate the number of lunches needed for those attending. John Keeley will hold a discussion of orchard mason bees at the meeting in April.

Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Harry Vanderpool reports that the group's annual three-day bee school got off to a great start this year with many eager, new beekeepers-to-be, ages 7 to 70, in attendance. Ken Kite started the first class off with an in-depth recap of beekeeping history. Harry followed with the honey bee life cycle. And President Richard Farrier concluded the first session with a hands-on look at hive equipment. Participation was high—the last group left the classroom at 10:00 pm.



Richard Farrier talks about bee equipment.

KEEPING BEES IN WESTERN OREGON

Todd Balsiger

- ❖ Finish your taxes.... Report your beekeeping income appropriately—that is, either as a hobby or a business.
- ❖ Assess the condition of your colonies—food quantities, queen quality, and overall strength. Much can be inferred by looking at flight activity and seeing whether or not pollen is being brought in. This is a great time to cull old comb and replace with new foundation (put a date on your new frames so you know their age).
- ❖ Feed light colonies, ones that you can tip forward easily with one hand, with sugar syrup (2:1 by weight). You can also swap frames from light colonies with frames of honey and pollen from colonies that have excess stores.
- ❖ If the colony is weak and the queen is performing poorly, you may want to requeen or combine the colony with another. If everything looks okay and you want to give it a chance, give it a boost by feeding sugar syrup (1:1 by weight).
- ❖ Use swarm-control practices to reduce swarming—e.g., requeen regularly, equalize colonies, make splits, reverse hive bodies, and provide extra room for colonies that are growing.
- ❖ Consider setting up decoy hives to catch stray swarms in your apiary. Make sure the mice can't get into them!
- ❖ Consider adding dead-out brood boxes to booming two-story hives in anticipation of making splits with them when your queens arrive. This will protect the dead-out brood frames from wax moths, reduce congestion and lessen the swarming impulse, and make a fine division later.
- ❖ April is an excellent month for making divides/splits/nucs where the goal is a decent honey crop.
- ❖ Remember to feed fumagillin syrup to packages, nucs, divides, as well as to colonies receiving new queens. Also, place a drop on the screen of queen cages at the time of arrival.
- ❖ Dandelions, fruit trees, and *maples* bloom in April. You may consider supering, but beware! This is a fickle crop, dependent on the weather. After the bloom, available nectar decreases until mid-May. You may need to feed your bees during this time. Many beekeepers allow their colonies to consume this extra, albeit temporary, nectar flow. Do not super hives that are receiving chemical treatments.
- ❖ As promised, more on *Nosema*. According to the OSBA *Honey Bee Pests and Diseases Update*, April is the month to test for *Nosema* infestation levels. Collect adult bees and send to a lab equipped to do the counts. Treatment recommendations are based on the number of spores (in millions) per bee.
- ❖ Consider using plain extender patties for tracheal mite control (two parts sugar to one part vegetable shortening). Place patty in the middle of a two-story colony or on the top of a single story.
- ❖ I want to emphasize the continued push to treat honey bee pests and diseases based on *need and economic thresholds*, and *not prophylactically*. But a word of warning: undiagnosed American and European foulbrood can be insidious and spread through your apiary. If you only have a few hives to look at (and to lose), consider treating the foulbroods based on need.
- ❖ For prophylactic treatment of the foulbroods, dust colonies with 2 tablespoons of Terramycin and powdered sugar mix every 5 to 7 days to ensure a continuous treatment that will last 21 days. To make the mix, thoroughly combine and mix 2 pounds of powdered sugar with one 6.4-oz packet of Terramycin. If American or European foulbrood resistance is found, consider the use of Tylan. If the infection is severe and

scale is present, burn the colony.

- ❖ Consider employing *Varroa* sampling techniques, such as using drop boards or contact paper, to determine colony mite loads. Determine threshold levels for *Varroa* treatment (I will have some regional numbers soon from Dr. Sheppard). Consider the use of management modifications (e.g., bottom screens, drone trapping, powdered sugar, and, especially, resistant queens) as well as chemical treatment.
- ❖ Remove *Varroa* strips according to instructions.
- ❖ Remove mouse guards.
- ❖ Wax moth activity picks up dramatically when the temperatures rise. Keep an extra eye out for frames that have had brood and have pollen. Moth crystals (paradichlorobenzene) can be used for control, as can freezing the frames. Exposing the frames to light can inhibit moths, too.

AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY REPORT

Brent Searle

The 2005 Oregon Legislature passed HB 2196 requiring the State Board of Agriculture to prepare biennial reports to the Governor and Legislative Assembly regarding the status of the agriculture industry. The initial "State of the Industry" report has been delivered to the Legislature and the Governor.

This document is a comprehensive overview of many topics and issues related to, impacting, and affected by agriculture. An executive summary outlines the current highlights, while the report delves into the background and details of these topics.

An online version can be found at: http://egov.oregon.gov/ODA/bd_rpt_toc.shtml. You can also find the ODA Biennial Report on the department at: http://egov.oregon.gov/ODA/news/pub_0612br.shtml.

Connie Petty—Continued from page 3

forms of travel. She loved trips on Amtrak and sailing to Europe on the Queen Elizabeth II.

Survivors include husband of 57 years Oliver; daughter and son-in-law Sylvia and Mike Hess of Ridgefield, Wash., and their children Sarah Hess and Ben Sainsbury of Ellensburg, Wash., and Rachel Hess and Brent McFarland of Lubbock, Texas; son Walter and wife Kathleen of Eugene, and their daughters, Elizabeth and Angela of Eugene; son Dean and wife Darla of Bozeman, Mont., and their children, Emeshea of Malibu, Calif., and Livia of Bozeman; daughter Martha and husband Michael of Haines, Alaska, and their children, Sasha and Nikolas of Haines; and surviving partner of her son, Douglas, Heather Bowen of Jalisco, Mexico.

Surviving siblings are Pauline Lunceford of American Fork, Utah; Elaine Williams of Paso Robles, Calif.; Charles Vaughan of Reno, Nev.; Philip Vaughan of Santa Maria, Calif.; and Dorothy Gasaway of Ojai, Calif. Connie was preceded in death by her parents; siblings Arleta Scott, Ronald Vaughan, Chester Vaughn, Raymond Vaughan, Morris Vaughan and Jewel Vaughan; and son Douglas Riley, who died of cancer in 1994.

Note: Reprinted with kind permission from Connie's family.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Eastern Apicultural Society

Short Course & Conference

6–10 August 2007

University of Delaware, Newark

secretary@easternapiculture.org

Western Apicultural Society Conference:

Coming Together

19–23 August 2007

Tucson AZ

Diana Sammataro, mellisam2003@yahoo.com

Apimondia 2007

9–14 September 2007

Melbourne, Australia

www.apimondia2007.com or queenbee@gil.com.au

COLONY COLLAPSE DISORDER

Suggested Practices

While no cause has been identified at this point, some beekeepers close to the issue [CCD] have concluded that certain beekeeping practices may contribute to the problem and certain practices may help alleviate it. Bear in mind that this is neither scientific nor legal advice, just information for you to use as you see fit.

- ❖ Check your colonies often. Keep in touch with what is happening inside your beehives. If you are having a problem, the sooner you recognize it, the better.
- ❖ Don't "double up" the dead-outs. Some affected beekeepers have stacked their dead-outs onto supposedly healthy colonies only to have the second hive collapse soon after. The current recommendation is to store the dead-outs away from your bees so they can't rob them out. A related, long-term recommendation is to replace old dark brood combs with foundation.
- ❖ Feed your bees. Beekeepers who feed more have fared better than their neighbors who had stored honey their bees were consuming. And don't neglect pollen feeding.
- ❖ Evaluate your locations. While no suspect has been confirmed as a cause for CCD, we have become concerned about the widespread use of a relatively new class of systemic insecticides on an increasing number and variety of crops. These *neonicotinoids*, even at low doses that are not deadly to individual bees, may cause sublethal effects that may lead to colony mortality or reduced productivity. You may want to talk to farmers or orchardists in your areas of operation and ask them to warn you about applications of products containing neonicotinoids—which include imidacloprid, thiamoxetham, acetamiprid, clothianidin, thiacloprid, and dinotefuran.

In addition, you can complete the beekeeper survey at www.beesurvey.com and donate to CCD research at The Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees, PO Box 1337, Jesup GA 31598 (write *CCD Research* on your check).

Tentative Recommendations

If you think you are experiencing heavy colony losses due to colony collapse disorder, please follow these tentative recommendations.

These recommendations will change as our understanding of this disorder changes. However as of March 1, 2007, these are our group's current thoughts.

- ❖ DO NOT combine collapsing colonies with strong colonies.
- ❖ When a collapsed colony is found, store the equipment where you can use preventative measures to ensure that bees will not have access to it. Put the equipment in this storage area within TWO WEEKS of collapse to prevent robbing by neighboring colonies. CCD colonies tend not to be robbed out by colonies immediately after collapse. When you take this equipment out for reuse, wear a protective face mask to prevent the inhalation of any mold spores that may grow on the comb.
- ❖ If you feed your bees sugar syrup, use Fumagillin.
- ❖ If you are experiencing colony collapse and see a secondary infection, such as European foulbrood, treat the colonies with Terramycin, NOT TYLAN.
- ❖ If you observe high levels of *Varroa* mites, treat them using soft chemicals, such as Api-guard, Apilife VAR, or MiteAway II. We DO NOT recommend the use of oxalic acid or home-made hard chemical mixtures.

Note: Adapted from the Board of Directors, *American Beekeeping Federation Update*, March 12, 2007, and a document released March 7, 2007, and prepared by Dennis vanEngelsdorp, M. Frazier, and D. Caron at the direction of the CCD Working Group. For additional information, see: <http://maarec.cas.psu.edu/Colony-CollapseDisorder.html>.

HONEY BEE POPULATION GENETICS

Debbie Delaney

The history of honey bee importations into the United States began in the early 17th century. Historical records show that the honey bee of Western Europe (subspecies *Apis mellifera mellifera*) was present in eastern North America by 1622, where it established a feral population (Sheppard, 1989). This population expanded in advance of European human settlers, such that Native Americans considered the local presence of honey bees to foretell the impending arrival of European settlers and called the honey bee "white man's flies" (Jefferson, 1788). No additional introductions of honey bees are known to have been made until 1859 (Sheppard, 1989). However, between 1859 and 1922, seven additional subspecies from Europe, Africa, and western Asia were introduced into the United States, with varying measures of commercial success (Sheppard, 1989; Schiff and Sheppard, 1993). Of the eight subspecies brought into the country, only three found favor with the beekeeping community and remain available today as selected "strains" from bee breeders. These subspecies (and the commercial designations under which their presumptive descendants are commonly sold) include: *Apis mellifera ligustica* (Italian honey bees), *Apis mellifera carnica* (Carniolan honey bees) and *Apis mellifera caucasica* (Caucasian honey bees).

Over a decade ago, the honey bee population of the United States was composed of both feral and commercial populations. Commercial populations are maintained by beekeepers for honey, bee products, pollination of crops, and replacement queens. Pollination by *Apis mellifera* L. is crucial to current US agriculture. The commercial value of pollination in the United States is estimated at 14.6 billion dollars (Morse and Calderone, 2000). One third of our total diet is dependent upon plants pollinated primarily by honey bees (S.E. McGregor, 1976).

Feral honey bee populations are not directly maintained by beekeepers. They flourished before the arrival of *Varroa destructor* and

contributed to the genetic makeup and integrity of the commercial honey bee population. The feral population reflects the importation history of the honey bee in United States.

Genetic variation is the raw material which enables an organism to adapt within a changing environment. Variation is the prerequisite for selection, both artificial and natural. Due to the introduction of small founder populations during US settlement, the decimation of US populations by *Varroa destructor*, and current queen-breeding practices, the amount of genetic variation present in the US honey bee population needs to be characterized and quantified.

Queen producers provide replacement queens for more than one third of all managed US colonies annually. Estimates from previous studies indicate that each queen mother was used to produce 1,500 daughters or replacement queens. The past population of feral honey bees was thought to serve as a reservoir for genetic variability useful for breeding. The introduction of a parasitic brood mite, *Varroa destructor*, in 1987 decimated both the feral and commercial honey bee populations. Past studies using allozymes and mitochondrial DNA analysis reported measurable genetic differences between the two main queen-breeding regions in the United States. However, these studies were performed before major losses of bee populations occurred due to the *Varroa* mite. Previous studies also suggested that commercial populations were more homogeneous than the feral population.

The commercial queen-breeding stock was re-sampled, and the current genetic composition of US honey bee populations is being assessed. These results are being compared to the composition of a sample set collected in 1993–1994. Mitochondrial and nuclear DNA analyses are being used to test hypotheses related to changes in genetic variability in the US commercial queen-breeding populations over the past decade. Changes in haplotype frequency have been observed. The re-analysis of the feral collection reveals some haplotypes representative of the subspecies *Apis mellifera mellifera*, and thus

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Population Genetics—Continued from page 9

further supports thinking that the feral population acted as a genetic reservoir that contained remnants of subspecies brought into the United States during early settlement. Microsatellite analysis is being used to assess whether commercial strains of honey bees here retain measurable genetic affinities to their progenitor subspecies. Microsatellite analysis also shows the change in allele frequencies over the past decade within the commercial population. Quantifying the genetic variability of the US queen-producing populations will allow us to understand the genetic heritage of the commercial strains of honey bees and to rationally address the complex issue of the need for additional germplasm importation.

Note: Reprinted with permission from the *Journal of the Western Apicultural Society of North America*, Winter 2007. Please contact Debbie Delaney, Washington State University, for the citations and additional information.

USDA MAP OF AHB SPREAD UPDATED

The map of Africanized honey bees' spread by county by year in the United States is updated about every six months. It is now posted on the Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) web site at: www.ars.usda.gov/ahbmap. Africanized honey bees have continued their slow territorial expansion in the southern United States and have now been confirmed in nine states. The map lists a county only when that state officially declares it to be Africanized.

There are discontinuities in the spread, especially between Louisiana and Florida, where AHB spread is likely a result of human-assisted transport—such as AHB swarms hitchhiking on trucks, railroad cars, ships, or airplanes. Human-assisted transports are not considered a territorial spread unless the honey bees become established beyond the original swarm find.

From: ARS News Service/ Agricultural Research Service, USDA/by way of Bev Koch, subscribed to pest_alerts@lists.orst.edu / .

Chimney Bees—Continued from page 1

The box contained a swarm that Glen had just collected. A good seal kept bees from escaping, and a strong strap around the box was critical for lifting the box into position. They left the strap in place.



Temporary board ledge with newly hived swarm.

With the newly hived swarm in place, Glen and Tom made an escape cone from wire screening. The mesh size was large enough to allow bees to escape, but small enough that it was not easy for them to re-enter the chimney. If the cone had been put up first, bees unable to re-enter the chimney hive would have made it difficult to put up the ledge and the new hive. Glen and Tom positioned the cone close to the entrance of the foundation hive, duct taped the works together, and sat back to watch.

At first hundreds of bees left the chimney and swarmed around in an irregular pattern. Yet, within a day, bees were entering the new hive and things began to calm down. A small number of bees managed to find their way back through an opening in the screen cone. Additional adjustments to reduce the size of the opening virtually eliminated the numbers returning—at least for a while.

Paul's article described what we hoped would happen in the hive: "Subsequently, the younger bees would also leave the chimney and end up in the box hive. The chimney queen would soon slow down and discontinue laying as the loss of foragers became evident. Nurse bees would



The escape cone and additional wire screening duct taped to chimney bricks.

continue attending the brood, using stored honey and pollen, until all brood was hatched and eventually left the chimney. The fate of the queen was uncertain; she would either emerge eventually or die unattended.”

The duct tape proved not to be a good idea. It fell down several times, thus letting bees re-enter the hive. Tom repeatedly adjusted the cone and sealed new holes with caulk. Ultimately, it was the caulking that worked with the cone to keep bees from re-entering the chimney.



Although the duct tape (left) did not hold, the caulking (above) did. Caulking and the cone kept emerging bees from being able to re-enter the chimney hive.

We watched bees continue to leave the chimney for over a month. Because of the position of the hive, it was not possible to inspect the inside.

It was fall by the time we no longer saw bees leaving the chimney. Glen advised that the next step, opening the chimney to let the bees rob the honey, would have to wait until spring—if it were to be done at all. So, they took down the hive. Using a rope with one man on the roof, they lowered the heavy hive without incident. Glen was pleased with the added weight.



Lowering the hive with the recent swarm and the bees that emerged from the chimney hive.

The neighbors are happy. And, though I don't know whether or not Glen and Tom would do it again, I expect their answer might be: *Only as a very special favor!*



Glen Andreson (left) and Tom Stibolt (right) with the hive—all back on the ground again.

Reference

www.bindaree.com.au/hints/hint22_chimney.htm.

BILL RUHL MEMORIAL BEE DAY

PRESENTED BY THE
PORTLAND-METRO BEEKEEPERS' ASSOCIATION

SATURDAY APRIL 21, 2007

This Year's Theme: Mentorship

PLACE: George Hansen's
Foothills Honey Farm
30576 S Oswalt Rd
Colton, OR 97017

TIME: Saturday, April 21, 2007
Registration at 9:00 am
Presentations from
10:00 am to 3:00 pm

COST: \$15.00 per person, pre-registered
\$18.00 per person, day of the event
Registration includes box lunch

GEAR: Bring your "bee protection equipment" (bee veils, gloves, suit, etc.)

PRESENTATIONS (about 45 minutes each)

- A. Beekeeping Equipment
- B. Basic Hive Inspection
- C. Nuc Installation
- D. Finding the Queen
- E. Diagnosis of Honey Bee Diseases

For more information, contact: Kerry Haskins (503) 632-8448
Peter Forrest (503) 236-7787

Complimentary morning beverage provided. Muffins, soda, and water available for purchase.

To pre-register, return this form with \$15 per person to *Bill Ruhl Memorial Bee Day, c/o Barbara Derkacht, 17130 S Seal Court, Oregon City OR 97045*. Make check payable to the Portland-Metro Beekeepers' Association. Please mail no later than Saturday April 14th. Thank you.

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Improve each shining hour....
—Isaac Watts, "Against Idleness"

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