



The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

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2016–2017 Winter Colony Losses Update

Dewey M. Caron and Ramesh Sagili

Ramesh and I reported 2016–2017 colony loss survey results in the June *Bee Line* based on the survey responses from 9 Oregon commercial beekeepers and 6 semi-commercial beekeepers. Since then we have received a few more returns and now would like to update the colony loss report. Fourteen (14) commercial (500 + colony operations) OR beekeepers managing 41,399 colonies in the fall (simple average = 2953 colonies/individual), reported losing 10,272 colonies, for a weighted average loss of 25%. This is nearly 37% greater compared to previous winter loss (15.7%) and twice as high as the 2014-2015 loss level of 12.4% (see reports in June 2015 & 2016 *Bee Line*).

Highest individual beekeeper winter loss rate reported was 44% of fall colonies and the lowest was 5%. Average summer loss rate for 7 of the 13 Oregon beekeepers was 18% (range 7 to 33%); six did not know or did not report their summer loss rate, 1 beekeeper reported zero summer losses. The beekeeper respondents all together managed 57 percent of the USDA NASS estimated colonies in Oregon.

Seven semi-commercial Oregon beekeepers (ranging from 50 to 500 colonies) had 767 fall colonies (110 simple average/individual) and subsequently lost 253 colonies, a 33% colony loss rate. 282 small-scale beekeepers in Oregon (ranging from 1 to 48 colonies) lost 48% of their colonies, which is 8 percentage points higher than last year. Information for the small-scale beekeepers will soon be posted to the www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com website for statewide and 12 local associations. This survey includes questions on management and analysis of losses related to management such as feeding, winter preparations, and mite monitoring and mite control.

The BIP national survey preliminary results were released near end of May; both Dewey and Ramesh are once again participating co-authors. Nationally, overwinter losses were 21.1% (for an estimated 13% of the total U.S. beekeepers) and 33.3% total seasonal loss. In this survey, 169 Oregon respondents had total winter loss of 20.46 % and average loss of 44.4%. Total loss closely approximates commercial beekeeper loss, who manage the majority of the colonies, while average loss relates to small-scale beekeeper losses, since 96% of the national respondents are small-scale, managing less than 50 colonies. Number of participating commercial and sideliners beekeeper respondents are not published to protect their privacy.

The national numbers are historical lows for overwinter loss and second lowest for seasonal losses. Oregon beekeeper losses have consistently been below the national average. Our BIP blog speculates “In the fall months of 2016, mite levels across the country were noticeably lower in most beekeeping operations compared with past years . . . This is likely due to increased vigilance on the part of beekeepers, a greater availability of mite control products and environmental conditions that favored the use of timely and effective mite control measures”

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Dewey Caron

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www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org
OREGON MASTER BEEKEEPER PROGRAM
A Joint Venture of OSBA and the Oregon State University Extension Service
info@oregonmasterbeekeeper.org

Image above: An “interactive” flower-bee poster board that was part of the Portland Urban Beekeepers Association presence at the Multnomah County Fair in May.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



OSBA killer Vice President Jason Rowan is working very hard organizing a GREAT fall conference that you will not want to miss. You will be hearing more about that from him in coming weeks and months.

There is some exciting news surrounding future OSBA Fall Conferences I want to share with you. The news is the expansion to a full 3-day conference.

For many of you, this will come as no surprise as we have slowly added breakout sessions on Friday over the last couple of years. Why not? We typically have had the entire space rented for the first day to allow for vendors to set up their displays. We have in the past begun the conference on the evening of the first day with registration and a reception.

We began the 2016 conference on Friday morning with an elective "Commercial Beekeepers Breakout Session." This ran until noon. After lunch, the Oregon Master Beekeepers met. There were a couple of meetings scheduled in available space with ODA, OSU, and commercial delegates as well. It was great, and the first thoughts of solidifying a 3-day conference began.

This is, as it turns out, a typical schedule layout for many association conferences. Typically, it is a 3-day conference with the first day full of elective breakout sessions. In our case, some, like the Master Beekeeper meetings, would be open to a limited group. Others may be open to all paid conference attendees. Others may require preregistration and paid admission as an add-on to regular conference admission. For example, we could have an instrumental insemination workshop or a commercial beekeeper workshop in which additional significant costs to the OSBA are involved.

The possibilities are only limited by available space depending on the venue. Maybe there could be an Oregon State Fair Honey Bee Booth planning meeting. Maybe a meeting of all of Oregon's regional association executive boards. Lots of potential.

I want to pass on to newer OSBA members and remind veterans of the following OSBA financial guidelines. All monies raised in the oral and silent auctions go to research. When you get the final results of our fundraising at the conferences, remember that not one penny of those funds goes to the ongoing expenses of the OSBA.

Breakout sessions that require an additional admission (not all of them would) will give us the ability to hold the conference in finer facilities, larger facilities, that will in turn allow for even more options.

Stay tuned and please, please voice your ideas for breakout sessions for the future. Please talk to your friends about becoming an OSBA member and attending the conference this year!

Harry Vanderpool

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A SPECIAL INVITATION TO THE FAIR!

The OSBA will have a booth at the Oregon State Fair this year. The fair runs from August 25 through September 4. This is a great opportunity to promote the importance of beekeeping and pollinator health to the general public, and we could use your help. Ideally, we will have members from our Oregon chapters hosting the booth each day. We will also need observation hives to display on a rotational basis.

If you have construction or exhibit experience, we could use your assistance to set up our exhibit in the 10-foot by 40-foot booth on August 24, and tear down the exhibit on September 5. We need people of all levels of experience to interact with the public on fair days. And if you know the ins and outs of observation hives, you can be part of a critical role to manage that important component of the exhibit. Volunteers get a free pass to the fair for the day, free parking, and the opportunity to promote bees and beekeeping to the public.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Yvonne Shaw at: ylshaw76@gmail.com.



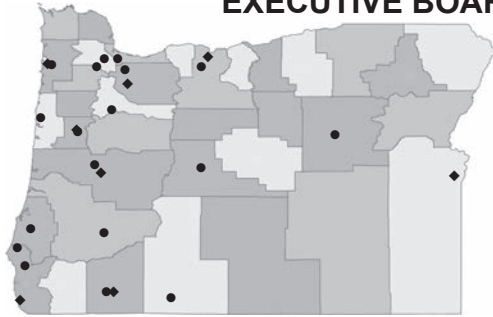
We have a big announcement! The Oregon Master Beekeeper Program has a new coordinator! Her name is Jen Holt. She has worked as a beekeeping educator for many years, including through the OMB program. We are thrilled to have her on board as she comes with fresh ideas, impeccable organizational skills, an energetic passion for honey bees, and load of experience working with the public and volunteers in all things related to bees. Part of Jen's position is to support the Pollinator Health Program at OSU, led by Dr. Andony Melathopoulos. In addition to working on extension programs related to native bees, honey bees, and other pollinators, she will help create avenues of participation for OMB volunteers in these programs (*Citizen Science!*). We are delighted to have her on board, so please join me in welcoming Jen! You can reach her at jen.holt@oregonstate.edu



Jen Holt, Oregon Master Beekeeper and Pollinator Health program coordinator

Oregon State Beekeepers Association

EXECUTIVE BOARD AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS



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North Willamette Valley

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South Willamette Valley

Rita Ostrofsky, 541.685.2875; ostrofsky@pacinfo.com

• REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Central Coast Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, fourth Wednesday
Newport Library, 35 NW Nye St, Newport
Information: centralcoastbeekeepers@gmail.com
President: Rick Olson
541.997.3792; rolson2@attglobal.net
Co-Vice Presidents: Anne Schatz, Kathy Cope
Secretary: Becky Fain
Treasurer: Stan Scotton
Website: www.ccbaor.org; www.facebook.com/Central-CoastBeeKeepersAssociation

Central Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:00–7:30 PM (5:30 PM beginners' corner), fourth Tuesday (except November)
The Environmental Center, 16 NW Kansas Ave, Bend
Information: contact@cobeekeeping.org
President: Allen Engle—aengle@bendbroadband.com
Vice President: Patricia Moreland—oregonpat@gmail.com
Secretary: Misty Lee
Treasurer: Steve Crawford
Website: www.cobeekeeping.org

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

Meets 6:15–8:15 PM, third Wednesday, Rockford Grange,
4520 Barrett Rd, Hood River
President: Zip Krummel—541.490.0587, zipk@gorge.net
Vice President: James Lombardo
james.lombardo@gmail.com
Secretary: Pat Case
541.806.3052, patcase@gorge.net
Treasurer: Ramona Tamiyasu
541.490.8746, ramona@gorge.net
gorgebeekeepers@org

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

Douglas County Bees

Meets 7:00–8:00 PM, first Wednesday, Douglas County
Courthouse, 1036 SE Douglas Ave, third floor, Roseburg
Information: douglascountybees@gmail.com
President: Phil Moulton—503.349.8463
Secretary/Treasurer: Ivory Los Bonos
www.douglascountybees.org; www.facebook.com/DCBeekeepers

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, 6923 Washburn Way, Klamath Falls
 President: Paul Davitt
 president@klamathbeekeepers.org
 Vice President: John Wilda
 vicepresident@klamathbeekeepers.org
 Secretary: Robert Clements
 secretary@klamathbeekeepers.org
 Treasurer: Ray Rutler, treasurer@klamathbeekeepers.org
 Website: www.klamathbeekeepers.org

Lane County Beekeepers

Meets 7:30/6:00 PM early session, third Tuesday (except Dec)
 Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene
 President: Max Kuhn
 541.999.0744; t.maxkuhn@gmail.com
 Vice President: Deb Elder
 541.854.5336; dgdeb.elder@gmail.com
 Secretary: Tamara Andreas
 541.406.0244; tandreas6@gmail.com
 Treasurer: Polly Habliston
 541.461.0339; polly@uoregon.edu
 Website: www.lcbaor.org

Linn-Benton Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, third Wednesday
 Corvallis Waldorf School, 3855 NE Highway 20, Corvallis
 President: Everett Kaser
 541.924.9214; everett@kaser.com
 Vice President: Tim Wydronek
 Secretary: Laurie Bowman
 541.250.1006; secretary@lbba.us
 Treasurer: Suzi Maresh
 541.967.9607; suzi@lbba.us
 Website: www.lbba.us

Oregon Prison Beekeepers

Sustainability Program Manager: Chad Naugle
 503.373.7544; Chad.E.Naugle@doc.state.or.us

Oregon South Coast Beekeepers

Meets 6:00 PM, third Tuesday
 OSU Extension Office, Fairgrounds in Gold Beach
 President: Brad Remsey
 330.980.6125; bradleeremsey79@aim.com
 Vice President: Harvey Young
 541.661.0031; fishhawk51@hotmail.com
 Secretary: Shelley Pottmeyer
 shelleypottmeyer@yahoo.com
 Treasurer: Barbara Fitts
 541.698.0300; bgfitts@gmail.com

Portland Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday
 Gladstone Senior Center, 1050 Portland Ave, Gladstone
 President: Rex McIntire
 503.720.7958; remcintire_5@msn.com
 Vice President: Doug Sieckmann
 503.804.5417; forty2chev@aol.com
 Secretary: Gary Barnard
 503.898.0301; gary@dranrab.com

Treasurer: Mike Hainley
 503.341.0344; hainleyfam@gmail.com
 Website: portlandmetro.org

Portland Urban Beekeepers

Meets 7:00–9:00 PM, first Wednesday
 Rose City Park United Methodist, 5830 NE Alameda, Portland
 For information, e-mail: officers@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
 President: Bill Catherall—503.572.6467
 president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
 Vice President: William Roll
 vice-president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
 Secretary: Simone Miller
 secretary@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
 Treasurer: Amanda Shaw
 treasurer@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
 Website: portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

Southern Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 7:30–9:00 PM, first Monday (demos, 6:30 PM), 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: Kate Womack
 602.321.6901; k8womack@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: Claire Moody
 503.318.9149; claire@vanirmail.com
 Vice President: Rick Stelzig—rstelzig@charter.net
 Secretary: Kathy Cope
 541.264.9222; beachwalkinlady@hotmail.com
 Treasurer: Terry Fullan
 503.368.9149; tfullan@nehalem.tel.net

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Meets 6:00–8:00 PM, last Tuesday, Jessie Mays Comm Hall, 30975 NW Hillcrest Street, North Plains (except Jul & Dec)
 Contact: tualatinvalleybeekeepers@gmail.com
 President: Debby Garman
 503.318.5227
 Vice President: Yvonne Shaw
 Secretary: Laura Stein-Weidner
 Treasurer: Julie Schmidkofer
 Web: http://tvba.weebly.com/

Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Chemeketa Community College, Building 8, Room 201, Salem
 President: Richard Farrier
 541.327.2673; rfarrierfarms@gmail.com
 Vice President: Mona Kanner
 Secretary: Shelley Growell
 Treasurer: Laura Evans
 Website: http://wvbahive.org



BEE EVENTS

July 14 (10 AM–12 PM): Epi-pen training class at Zenger Farm. \$30 per person. *Information:* andy@zengerfarm.org

July 29 (9 AM–4:00 PM): Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association Beginning Beekeeper Class. *Information:* www.southoregonbeekeepers.org/news-and-events/fall-bee-school

August 19: Oregon Honey Festival. Ashland. Honey/Mead Producers/Vendors Wanted. *Information:* www.oregonhoneyfestival.com

August 25–September 4: Oregon State Fair. *Information:* <https://oregonstatefair.org>

September 5–8: Western Apicultural Society of North America 2017 40th Anniversary Conference, UC-Davis. *Information:* www.westernapiculturalsociety.org

October 27–29: OSBA Fall Conference. The Oregon Garden.

November 14–16: CSBA Annual Convention. Lake Tahoe. *Information:* www.californiastatebeekeepers.com/events.html

January 9–13, 2018: American Beekeeping Federation Conference and Tradeshow. Reno, Nevada. *Information:* <https://abfconference.com>

REGIONAL NEWS

Note: For all groups, see pages 4–5 for meeting time and place, website, and/or contact information. All groups invite and welcome visitors to join them at meetings! In addition, regional associations often offer opportunities for learning, many of which are posted on their websites as well as on this page.

Regional Representatives

North Coast

For those of you who don't know me, you should know that I am a hobby beekeeper. I currently have six colonies and two nucs in an urban setting here in Lincoln City. Most have ocean views with two having lake views. I have recently been wrestling with several hive issues. Those include Nosema or dysentery (I'm not sure what the difference is from a practical standpoint), swarming, a queenless hive, and more. At times like this, it is so nice to be able to contact other beekeepers for advice and consultation. I am so lucky to belong to two "Bee Clubs": Tillamook County and Central Coast. I also have my mentor, Max Kuhn, from the Oregon Master Beekeeper (OMB) Program as well as OMB participants I have mentored. This year I have an apprentice who has been a beekeeper longer than I have and is a great resource for me. I am also lucky to have three beekeepers, relatively close, who face many of the same challenges and issues. It allows us to cover each other and share resources like equipment, clothing, bees (and queens), and help with swarms when needed.

The Central Coast beekeepers had Carolyn Breece, Senior Research Assistant at Oregon State University, as our featured speaker at our last meeting. Her topic was Keeping Healthy Bees. I always learn something club presentations. My favorite quote from Carolyn's presentation was, "Count your mites." Carolyn stressed how important monitoring mite levels is to having healthy bees. Her presentation was the perfect follow to Dr. Sagili's class the month before.

The Tillamook County beekeepers will most likely be changing our meeting location. We have simply outgrown our traditional meeting location at The Fresh Café in Bay City. Trisha Kauffman, long-time North Coast beekeeper, has allowed us use of her building for meetings for all the years I have been attending meetings. Thank you, Trisha, for the use of your building and for supporting the Tillamook County Beekeepers Association. *Stan Scotton*

Regional Associations

Central Coast Beekeepers

Our Himalayan blackberries just started to blossom the first week of June. It looks like the bees are taking to them, unlike last year when they were ignored. I attended Randy Oliver's session in Hood River, and he says they have the same problem in California. But as I write this the rain has started again and the forecast is rain for most of the week. A very bad start to the honey flow.

Our swarm season started on the coast the first week of June this year while the sun was still out. One of my stronger hives swarmed even though I'd added two empty westerns the two weeks before—there weren't any swarm cells at that time. They clustered in a fir tree 60 feet up—too high to capture. I hastily put out two more bait hives and spritzed them with Swarm Commander. By two o'clock the next day, the bees were gone and the bait hives were still empty. Several club members have been more successful at catching their or others' swarms so far this season.

We have done two community booths and signed up 25 new folks who were interested in finding out more about beekeeping. We have another booth scheduled soon as well as a two-hour introduction to beekeeping session planned at the Newport Public Library.

Carolyn Breece came out to the coast and gave a good overview of Integrated Pest Management. We're lucky to have such expertise and talent so close. Thanks, Carolyn. Ken Ograin from the Lane County beekeepers will be our next speaker to discuss reading frames. Club members can bring in frames that they have questions about for analysis. We had a follow up question-and-answer session for our

OMBP apprentice class. Lots of questions and stories from our new beekeepers as they get more involved with their bees and their bee paradigms evolve. *Rick Olson*

Central Oregon Beekeepers

Famine then Feast. Central Oregon had great fruit tree blooms, and just finished up a prolific (wow!) bitterbrush flow. We're all looking forward to the sagebrush next. Those with hives that made it through the winter are busy splitting, supering, or swarming. Overall though, there's been quite the reduction in swarms in the area. The thought is that not many feral colonies survived and the newly created ones aren't strong enough yet. Those with replacement colonies are finally seeing them take off.

Our local Oregon Master Beekeeper Apprentice and Journey students have been quite active with their instruction, hive manipulations, and the "Saturday in the Apiary" activities (thanks to Heike Williams and Naomi Price), as well as helping with mentoring beginner beekeepers.

In May, we had a great talk from Heike Williams on her experiences with several mite treatments, both individually and in combination. And in June, Dr. Ramesh Sagili has offered to talk to us about hive equalization and the current topics of research at OSU. As always, we invite you to attend any of our meetings. *Allen Engle*

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

The Columbia Gorge area is finally starting to experience spring growth, albeit somewhat at a stutter with our up-and-down temperatures. A lot of reports of pollen coming in, but very little remaining in the cells for long; appears as if they are bringing in enough to survive but not enough to really start putting away. Hope springs eternal (or is it, "Hope for an eternal Spring"?), and most of our hives are working hard with what is available. Doesn't feel like we've really got into our usual spring flow yet.

After a great presentation by Dr. Andony M. last month on Bee Biology, this month we have John Edwards (Brushy Mountain) talking about Hive Metrics. We've also started hive-type specific small-group gatherings in the area—TBH and Long Hive are up and meeting—with Langstroth, Warré, Flow, and others in the future. *Zip Krummel*

Klamath Basin Beekeepers

This past monthly meeting of KBBA had Dr. Ramesh Sagili in attendance giving a presentation entitled Thirty Years After Varroa Introduction: Lessons Learnt and Future of Our Bees. The meeting was well attended and very informative. Our June 24th meeting will be a field day, where we will work John Wilda's bees in teaching members how to do a mite test, how to do an oxalic acid

treatment, and other things to look for in a hive. Our education officer is continuing her educational efforts in various elementary schools; so far in the month of May and June, she visited six elementary schools, 18 classes, and taught approximately 500 students. The education program focuses on visual and environmental differences between bees, bumble bees, wasps, what to do in case of a sting, why we need honey bees, and what is pollination, and the students get to see some bees in an observation hive. Katharina has written a book for use in class (you can see a copy at <http://tinyurl.com/blackandfuzzy>), and she and the club are trying to raise funds to pay for the printing of this book so a copy can be given to each student. We will have an exhibition at a street fair on the third Thursday and at the Klamath County library later this month. *Paul Davitt*

Lane County Beekeepers

Last Saturday, the 3rd of June, we at LCBA had our annual field day. This year, as last, we joined with the Linn-Benton bee club for a great joint field day. It was a dry summer day, rare this year, and as I watch it raining

now, it makes me appreciate that day even more. We spent the day visiting with fellow beekeepers in a picnic-like setting at the Oak Creek Apiary. A very relaxing, entertaining, and educational experience by any standards. During the morning we attended three separate sessions intended for the newer beekeeper, all of which were well attended and well received by those attending. Afterwards we took a break for lunch, which seemed to me to be very well organized and was in my opinion delicious. The Linn-Benton club deserves a big Thank You for all the work they put into this lunch. It was great! After lunch we broke into groups and watched more-experienced beekeepers conduct hive examinations.

All the participants I spoke to afterwards were excited about the experience. I attended a group session watching always-popular Kenny Williams (48 years of beekeeping experience!) demonstrate hive examination and queen location. Great!! We can now call Kenny a miracle worker . . .



because as we all watched . . . he found a queen in a hive labeled as queenless! WOW! How'd he do dat? 😊

Thanks to Kenny and all the many other volunteers who worked to make this field day special. It was indeed special.

Congratulations! To Ramesh Sagili on his promotion to "Associate Professor with Tenor"! Very well deserved.

Max Kuhn

Linn-Benton Beekeepers

In and around Corvallis, Himalayan blackberry began blooming over Memorial weekend this year. We traded May's meeting for a field day in June, hosted by the busy bees at OSU's apiary. About 60 members of LBBA and Lane County Beekeepers attended this year's field day.

Mid-summer (Solstice) marks change in the beekeepers' year. Karen Finley from Queen Bee Honey will be the club speaker later in June. She'll talk about changes in the hive and how we can prepare for the second half of the season.

Upcoming speakers are Carolyn Breece (OSU Faculty Research Assistant, Apiculture) in July, and Andony Melathopoulos (Assistant Professor, Pollinator Health, OSU Extension) in August, topics to be determined.

Have you heard that Andony Melathopoulos hosts a great new podcast, PollinNation? It's well worth a listen. Mike Burgett about Oregon's Honey Bee Pollination Market. Website <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/pollinationpodcast>. Once there, click on "RSS feed," then copy the RSS address into your preferred podcast app. *Laurie Bowman*

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Portland Metro Beekeepers

The Portland Metro Beekeepers Association was again represented at the Oregon City Farmers Market for their annual Pollinators Day. The presentation was under the care of Gary Barnard. We had two observation hives, which are always the biggest draw for kids and adults.

We had a good number of club volunteers to answer questions, good weather, and a good turnout. Thank you, club volunteers!

For our meeting on the 9th, our primary presenter was John Edwards, manager of the Wilsonville Brushy Mountain Bee Farm Store. His topic was mite management. He said, "The mite problem . . . getting worse not better." He outlined the life cycle of the mite and its trajectory of growth in the hive, lagging behind the growth in number of bees. He had an interesting chart (still in development) of the variety of treatment options' effectiveness over a year's time. He discussed the various options for helping the hive combat this destructive pest.

Since some treatments are a potential danger to the queen, he offered the "treatment trick" of sequestering the queen temporarily in a nuc while the treatment is applied to the main hive. In addition, Dewey Caron presented results from the Winter Loss Survey. The results show continued significant losses of hives and the importance of mite control in hive survival.

Paul Jarrett

Portland Urban Beekeepers

Glen Andresen took us through annuals, perennials, shrubs, vines, and flowering trees that are contributing to this year's honey flow. For a more-detailed report, check out bridgetownbees.com for Glen's monthly "What's in bloom" report. Our featured speaker was Brian Lacy, owner of Urban Bees And Gardens, which offers a range of programs for all ages to educate, support, and advocate for the beekeeping community. Brian's highly informative presentation covered first-year beekeeping and offered knowledge from his 45 years of beekeeping experience.

Tour De Hives is a self-guided tour of backyard apiaries and bee trees in and around Portland, Oregon. This year the tour falls on the weekend of June 24-25. Saturday we will be exploring SE neighborhoods and Sunday will be in NE Portland neighborhoods. We hope this will help give people more time to enjoy the tour stops, create more traffic at more stops, and give tour hosts a chance to also take the tour.

We want to take an opportunity to learn more about who makes up our beekeeping club and are asking members to fill out an online survey.



A great age to start in bees!
 A huge success!! Part of PUB's commitment is to advocate for the bee community and educate those interested in raising honey bees and supporting their presence in the environment and we hit our mark at this year's fair. Well done, everyone!!

PUB's presence at the 111th Multnomah County Fair was its best ever. The observation hive was a huge hit (thanks Bill Catherall & Janene Gibbs), as was the face cutout photo board. Special thanks to Linda Zahl for organizing and staffing the event and to all the volunteers who donated their time to making it a

huge success!! Part of PUB's commitment is to advocate for the bee community and educate those interested in raising honey bees and supporting their presence in the environment and we hit our mark at this year's fair. Well done, everyone!!
Scott Macdonald

Southern Oregon Beekeepers

Our next SOBA meeting will be on July 10th, rather than the first Monday.
Cheryl Housden

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers Association members are very pleased to see the SUN in the sky, and that event has encouraged many who were darkly despondent to forge forward with our hive habits for another season. With the nectar flow on, forage sources have moved out of the red and into the black—as in Blackberry. Many of us in the club have pollinator gardens off to a great start thanks to Diane VanDyke's plant sale last month. Others enjoy watching their bees work flowers on their—and their neighbors'—decks, ditches, and meadows. The bees aren't picky about property lines.

Speaking of property lines, our swarm-collecting members are finally getting calls about colonies looking for new homes. All seem to agree that the number of swarm calls they are getting is down significantly compared to other years. Perhaps colonies were reluctant to leave their hives during our rainy spring. Members comment that swarm collection is about a month behind, but is picking up fast.

And where there are swarms, there are queen issues. The TVBA speaker for June is Glen Andresen of Bridgetown Bees. Glen will discuss everything to do with queens: Raising queens; Replacing queens; The nature of queens; and Selling queens for profit and adventure. Bring your queen questions; Glen has queen answers.

July is our annual membership picnic at the VanDyke farm in Hillsboro. We will have demonstrations on hive inspections, handling honey supers, and honey extraction. Also in July is the Washington County Fair. Admission is free, so you won't have to pony-up to visit the TVBA Beekeeping Booth! The fair runs July 27–30, and our booth coordinator is Julie Schmidlkofer. The Washington County Fair is combined with the 4-H and FFA Fairs, so you can stop by and say hello to fellow beekeepers while you munch a snow cone and wait for the auction to start. Members and the public are welcome to attend our club meetings to check out what we are up to. Hope to see you there!
Yvonne Shaw

SURVEY REMINDER

The deadline for contributions to the OSU Honey Bee Lab survey as requested by e-mail to OSBA members on May 31 is the end of the month, July 31. The request and survey link are also posted on orsba.org.

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KEEPING BEES IN JULY

Karessa Torgerson

In most parts of Oregon, July brings the end of the nectar flow and the beginning of dearth. A few timely actions taken by a proactive beekeeper can do wonders to relieve colony stress and increase a colony's likelihood of surviving the winter.

The end of the nectar flow means bees will not be drawing out wax or bringing in loads of wet nectar to cure. If you haven't already started consolidating frames, do so now by rearranging honey supers where possible. Remove empty and nearly empty frames so that the remaining boxes are filled with full ones.

By the end of July you should be ready to harvest honey. If this seems early, keep in mind that most colonies don't gain much harvestable weight after the end of this month.

More importantly, your bees will fare much better in the seasons to come if you can get any needed Varroa mite treatments done before mid-August. If you can knock the mite levels down at the beginning of the beekeeping new year (August 1), your current bee population can foster a generation of well-nourished bees that have not been compromised by mite infestations and mite treatments. The workers will have longer lifespans and should be more resilient to the stresses of winter, the winter brood will be healthier, and even the spring bees will benefit from lower mite numbers at the start of brood-rearing season.

Before treating for mites, it is important to do a mite count. A powdered sugar shake or alcohol wash can both give accurate results. You can also use the sticky board method. There is an excellent video on how to sample mites posted on the Oregon State University Extension Service YouTube page.

A colony going into winter with high mite numbers is



unlikely to survive. Many beekeepers are opting to treat for mites in fall when they count 3–6 mites per 300 bees, or a 1–2% rate of infestation. Colonies with counts even a little higher than that often appear to collapse from thriving hive to deadout in just a few weeks come August, September, or October.

Before choosing your treatment, consider factors such as: temperature, time available to treat, and the use of previous treatments. Formic acid, while effective and safe to use with honey supers on, can sometimes cause queen loss and other problems in high temperatures. Other treatments, such as synthetics and essential oil formulations, require that honey supers be removed before use. If your colony is missing brood due to a queen issue or swarm, it is advisable to do an oxalic acid treatment during the broodless period. See the documents section of the Oregon Master Beekeeper website for a handy breakdown of the pros and cons of the most common Varroa mite treatments. It is important to always follow the manufacturer's instructions when using any treatment. Failure to do so could harm your bees, compromise your health, or, in some cases, risk an increase in mite resistance to the treatment method.

More Tips for July:

The end of the nectar flow signals the beginning of robbing season. Vulnerable colonies can be plundered in a matter of days, and robbing also transmits Varroa and disease. To prevent problems, don't spill honey or nectar near your colonies nor keep them open any longer than you absolutely must. Cover open boxes and frames to prevent easy access. Reduce entrances on weak colonies and keep a robbing screen handy, just in case.

Speaking of weak colonies, consider combining them with stronger hives if you can determine they aren't afflicted with Varroa or disease. Whenever possible, you want to "take your losses" in late summer and early fall instead of in the winter.

Continue supplying water for your bees if there isn't a dependable source available. This will keep your colonies from drawing the ire of birdbath watchers and swimming pool owners. A Honey Bee Biology article written by Dr. Wyatt Mangum and published to the *American Bee Journal* explains that keeping a nearby water source can also make a big difference for the hive; if a honey bee must fly a long distance to the water source she is able to carry less water. For water carriers making an average of 50 round trips a day, this small difference can really add up over the course of the season.

Continued on page 13



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Keeping Bees—Continued from page 11

Ensure your colonies are queenright while queens are still available.

Don't forget to leave plenty of honey for the bees when you're removing honey supers. Colonies in many parts of Oregon will need 80–100 pounds of honey to get through the winter.

Losses—Continued from page 1

This statement does not reflect the situation in Oregon this year, as we saw a spike in mite numbers in fall 2016, despite ongoing mite control treatments (among commercial beekeepers and more monitoring and control among small-scale individuals). Additionally, we had a relatively colder and longer winter this year. Perhaps those two factors are responsible for our heavier overwinter losses compared to the previous two seasons of both commercial and sideline beekeepers.

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A BEETLE CONCERN

Todd Balsiger

Small hive beetles are definitely around this year. I had a division board feeder partly filled with a ripe sugar saturated solution that was loaded with SHB larvae. I'm glad I noticed. No more supersaturated sugar "solutions" in division board feeders for me.

I've seen two adult beetles, one of which I was able to crush. Upon crushing it, eggs were ejected from its abdomen. Clearly, SHBs are egg-laying machines. 😊

I'm not sure if these beetles originated from my hives—in which case they overwintered here—or from the many commercial hives in my area. None of my hives went to almonds this past year.

DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES

A joint collaboration between the Bee Informed Partnership, the USDA-ARS Bee Research Laboratory, and USDA-APHIS has been established in the short term to primarily provide for the diagnostics of honey bee brood for American foulbrood (and other brood) disease. For information about the services, cost, and shipping, visit: <https://beeinformed.org/diagnostics>.

AS Pogo SAID . . .

An article in *Science Daily* describes research in which "Robert Owen argues that human activity is a key driver in the spread of pathogens afflicting the European honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) and recommends a series of collective actions necessary to stem their spread. While some research seeks a 'magic bullet' solution to honey bee maladies such as Colony Collapse Disorder, 'many of the problems are caused by human action and can only be mitigated by changes in human behavior,' Owen says." The study, as published, is: "Role of Human Action in the Spread of Honey Bee (Hymenoptera: Apidae) Pathogens" by Robert Owen. It is in the *Journal of Economic Entomology*, 2017, at DOI: 10.1093/jee/tox075.

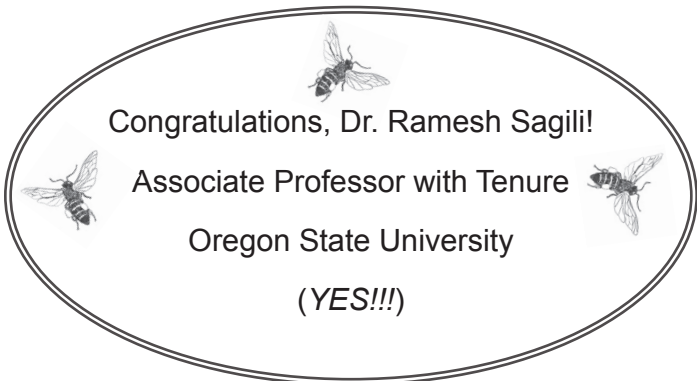


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PESTICIDES

SAN FRANCISCO (5-10-17) —A Federal Court has ruled that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) systematically violated the Endangered Species Act (ESA) – a key wildlife protection law – when it approved bee-killing insecticides known as neonicotinoids. In a case ongoing for the last four years, brought by beekeepers, wildlife conservation groups, and food safety and consumer advocates, Judge Maxine Chesney of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California held that EPA had unlawfully issued 59 pesticide registrations between 2007 and 2012 for a wide variety of agricultural, landscaping and ornamental uses.

See: www.centerforfoodsafety.org/files/2017-5-8-dkt-269--order--granting-and-denying-in-part-msjs_54860.pdf
Current action regarding Kroger: http://action.beyondpesticides.org/p/dia/action4/common/public?action_KEY=24993

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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:

Oregon State Beekeepers Association, Membership
4207 SE Woodstock Blvd, Ste 517, Portland, Oregon 97206

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Voluntary contribution(s):

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Research Fund \$ _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

Note: To renew or join online, please visit:

<http://osba2016.orsba.org/product/osba-membership/>

Thank you!

Effective Date: 12/10/2016



The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

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If the date is July 2017 (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 August issue, 2017. The deadline for submitting copy is **July 10, 2017**. 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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