The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

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Mary Edwards

IN THIS ISSUE...

www.orsba.org
Oregon State Beekeepers Association
orsbawebmaster@gmail.com

www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org
Oregon Master Beekeeper Program
A Joint Venture of OSBA and the Oregon State University Extension Service
info@oregonmasterbeekeeper.org

Yes, it's been only a matter of time. Here comes the sun—and along with it, the many fabulous swarms of May! So many measures now to be taken to reduce the possibility, so much chasing & collecting now to be experienced. A swarm is a truly beautiful thing, such an ingenious means of reproduction.

SWARMS

Karessa Torgerson

What are swarms?

A swarm is a colony's means of reproduction. Most Willamette Valley swarms occur in April, May, or June, although they sometimes appear as early as March and as late as August. Swarms are generally composed of the colony's original queen, about half of the colony's bees, and as much honey as the bees can carry with them to their new home, which they select after the swarm has already left the colony.

How does the process work?

Once the colony has decided to swarm, worker bees rear queens in cells located along the bottoms and outer edges of the brood frames in the colony. If all goes well one of these young queens will replace the original one. As soon as the developing queens enter the pupal stage (and sometimes earlier), about half the bees leave the colony for good, bringing the old queen with them. The remaining bees are left with the brood and what food stores the swarming bees did not take away.

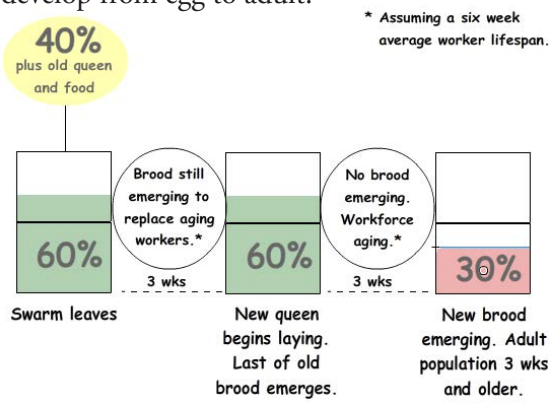
Immediately after a swarm, a new beekeeper may be encouraged by the apparently high numbers of bees and the full frames of brood still filling the boxes. A more experienced beekeeper probably won't find these things reassuring. To illustrate why, we must work with a few assumptions:

Worker bees live an average of six weeks. (A generous number.)

A queen needs three weeks from the time she is "capped" to emerge, mature, mate, and begin laying.

Worker bees require three weeks to develop from egg to adult.

For the purpose of this example, let's also assume that only 40% of the colony leaves with a swarm. That leaves 60% of the original bees in the hive. Brood from the previous queen will continue to replenish the workforce for the next three weeks, so the number of bees will remain steady during that period.



Will Your Colony Swarm?

Assuming all goes well the new queen-to-be will begin to lay eggs at about the same time as the last of the brood from the previous queen emerges.

During the next three weeks there will be no new brood as the offspring from the new queen are still developing. By the end of that period half of the adult workforce left after the swarm will have died.* The hive will contain only 30% of the number of bees it did before the swarm and those bees will be three weeks of age and older,

Continued on page 3

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Many, many years ago, the Oregon Department of Agriculture instituted a hive brand registration program for Oregon beekeepers. Oregon beekeepers could fill out an application and the ODA would issue them a *brand* that could be burned or painted on hive equipment for identification. There has never been a charge for this service.

My brand is *M-77*. The M stands for Marion County in which I reside, and I am the 77th brand from that county.

For decades, if someone wanted to contact a beekeeper that had a honey or holding yard, all they needed was the hive brand. They could call the ODA and get an instant response with contact info.

Over the years, the hive brand files have been shifted from one office to another finally ending up in Commodity Inspection. There, Jim Cramer, a friend to Oregon beekeepers, managed the files until he retired recently. From there, things have kind of fallen apart.

When I called to inquire about the status of the program after Jim's retirement, it took about a week for the files to be located. That was alarming! It told me that at this point in time, the program is dead.

At this point in time the hive brand files are intact and in a safe location. However, the program is not widely known about in the ODA or with newer Oregon beekeepers.

Is this a program that you are interested in? Do you have an Oregon hive brand that you want to keep in force? If not, are you interested in obtaining a brand from the ODA for positive identification of your property? Your OSBA Executive Board is eager to hear your comments and respond appropriately, working with the ODA.

Joy Pendell, California State Beekeepers Association media director, is now reporting that over 1,700 hives were stolen during almond pollination in the spring of 2016. Hive thefts are on the sharp increase.

Do you believe that branding your hive equipment is of value? Please make your wishes known. Please send comments to OSBA Secretary Mary Edwards at: bfamily@live.com. Please do it now while you are thinking about it. Also, please indicate on your comments if it is okay to publish them in an upcoming *Bee Line* article.

Thank you for time and effort in deciding this issue!

Harry

Swarms—*Continued from page 1*

long past their prime for performing in-hive functions like nursing babies and making beeswax.

This effect is somewhat mitigated by the spring buildup of the bee population. At swarm time there may be abundant brood in the nest, so the population losses might be less than suggested in this example. Still, the example seems worth citing, as it illustrates what happens to the colony in the weeks following a swarm.

Further Complications

Sometimes, swarming can be directly fatal to a honey bee colony. For example, some colonies will issue swarm after swarm until few bees remain. New queens will occasionally fail to return from mating flights. Long queenless periods can lead workers to begin laying unfertilized eggs themselves, creating a difficult problem that is seldom successfully resolved by the hobbyist beekeeper with only a colony or two.

If this disruption is poorly timed and the swarm happens six weeks before the predominant food source (blackberries) comes into blossom, the colony is unlikely to be able to put away enough food to last the coming winter, and the likelihood of a honey harvest is very slim.

How can we prevent a swarm calamity?

When it comes to swarming, an ounce of prevention is worth ten pounds of cure.

Colonies with first-year queens are less likely to swarm, consider requeening every year or every two years.

Provide space as needed. Once the top box is 70–80% full it's time to add another box.

Other prevention methods involve manipulating the brood nest to fool the bees into thinking that they aren't ready to swarm. For details, search for the following terms in your bee books and on the beekeeping forums: checkerboarding, breaking up the brood nest, demaree, and colony splits.

According to Walt Wright, the creator of the checkerboard swarm control method, one early indication that prevention measures are needed is *backfilling*, or filling former brood cells with nectar. This symptom of swarm planning can appear weeks in advance of the first queen cell.

By the time you see queen cells it is too late for prevention. The bees have already decided to swarm. Some beekeepers recommend cutting queen cells out so that no new queen is raised and the original queen cannot leave. This is only minimally effective as the queen cells must all be destroyed and they are easily missed. The bees will probably build new queen cells to replace the old, so weekly inspections of the entire brood area are necessary to make sure no queen cells reach the capped stage. If you do see capped queen cells, it's best not to cull them unless you know for certain that the original queen has not left the colony.

What can you do if your colony has already swarmed?

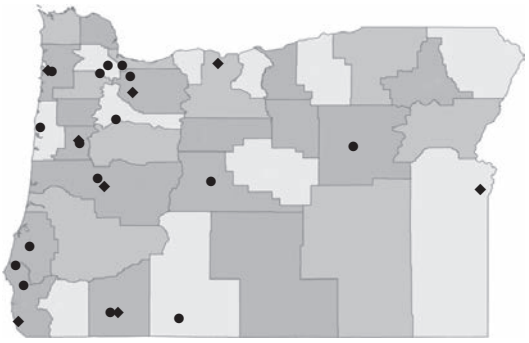
Manage Varroa mites. This is important! Because most of the Varroa mites in the colony are tucked away in brood cells, the bees that remain after the swarm can easily be overwhelmed by the sudden change in Varroa numbers relative to bee numbers. This alone can cause the collapse of a colony that has swarmed. Fortunately, swarming presents an opportunity for treating for Varroa with oxalic acid! When all the brood from the previous queen has emerged (starting just under three weeks post-swarm) but the brood from the new queen still hasn't been capped, all the Varroa mites in the colony will be phoretic, or attached to adult bees. An oxalic acid dribble applied during this time can be very effective.

Check the colony for a laying queen five or six weeks after the swarm.

If you can, add frames of open brood every week until the new queen starts to lay. The open brood pheromone will inhibit laying workers and the brood will boost colony population. Don't do this if the colony is still very strong.

Be prepared to take extra measures to protect the colony from robbing if it still hasn't recovered when robbing season approaches. Also, be prepared to feed if colony doesn't have adequate food stores by August/September.

Oregon State Beekeepers Association
EXECUTIVE BOARD AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS



OSBA OFFICERS

President: Harry Vanderpool
7128 Skyline Rd S, Salem 97306
503.399.3675; shallotman@yahoo.com

Vice President: Jason Rowan
80881 Turkey Run Rd, Creswell 97426
541.942.6479; beetanical@q.com

Secretary: Mary Edwards
5051 Lost Lake Rd, Hood River 97031
541.354.2223

Treasurer: Jeff Milligan
PO Box 20548, Keizer 97307
503.588.7224; milligan50@msn.com

Past President: Paul Andersen
19255 SW Prospect St, Aloha 97007
503.332.5410; paulkandersen@frontier.com

◆ OSBA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

North Coast: Stan Scotton
PO Box 364, Lincoln City 97367
503.232.4945; 4scotton@gmail.com

South Coast: Mureen Walker
25055 Pistol River Loop Rd, Gold Beach 97444
541.373.7010; mureen98@gmail.com

Columbia Basin: Bill Edwards
5051 Lost Lake Rd, Hood River 97031
541.354.2223

Eastern Oregon: Jordan Dimock
2635 Mitchell Butte Rd, Nyssa 97913
541.372.2726

Portland Metro: Tom Cinquini
1172 S Sycamore St, Canby 97013
503.547.5386; tomcinquini@gmail.com

Southern Oregon: Sarah Red-Laird
PO Box 3257, Ashland 97520
541.708.1127; sarah@beegirl.org

North Willamette Valley: Steven Coffman
2540 Greenwood Rd S, Independence 97351
503.838.2981

South Willamette Valley: Karessa Torgerson
541.220.8919; karessat@gmail.com

• OSBA REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Cascadia Queen Breeders
Meets quarterly; contact the secretary for information.
Chair: Paul Maresh
503.283.2060; pmaresh@spiretech.com
Vice Chair: James Hensel
Secretary: Ken Anthony
klanthony1@comcast.net
Treasurer: Tom Chester

Central Coast Beekeepers
Meets 6:30 PM, fourth Wednesday
Newport Library, 35 NW Nye St, Newport
Information: centralcoastbeekeepers@gmail.com
Co-President: Nancy McDowell
541.487.4666; carverranch@gmail.com
Co-President: Anne Schatz
541.418.1156; rapscallion.retiree@gmail.com
Website: www.ccbaor.org

Central Oregon Beekeepers
Meets 6:00 PM, fourth Tuesday (except December)
The Environmental Center, 16 NW Kansas Ave, Bend
Information: contact@cobeekeeping.org
Co-President: Allen Engle
aengle@bendbroadband.com
Co-President: Patricia Moreland
oregonpat@gmail.com
Website: www.cobeekeeping.org

Coffee Creek Beekeepers

Coos County Beekeepers
Meets 6:30 PM, third Saturday (except December)
Ohlsen Baxter Bldg, 631 Alder St, Myrtle Point
President: John Gardner—541.572.3847
Vice President: Shigeo Oku—541.396.4016
Secretary: Betsy Fleming
Treasurer: Jane Oku
541.396.4016; janeoku1958@gmail.com

John Day River Beekeepers
Meets quarterly
President: Matt Allen
541.934.9101; apricotapiaries@gmail.com
Education Coordinator/Secretary: Liz Lovelock

Klamath Basin Beekeepers
Meets 9:00 AM, last Saturday (except Nov/Dec)
OSU Extension, 3328 Vandenberg Rd, Klamath Falls
President: Paul Davitt
president@klamathbeekeepers.org
Vice President: John Wilda
vicepresident@klamathbeekeepers.org
Secretary: Judy Olson
secretary@klamathbeekeepers.org
Treasurer: Ray Rutler
treasurer@klamathbeekeepers.org
Website: www.klamathbeekeepers.org

Lane County Beekeepers
Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Trinity United
Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene
President: Pam Leavitt
541.344.4228; pamseaver2000@yahoo.com
Vice President: Max Kuhn—541.997.7390
Secretary: Jodi Wiktorowski
Treasurer: Polly Habliston
Website: www.lcbaor.org

Linn-Benton Beekeepers
Meets 6:30 PM, third Wednesday
Corvallis Waldorf School, 3855 NE Highway 20, Corvallis
President: Steve Oda
541.745.7227; steve@lbba.us
Vice President: Everett Kaser
541.924.9214; everett@lbba.us
Secretary: Laurie Bowman
541.250.1006; secretary@lbba.us
Treasurer: Suzi Maresh
541.967.9607; suzi@lbba.us
Website: www.lbba.us

Oregon South Coast Beekeepers
Meets 6:00 PM, third Tuesday
OSU Extension Office, located at the Fairgrounds
in Gold Beach
President: Jim Sorber
Vice President: Curt Sawall
Secretary: Lynn Sorber
Treasurer: Barbara Fitts

Portland Metro Beekeepers
Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday
Clackamas Community College
Clairmont Hall, Room 118, Oregon City
President: Joe Maresh
503.703.5060; joemaresh@bctonline.com
Vice President: Rex McIntire
503.720.7958; remcintire_5@msn.com
Secretary: Patty Anderson
503.887.7057; wiseacrefarms@me.com
Treasurer: Barb Derkacht
503.631.3063; bderkacht@yahoo.com
Website: portlandmetro.org

Portland Urban Beekeepers
Meets 7:00 PM, first Wednesday
Alberta Abbey, 126 NE Alberta St, Portland
For information, e-mail: officers@
portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
President: Bill Catherall—503.572.6467
president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Vice President: Laren Leland
vice-president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Secretary: Simone Miller
secretary@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Treasurer: Linda Callahan
treasurer@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Website: portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

Southern Oregon Beekeepers
Meets 7:30 PM, first Monday (6:30 PM demo thru bee
season) Southern Oregon Res & Ext Ctr
569 Hanley Rd, Central Point
President: John Jacob
541.582.BEES; john@oldsolenterprises.com
Vice President: Risa Halpin
rhalpin906@aol.com
Secretary: Ellen Wright
541.941.1894; ewright42@gmail.com
Treasurer: Cheryl Housden
541.659.6654; chousden@earthlink.net
Website: southernoregonbeekeepers.org

Tillamook County Beekeepers
Meets 7:00 PM, second Tuesday (except December)
Fresh Cafe, 9120 5th Street, Bay City
President: Bob Allen—503.322.3819
Vice President: Rick Stelzig
rstelzig@embarqmail.com
Secretary: Claire Moody
503.318.9149; claire@vanirmail.com
Treasurer: Terry Fullan
503.368.7160; tfullan@nehalemtel.net

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers
Meets 6:30 PM (6:00 PM social time), last Tuesday
225 S First Street, Hillsboro
Contact: tualatinvalleybeekeepers@gmail.com
President: Jeff Clark
Vice President: Debby Garman
Secretary: Dianne Hutto
Co-Treasurers: Barb Falconer
Web: www.facebook.com/TualatinValleyBeekeepers

Willamette Valley Beekeepers
Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Chemeketa
Community College, Building 34, Room A, Salem
President: Richard Farrier
541.327.2673; rfarrierfarms@gmail.com
Vice President: Mona Kanner
Secretary: Emily Cross
Treasurer: Laura Evans
Website: http://wvbahive.org

BEE EVENTS

April 30–May 1: **Portland Metro Beekeepers**, booth at the Master Gardener's Fair, Clackamas County Fairgrounds.

May 21: Lane County/Linn-Benton Beekeepers Field Day, Oregon State Univesity Apiary. Two tracks: one serving beginners and the other, more advanced beekeepers.

June 25–26: **Portland Urban Beekeepers Tour De Hives**, featuring tour stops of backyard apiaries all over Portland. To volunteer or host your hive, go to the official volunteer/host application: https://portlandurbanbeekeepers.org/tdh2016/. Information: https://tourdehives.com.

July 18–20: **International Conference on Pollinator Biology, Health and Policy**. Penn State, University Park, Pennsylvania. Information: www.cvent.com/events/international-conference-on-pollinator-biology-health-and-policy/event-summary-a63f438020fa4db6a3dd57d5ba0f1acc.aspx. Contact: Kim Swistock:kar3@psu.edu.

July 27–29: Eastern Apicultural Society 2016. Richard Stockton University, Galloway, New Jersey. Information: www.easternapiculture.org.

August 20: **Oregon Honey Festival**. Ashland, Oregon. Information: oregonhoneyfestival.com.

October 12–15: **2016 WAS Conference**. Honolulu, Hawaii. Information: www.westernapiculturalsociety.org.

October 28–30: **2016 OSBA Fall Conference**. The Oregon Garden, Silverton, Oregon.

November 15–17: California State Beekeepers Association Annual Convention. Kona Kai Resort & Spa, San Diego. Information: www.californiastatebeekeepers.com/events.html.

FROM AMERICAN BEEKEEPING FEDERATION

*The American Beekeeping Federation Research Committee has developed a program to support small research projects conducted by beekeepers and members of the beekeeping industry. The amount for the small research project(s) will not exceed $1,500. Submissions will be accepted through May 15, 2016. If you have any questions, please contact Regina K. Robuck at reginarobuck@abfnet.org or 404.760.2887.

*Complimentary Membership is free to anyone who has never been a member of ABF. All memberships will expire December 31, 2016.

*Ready to add to your honey recipe collection? See: www.abfnet.org/?page=40!

REGIONAL NEWS

Note: For all groups, see pages 4–5 for meeting time and place, website, and/or contact information. All groups welcome visitors to join them at meetings! In addition, many groups offer opportunities for learning. Some appear on this page, and others may be posted on their websites.

Regional Representatives

North Coast

This is an exciting time of year for beekeepers. That is certainly the feeling on the North and Central Coast and the members of the two north coast clubs, Tillamook County Beekeepers Association and the Central Coast Beekeepers Association. The Tillamook beekeepers had their Bee Day on Saturday, April 2nd. We had very good attendance, sixty-five mostly new and beginning beekeepers. Dr. Dewey Caron was our featured speaker. Thank you Dr. Caron. I want to thank Rick Stelzig and Claire Moody who were the primary organizers, Terry Fullan who acted as host and kept the program moving and on schedule, and lastly all of the presenters, door prize donors, and volunteers.

This year the two groups collaborated on a joint bee order. Tillamook County President Bob Allen and I picked up the nucs and packages. What a new experience for me. I want to thank Bob and all of the Tillamook members for allowing Central Coast to participate in their annual bee order. Once again thanks to the suppliers. For the smaller clubs and in the case of Central Coast, a new club, this is a great benefit to club members. The clubs gain additional members (and their dues) and provide members the additional service of being able to order bees through the club, as well as the training and mentoring that takes place among the members. *—Stan Scotton*

South Coast

"Ghost Bee" photos in giant size on the in the major newspapers of the county brought in the most ever first time attenders to the Oregon South Coast monthly meeting, nearly a third of the attendance, eager to hear more about use of powdered sugar sprinkling as a treatment for honey bees. The report on that was accompanied by slides and a discussion of the mites, followed by a detailed depiction of the life cycle of the Varroa mite. One of the visitors, considering what should be done about the mites, suggested putting some kind of mite barrier at the entrance to which someone else mentioned that there is development of The Bee Gate by Bayer. Jim Sorber, president of Oregon South Coast beekeepers, gave a presentation on the use of oxalic acid fumigation.

Several members explored two Warre hives that housed colonies that had overwintered well and had never been investigated since installed nearly a year ago. The bees back up Mike Hewgill (left) during the inspection. The hives were constructed entirely of Port Orford cedar on the advice that that would prevent mites and other unwanted insects. The first discovery was just under the cover, an ants nest full of eggs. It didn't appear to interfere with the bees, but was not at all put off by the scent of the cedar top bars that they were on. The weaker colony had a brood area of mostly drone cells and several mites were uncovered there. Both hives were very overcrowded and a box was added at the bottom of each, but both colonies swarmed within a week. Most of the swarm bees were recovered.

Club members ordered fifty packages of bees to be delivered mid-April by Russ & Babette Rose. Coordination of the payments is managed by Barbara Fitts, treasurer and OMB instructor.

The monthly meeting potluck featured St. Patty's Day corned beef and cabbage provided by President and Secretary Jim and Lynne Sorber. Carla Fletcher treated everyone to yet another honey, as is her practice, passing around a sampling of honey sticks. She reports that the association's Educational Bee Yard is nearly ready for housing the first colonies.

As usual there is a high interest in the new hive that lets you just turn the handle and the honey pours out into jars, all clean and ready to eat with no getting into the beehive. There has been much curiosity as to how exactly that is accomplished. Now it is demonstrated on YouTube in "Flow Hive Full Reveal" by Flow Hive (not by the rip-offs using the name to draw hits to their own videos). One of those does mention the problem of harvesting before all the plastic comb is capped, getting uncured nectar into the honey. Still, it would be of interest to have in the educational apiary several frames of the Flow Hive design for viewing through an end window the activity of the bees filling and capping the cells.

—Mureen Walker

Regional Associations

Cascadia Queen Breeders

Cascadia Queen Breeders is sad to announce the passing of our Secretary, Ken Anthony. Ken was generous in his contributions to Cascadia Queen Breeders and facilitating the education of Pacific Northwest Queen Breeders and our work of teaching people how they can increase the viability and productivity of their apiaries by breeding queen bees adapted to our climatic and botanical cycles. Ken's contributions of ideas and time will be truly missed. CQB wishes to extend our condolences to Ken's family and friends.

—Paul Maresh

Central Oregon Beekeepers

We have a mixture of daffodils, pasque, and plums blooming, with snow and a frost looming in the next few days. Such are the challenges/delights of beekeeping in Central Oregon.

A non-scientific questioning of local beekeepers indicates that our mite losses are much lower this year. My thought is that there is quite a bit more active mite control with a couple of the organic acids. We still have several weeks of fruit trees, and folks have already started adding supers (quite unusual for this early here). We had a great talk by Ramesh Sagili about bacterial brood diseases (more than 1 person left halfway through the day to go check their hives) and current research. Other talks coming up at COBKA are Mason bees (April) as

well as Splits and Swarms (May). In June, we'll be having Dewey Caron over talking about Africanized honey bees.

Additionally, we're running a bit short of commercial nucs and packages on this side of the mountains. Hopefully in years to come, we'll get some more suppliers.

Most of us who need to reverse the hive bodies have done so, and now we're awaiting the massive numbers of swarms to refill the empty boxes due to losses, and help out the newbies. *—Allen Engle*

Lane County Beekeepers

Our April general session meeting topic was on Nucs and Queen Introduction, given by Morris Ostrofsky. In addition, we had an early session on Swarms, presented by Pat Waters. Dr. Dewey Caron came to talk about the Bee Informed Partnership survey and the PNW Honey Bee survey and encourage members to complete the surveys. In the past, our club has responded well to the call to provide this important information.

GloryBee held its 41st "Bee Weekend" on April 15 and 16. This event is always well attended and it is fun to watch new beekeepers carefully handle their packages of bees. LCBA has a booth that is staffed by experienced beekeepers to answer questions and encourage becoming active in a bee club for the knowledge and support that is the primary benefit of membership.

"Save the Bee Run" at Fern Ridge Reservoir on April 23 is a 5K Run/Walk and Kids Dash, an opportunity for the community to put forth the effort to help the bees. LCBA will be in attendance to answer questions that participants may have.

LCBA was invited to participate in the Lane County Master Gardener Plant Sale and Garden Fair. We will have a booth, organized and set up by Francis Rothauge.

We are planning our May 21 Field Day at the OSU apiary. We will be co-sponsoring this with the Linn-Benton Beekeepers Association, as we did in 2013. The day will consist of morning lectures on (1) Medications and Foul Brood Frames, (2) Best Practice Guidelines, (3) Tools and Smokers, and (4) Dividing Hives/Robber Screens and Moisture Boxes. Then after lunch, the groups will take two different tracks. One will be aimed at the beginner/intermediate beekeeper and the second one for the advanced beekeeper. Nancy Ograin and Katharine Hunt are the contacts for LCBA for this event.

The warm weather breaks in late March and early April have resulted in swarm activity in Lane County. I hope your bees are healthy and staying home! *—Pam Leavitt*

Linn-Benton Beekeepers

My, it's swarmy around here! On March 31st, the first swarm was reported by a club member, a week earlier than in 2015 for that beekeeper. Morris Ostrofsky shared his great presentation on the Miller Method of Queen Rearing at our March meeting. First arrivals of packaged bees arrived in early April. We are looking forward to a roundtable style of meeting in April, and a field day in May at the OSU Apiary. *—Laurie Bowman*

Portland Metro Beekeepers

We opened our April meeting with announcements. See April and May education opportunities for beekeepers of all levels at: portlandmetro.org.

Dr. Dewey Caron was our featured speaker this month. He reminded us to complete surveys this month for the PNW survey and The Bee Informed survey.

Many of us purchased nucs this spring, and Dewey discussed his program for the new hive. It is very important to feed... and to continue to feed until you are tired of feeding. Or your bees stop eating. We want to ensure we expand colony numbers. He showed us how to read frames and to pay attention to what the bees are telling us. And don't forget to check for mites on those new nucs. We are always very appreciative to Dewey for an informative and entertaining discussion and Q&A session. Thank you Dewey!

—Patty Anderson

Portland Urban Beekeepers

In lieu of our monthly member spotlight, Bill Catherall led an informative Q&A session called "What to do in the hive this month" that included strategies in swapping brood boxes and when to split your hives.

Glen Andresen shared his monthly Pollen & Nectar report. We are seeing the beginnings of a nice spring flow which is quite advanced for this time of year. Wisteria is blooming now as are fruit trees such as the sweet cherry, Asian pear, and Greengage plum. Broccoli and kale are flowering which is great for those urban farmers. For a more detailed report check out http://bridgetownbees.com. Please email Glen at glen@bridgetownbees.com with any photos and/or suggestions of other good honey bee plants.

Did you know that there are over 4,000 species of native bees in North America alone? Our April meeting featured local entomologist Rebekah Golden, who gave a fantastic presentation about native pollinators. Thank you Rebekah for sharing with our group. If you have any questions about Rebekah's presentation you can contact her at rebekah@beethinking.com.

Swarm season is underway and it's not too late to get in

on the action! If you need bait hives, email Lauren Smith at: librarian@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org to order.

And last but not least . . . don't forget to SPREAD THE WORD for Tour De Hives 2016 the weekend of June 25–26! This is our yearly fundraiser and PUB's opportunity to introduce Portlanders to the art and science of beekeeping. —*Scott Macdonald*

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Spring arrived quite early again this year in our area and TVBA has been busy supporting experienced and beginning beekeepers. Our annual 10-hour 3-session Bee School in March was filled to capacity, and our April nuc buy was the biggest ever.

Jackie Walters

We provided materials and volunteers for several Earth Day outreach requests, and our members have given presentations on honey bees and pollinator stewardship at a number of community events and schools. At our March meeting, we enjoyed presentations from Jeff Clark on catching swarms and Mark Johnson on making splits. In April, we enjoyed Morris Ostrofsky's great Reading Frames presentation. We've invited specialist Ron Spendal to speak on native pollinators and Mason bees for our May meeting on Tuesday, May 31.

—*Debby Garman*

ANNUAL CONFERENCE HONEY SHOW 2015

Dewey M. Caron & Trevor Riches

There were 16 individuals (about 7 percent of attendance) submitting a honey show entry – 25 total entries at the Annual OSBA Conference. The Show was stewarded and judged by Dewey Caron (Trevor Riches was preparing for his knee replacement operation). Here are the winners:

3 jars LIGHT extracted honey
- 1st Gene Doyle, TVBA
- 2nd Matt Allen and Liz Lovelock, John Day

3 jars AMBER extracted honey
- 1st Max Kuhn, LCBA
- 2nd Matt Allen and Liz Lovelock, John Day
- 3rd Eric Walls, PM

3 jars DARK extracted honey
- 1st Mark Minloff, PM
- 2nd Matt Allen & Liz lovelock, John Day
- 3rd Cynthia Wiancko, Corbett

3 jars Labelled Extracted Artisan honey
- 1st Blond Girl, Dayton
- 2nd Omas's Honey (Pam Arion), Corbett
- 3rd Pacific Honeybee, Silverton

3 jars locally labelled artisan extracted honey
- 1st Michael Caliguire, Bend

Single jar Artisan honey (labelled or not)

Light: 1st Bees Choice Honey, Ferndale, WA
- 2nd Marianne Heater, Grants Pass

Amber: 1st Katherine Hunt, LCBA

Dark: 1st Raymond Butler, Keno (Klamath)

Cut comb
- 1st Cynthia Wiancko, Corbett

Creamed honey
- 1st Eric Walls, PM

Photograph
- 1st Dan Wyns, Corvallis

A question Trevor & I frequently get is 'What is the flower source'? In the State Fair and OSBA Honey Show, and in our training of MB honey judges the past 2 years, flavor is NOT used in judging, except to detect if the beekeeper has used too much heat or there is fermentation occurring.

When I came to Oregon the shows had honey entry categories listed by variety (blackberry, clover for example). My palate was not familiar with western honey flavor and as it turns out no individual could certify honey by floral source. So we have changed our state fair and OSBA entry categories to light, amber and dark honey. Another reason to simplify the categories was the lack of entries for any given variety. With the renewed interest in entering a honey show Trevor and I continue to review entry rules for OSBA honey shows to accommodate this new interest.

The Nov 24 BEE CULTURE Catch the Buzz posted an offering of two Feb 2016 American Honey Tasting Society (AHTS) (www.americanhoneytastingsociety.com) training courses

in the sensory analysis of honey. Two experts on honey tasting, Marina Marchese and Raffaele Dall' Olio, will teach hands-on, full immersion training of the sensory analysis of honey. Attendees will learn the methods for smelling and tasting to identify honey, how to recognize and identify the 9 basic aromas and flavor families of honey and practice writing descriptive notes for the most important domestic and international honeys.

The American Honey Tasting Society's mission is to standardize the protocol for sensory training in honey and to raise the awareness of honey diversity through educational courses and guided tastings. "The AHTS is the first organization of its kind in the United States that provides educational insight into the finer points of identifying the flavors in honey and matching them with their floral source and region," says Marchese. With such training, it is likely we could once again offer Oregon and Washington beekeepers the opportunity to submit honey for judging by floral class and utilize flavor in judging analysis.

NHB LAUNCHES ONLINE CATALOG

In a continued effort to provide materials to help promote honey, the National Honey Board has made available to all industry members various materials that can be utilized to educate the general public about the story and benefits of honey. These materials can be displayed in storefronts, as well as at farmer's markets and other community events. The new online tool can be found at: www.nhbcatalog.com.

KEEPING BEES IN MAY

Todd Balsiger

The summer's main nectar flow begins this month and lasts into early July (albeit this year expect it to begin and end earlier than normal). This roughly eight-week period is of critical importance for hives to gather surplus honey and winter stores. For the rest of the year hives mostly lose weight. This is a dynamic period in bee management with many overlapping tasks. Consider the following:

- We need to ensure hives continue to build up for the main nectar flow. After the maple and fruit trees bloom, there is actually a decrease in available nectar, and with poor weather hives can still starve. Although very infrequent, in past years it has been necessary to feed well into summer to prevent starvation. Discontinue feeding prior to supering!
- It is still possible to treat for Varroa mites if your infestation rates are too high. It should be with a "soft treatment"" compatible with supering.
- May is an ideal month to requeen and make divisions (the earlier the better). It's a more forgiving time to work bees than in March or April with increased daily high temperatures and less rain. Keep in mind that divisions made now most likely will not make a honey crop and will probably require extra feeding to draw foundation and secure adequate winter stores.

I was once told that a good starting point to raise queens here in the Pacific Northwest is when the trailing blackberry blooms (our native blackberry). This usually is about mid-May. But not this year—I saw it blooming yesterday mid-April!

- Continue swarm-control practices. Decreasing queen pheromone production and its distribution within the hive triggers the swarm impulse. The two best ways to reduce swarming are to regularly requeen (young queens produce more pheromone) and to reduce congestion. You can reduce congestion by supering, making divisions, equalizing, replacing old/poor quality brood frames with foundation or new comb, and by possibly reversing the brood boxes at this point).
- Swarming will be at its zenith. Nuc boxes containing a combination of at least one frame that has had brood (darker comb) and another with food stores (honey and pollen) with the balance either drawn comb or foundation are ideal for catching swarms. Remember, frames need to be tight together when drawing foundation, or at least not too far apart and equally spaced—otherwise the likely result will be burr or misshapen comb. Feeding sugar water will help draw out foundation into quality comb and accelerate hive growth.
- Consider setting up bait hives in your apiary or at your house (similar to the nuc box above) to catch swarms. Make sure mice can't get in!
- Visually look at hives for health and investigate under performance (e.g., less flight activity, lack of honey production, etc.). Possible reasons: poor queen (they may be raising a supercedure queen), queenlessness (possibly in conjunction with laying workers), brood diseases (American or European), too many Varroa mites, the hive has swarmed (don't destroy the swarm cells at this point). Take appropriate action which may include doing nothing. If you don't know what to do, go to your next local beekeepers' association meeting and ask.
- Look for signs that it is time to super—for example, the bees lose interest in syrup, the bees have zero robbing tendencies, or you see a new film of white wax, especially on the top bars. I strongly recommend the use of queen excluders.
- Provide abundant room for storing honey early in the season. I consider two supers as abundant. If paradichlorobenzene crystals are used for wax moth control, then air out the supers on a warm day to vaporize its residues.
- Bees generally work from the center up, so foundation centered in the hive will be drawn the fastest. I recommend ten frames when drawing foundation to prevent burr and misshapen comb. The usage of 9 frame spacer bars also works for drawing out quality comb. These spacer bars ensure equal spacing that's not too far apart.
- If appropriate water resources are absent, provide water early and let the bees train themselves to use it.

Small Hive Beetle Observations

I had the highest incidence of Small Hive Beetle (SHB) that I have ever seen in my hives when they came back from California. Previously I only seen larvae in one hive; this time, it was in numerous hives. I had tried to convince my "piggyback" commercial beekeeper to not put pollen patties into my hives down there to no avail.

Many years ago, Gus Rouse (Big Island queen breeder) shared one of his first experiences with the SHB. He had opened up and systematically put pollen patties on 10 hives, and when he put the lids back on, SHB adults had already found the pollen patties! This is the primary location that I have seen SHB larvae within the hive: on pollen patties. I captured an adult beetle again and larvae feeding on pollen patties and placed them into jars as samples.

I am not the only one. I talked to another Oregon commercial beekeeper and he too saw a SHB in one of his hives in California. Clearly this is a growing problem. Without doubt, whether discussed in the open or not, SHBs are in Oregon within migratory commercial beehives. Our habitat may be ill suited for the SHB to thrive, but this is an open question that time will answer. When I look at

hives that previously had larvae feeding on pollen patties in them, in general the hives look good.

Without Chemical Treatment

Lynn Royce

Swarming may have an important function for the colony of bees in addition to reproduction. Think about the number of pests and diseases that depend on the brood to complete their reproductive cycle. If the bees break their brood cycle they will break the reproductive cycle of pests and diseases like Varroa, tracheal mite, foulbrood, chalkbrood, and others. We can break the brood cycle without letting the bees swarm. Caging the queen for a few days, making splits, and requeening are all possible ways to break the brood cycle, and with luck lower the prevalence of pests and diseases that depend on brood. Think about swarming to get an idea of how long you need to keep the colony queenless. To get ready for swarming the workers prepare the queen to fly. They stop her from laying eggs so she will resorb any developing eggs and thereby reduce her body weight so she can fly. This takes several days. The bees left behind have a virgin to mate, so add the days for a newly emerged virgin to harden and develop muscle for flight, about 4–5, then a couple more days for mating flights, then 4–5 more days to develop ovaries and start laying. Now add up the time: 5–6 days to get the old queen ready to fly, plus 10–12 days to mate the virgin and get her laying. This gives you 15–18 days of broodless time during the swarming process.

From: *The Bee Line*, May 2015 and May 2014, respectively.

SMARTPHONE APP PERTAINING TO THE EXTENSION PUBLICATION *HOW TO REDUCE BEE POISONING FROM PESTICIDES* IS NOW AVAILABLE

We are excited to announce the release of a smartphone app pertaining to PNW 591 Extension publication titled *How to reduce Bee Poisoning from Pesticides*. Many beekeepers, farmers and crop consultants have been requesting for an app related to this popular extension publication. This app is now available for beekeepers and farmers to use when they are out in the field. To download the app on to your smartphone, please follow the link: https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw591.

For more information regarding release of this app, please read the Oregon State University press release: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/news/release/2016/04/protecting-bees-pesticides-now-there%E2%80%99s-app.

Regards,
Ramesh Sagili

2016 ALMOND BLOOM SPRAY ISSUES SURVEY

California State Beekeepers Association

It has come to our attention that there are a number of beekeepers picking up their hives from almonds to find the emerging brood seriously dying, typical signs of an IGR application. Bee supply was severely short this spring and will continue to be short due to almond bloom sprays negatively affecting package bee production. Beekeepers all across the country are hurting. In order to gather more information about this problem, please complete the survey below. This survey will be used by the CSBA to guide decision making and inform the almond industry and our other partners. Thank you for your participation.

Recent reports indicate that many beekeepers have noticed significant loss of brood in their colonies about two weeks after fungicides and/or fungicide/IGR combinations were applied to blooming almonds. In many cases the hive entrances have been clogged with dead young fuzzy bees and pupae that failed to hatch. All beekeepers who experience such losses are encouraged to file a report of loss with the agricultural commissioner's office in the county where the loss took place. If no report is filed there is a rebuttable presumption that no loss occurred.

If you experienced such brood losses in your colonies, which pollinated almonds, please fill out and send in the following survey:

1) Did you experience any abnormal loss of brood in your colonies that pollinated almonds in 2016?

2) How many of your colonies experienced severe brood losses?

3) Are you aware which pesticide products were applied in the area where your bees were pollinating almonds?

4) Did you file a report of loss with the agricultural commissioner in the county or counties where your bees were exposed the pesticides?

5) Please describe location of the colonies while in the almonds using Section, Township/Range, or Road names/numbers and County

6) Have pollen or dead bee/brood samples been collected for chemical analysis?

7) Have these losses been reported to any other bee industry brood loss survey in 2016?

Please e-mail your completed survey to: gbrandi@sbcglobal.net.

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For new subscriptions and renewals during MAY 2016

POLLINATOR WEEK
June 20–June 26, 2016

It's not too early to plan events!

Ideas & information: www.pollinator.org

Post on the website (some Oregon events are already listed) and also please share with us!

Send to: osba.newsletter@gmail.com

MEMORIAL FUND

DeWayne Keller had such a passion for honey bees that the Keller Family of Ontario, Oregon, created the DeWayne Keller Honeybee Memorial Research Fund through OSBA, with funds to be sent to the Oregon State University Honey Bee Lab. Almost $5,000 was recently sent to Dr. Ramesh Sagili as a result of their generosity. A huge Thank You to the Keller Family during this difficult time.

Oregon State Beekeepers Association
Membership Application

The **Oregon State Beekeepers Association** is a nonprofit organization representing and supporting all who have an interest in honey bees and beekeeping. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in bees and beekeeping. You do not need to own bees or reside in Oregon to join. Membership includes the ongoing work of the organization on behalf of the honey bee and beekeeping, a vote in OSBA elections, discounts on publications, placement on the swarm call list, three free ads on the website, and an annual directory and subscription to *The Bee Line*.

Please send check made payable to OSBA with a ***completed form for each individual*** *to:*

Jeff Milligan, PO Box 20548, Keizer OR 97307-0548

Date: _____ ❑New Member ❑Membership Renewal

First Name:_____**MI:**____**Last Name:**_____

Company name: _____

Type: ❑Small scale (less than 25) ❑Sideliner (25–300) ❑Commercial (more than 300)

Mailing address:_____

City:_____ **State:**_____**Zip:**_____

Telephone number: _____ **e-mail address:** _____

Contact information: The OSBA respects the privacy of members. Please let us know if you want your contact information included in a membership directory sent to OSBA members only:

❑**Do not include contact information**

❑**Share all information *OR* Share: ❑mailing address ❑phone number ❑e-mail address**

Local group, if member: _____

Membership dues: $40 per person ($50 per person outside the US) $_____

Voluntary contribution(s):

General Fund $_____

Research Fund $_____

Total amount enclosed: $_____

Thank you!

The Bee Line
Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association
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Reminder: The date on the mailing label is the expiration date for membership.
If the date is April 2016 (or earlier), this is your friendly renewal notice.

The Bee Line

The Bee Line is the official publication of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. Annual subscriptions to the newsletter are included with each membership in OSBA.

Please send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as events, corrections, comments, questions, photographs and stories, interviews, recipes, points of view—and ads/advertising—to: Rosanna Mattingly, *The Bee Line*, 4207 SE Woodstock Blvd Ste 517, Portland OR 97206; e-mail: osba.newsletter@gmail.com. It's *your* newsletter—we want to hear from you!

The next issue to be printed will be the June issue, 2016. The deadline for submitting copy is **May 10, 2016**. Please let me know if you find difficulties with the deadline so we can work out the space and timing for the material.

Thank you!

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