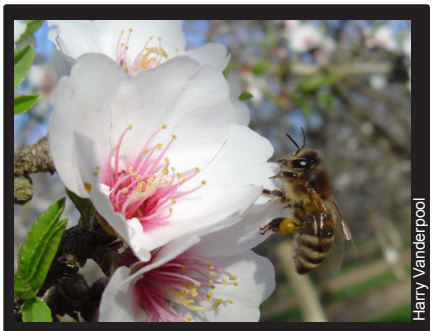
The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

Volume 43
Number 2
March 2018


Harry Vanderpool

IN THIS ISSUE . . .

Supplemental Forage	1
President's Message	2
Residential Beekeeping	3
The Best Hive	5
Resources	6
Classified Ad	7
Bee Events	8
Regional News	8
Survey	12
Keeping Bees in March	13
Swarm Call	13
Membership Form	15

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orsbawebmaster@gmail.com

www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org
Oregon Master Beekeeper Program
A Joint Venture of OSBA and the Oregon State University Extension Service
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Image above: Honey bee on 2018 almond. May we find that all colonies overwintered well, all return from the almonds healthy and strong, and all are surrounded by rich, abundant, diverse resources throughout.

Bee Schools and Bee Days are being planned for 2018. See page 8 and visit orsba.org and regional association websites for dates, times, and updates.

SUPPLEMENTAL FORAGE FOR HONEY BEES IN ALMONDS

Elina L. Niño, Department of Entomology and Nematology, University of California Davis

Honey bees benefit from access to plentiful and diverse nutrition. Optimal forage access can help honey bees (and undoubtedly other pollinators) better deal with pathogen and pesticide pressures. The earliest need for strong colonies is in February when approximately 2 million colonies from across the country make their way into California for providing pollination services in almonds. However, during almond pollination (Figure 1), there are minimal, particularly naturally occurring, options for additional forage for honey bees. This has prompted calls for supplemental forage plantings to be available to colonies in various regions where honey bees are either used for pollination, honey production, or are simply taking a break from hard work they have been doing all year. Period before, during, and after almond bloom perhaps is the greatest opportunity to provide supplemental forage that could benefit the most colonies at once. Therefore, it is an ideal space for making these available to foraging bees.

The main interest of the Niño Lab, within the context of this collaborative almond forage project, is to evaluate the immediate and long-term benefits of two different supplemental forage plantings in almond orchards during pollination on honey bee colony health, growth, and survival. During the 2017 almond bloom, we placed colonies at sites with access to mustard plantings (supplied by Project Apis m.) or wildflower plantings (mix developed by Dr. Neal Williams Lab group at UC Davis) or accompanying control sites without purposefully planted supplemental forage. Colonies were evaluated for the size of the adult population and brood production, pollen and nectar/honey stores, and varroa mite levels, prior, during, and immediately after they were stationed in almond orchards in the northern areas of the Central Valley region (Figure 2). Samples of pollen were also taken in order to verify that bees were indeed foraging on plants of interest (Figure 3). In addition, our collaborators in the Williams lab evaluated these plantings for attractiveness to wild bee species and determined whether there was any potential for competition for pollinators between the almond flowers and supplemental forage flowers. They also inquired about the nut set success in orchards within these different contexts. Lastly, Dr. Quinn McFrederick (UC Riverside) is currently processing collected bee samples for presence of various pathogens as well as immune gene expression.

Continued on page 3

E. L. Niño Bee Lab

Figure 1. Northern Central Valley California almond orchard in bloom.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Can't be done, can't be done, can't be done, can't be done!!!

Have you ever had a great idea, invention, or improvement that you couldn't get out of your head? After thinking about it for a while, maybe you decided to run it by a few people for their opinion. Do you remember what they said?

Did they say, "It can't be done"?

I have always preferred to hear, "It can't be done, and here are the reasons why," for which I quickly reply, "Wait. Wait, let me get a pencil. I want to write this down."

If you have an idea that you really feel strongly about pursuing, making a list of "reasons" why it can't be done is a valuable shortcut. After all, if your idea is so great, why isn't it already discovered and in use? It is not in use because nobody has been willing to work through the accepted "reasons" why "it can't be done." The list that you compile is your to-do list. As you carefully solve one issue after another, you move closer and closer to make your idea happen.

Several years ago, I spent a few hours in Thomas Edison's laboratory in Greenfield Village, next to the Ford Museum. Very enlightening! (Sorry!) I'll bet that Edison holds the world's record for hearing all of the reasons that his many contributions to society, "Can't be done."

Thomas Edison once said in response to an annoying question from the press, "I have not failed 700 times! I have not failed once. I have succeeded in proving that those 700 ways will not work. When I have eliminated the ways that will not work, I will find the way that will work."

I want to encourage all OSBA members to *believe in their ideas* and *believe in themselves*. Nobody knows more about honey bee problems than we do. Yet, in our agricultural community, our members have a very impressive array of backgrounds, experience, and education perfectly suited to SOLVE those problems!

As we move into the 2018 season, excitement is in the air! A number of possible solutions for the problems that honey bees face are being aggressively pursued.

Please keep the faith and move your ideas forward!

Harry Vanderpool

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Forage—*Continued from page 1*

The poor weather has unfortunately precluded the wildflower plantings from reaching full bloom during the time that the bees were in orchards so we ultimately analyzed potential effects of mustards on various colony parameters. Our preliminary analysis on colony growth indicates, not surprisingly, potential immediate positive effects of mustard plantings. Adult bee population size as well as brood amount was significantly greater in mustard-exposed colonies as compared to almond orchard controls at two time points during almond bloom. Once the colonies were transferred to a common apiary, potential colony growth benefits were lost indicating the importance of continued access to diverse forage. While we also tracked varroa mite infestation over time, we did not find any forage effects on mites. However, pathogen and immunity analyses are more likely to reveal potential benefits of supplemental forage. In terms of survival, colonies from mustard-supplemented orchards had the greatest, but not significantly so, survival when the colonies were inspected in July 2017. Worth mentioning are the results of pollen analysis, which confirmed that honey bees near mustards were indeed collecting a nice mix of mustard and almond pollen. Colonies near wildflower plantings did end up collecting a small percentage of wildflower pollen as seen at our final pollen collecting date after the almond bloom was complete indicating that the bees indeed were foraging on these plant species as well.

Figure 2: Bernardo Niño evaluating colonies for size and Varroa infestation, and collecting bee samples for pathogen analysis.

Figure 3. Pollen traps set on experimental colonies in Northern California.

Our preliminary analysis supports the idea that supplemental forage during bloom has benefits for colony growth and likely bee health and survival (samples and data currently being processed). To me, it was perhaps most important to learn that, while early supplemental forage in agricultural settings can indeed have immediate and potentially long-term benefits for bees, it was clear that the need for valuable food sources doesn't stop there. Researchers and beekeepers alike for a while now have been sending a message that every little bit of extra forage helps bees in their fight against other stressors. And in case you don't own an almond orchard but want to plant for bees, keep an eye on research updates for another one of our projects (done in collaboration with Dr. Christine Casey of Häagen-Dazs Honey Bee Haven) that evaluates attractiveness of common garden plants to various bee pollinators.

RESIDENTIAL BEEKEEPING

A New Law and Recommended Best Practices

Ralph M. Rodia, OSBA Agricultural Liaison

In many instances, when a number of individuals have engaged in an activity that might affect others, there will be efforts to regulate or standardize that activity. Those efforts are, sometimes, based on the premise that others need to be protected. An activity, such as beekeeping, which a person may engage in simply for their own enjoyment and benefit, will become subject to oversight by others. That oversight might simply include volunteer support organizations such as the Oregon State Beekeepers Association and its regional associations. However, there will also be those in government who will want to require specific training, licensing, codes, rules, and regulations to ensure the activity does not pose a problem to others in the community.

As beekeeping has progressed, particularly over the last 20 years, to include many residential beekeepers with a few colonies, regional beekeeping associations have grown from having fewer than 50 members to having memberships of 100 to 200 or more. With more residential beekeepers, there are now more interactions among beekeepers, their bees. and their neighbors. In many cases, not because of anything the beekeeper has or has not done, the beekeeper has faced scrutiny by their neighbors and local governmental officials. Most often, driven by concerns and complaints from fearful or concerned citizens, local governmental agencies have responded with efforts to "protect" others in the community.

Such efforts have included a range of actions throughout Oregon as well as the country, as there is no recognized set of guidelines, rules, or processes that, if required, can be equably applied to residential beekeeping. Nonetheless, in responding to their constituents, some local governments:

1. Through the use of ordinances, have banned beekeeping altogether. Interestingly, many of these ordinances, surely not by intent but rather from a lack of understanding, have also banned the keeping of all other bees, including Mason bees. The cities of St. Helens and Junction City have bans.

2. Allow residential beekeeping, but only with many restrictions that might include limits on the number of hives, their locations, the type of hive construction that may be used, hive placement in the apiary, notifications to neighbors and in some cases neighbor approvals, along with a number of other requirements. Cities with restrictions include Gresham and Hubbard, both of which recently adopted new rules to replace those rules that previously banned beekeeping.

3. Permit beekeeping, but limit the number of hives to a few. For instance, Salem allows up to 5 hives and by rule classifies an apiary with more than 5 hives as a commercial beekeeping operation, which is not allowed in residential areas. Otherwise it applies nuisance rules if there is a problem.

4. Some local governments do not specifically address residential beekeeping in their codes, but instead will use "nuisance" rules or ordinances to order a correction if a problem with beekeeping arises. The cities of Albany and McMinnville and Mollala now use this approach after their city councils rejected citizen requests to adopt residential beekeeping bans.

It should be noted that some local governments also have requirements that residential beekeepers register each year and pay a licensing fee that is based, in part, on the number of hives. And most recently, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, through legislative directive, now collects a yearly registration fee of 10 dollars plus another 50 cents per hive, if any beekeeper has 5 or more hives during the previous beekeeping year.

In most cases, when asked by new beekeepers about what local rules and regulations might apply to them, they were advised them not to to ask their local officials. A beekeeper might not like the answer they would receive. Moreover, by asking the question, the beekeeper might stir up a "hornet's nest" that could result in local officials deciding to adopt specific codes, rules, and ordinances which, more likely than not, would set limits on their beekeeping.

. . . The Best Practices are to be used to foster nuisance-free residential beekeeping and also serve as a guide for addressing problems when considering and applying nuisance codes, rules, and ordinances by local governmental enforcement agencies. The Best Practices document is very comprehensive.

When the Best Practices has been printed and distributed, later this year and early next year, we as beekeepers along with the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program have the expertise to assist other beekeepers and the cities and counties in

complying with the new laws. We may be asked to, and in any case volunteer to, aid governmental agencies with their reviews of the Best Practices, their existing codes and rules, and any adoptions they might consider that would relate to residential beekeeping. We will also need to ensure, as much as possible, that every residential beekeeper, both old and new, is provided a copy of and encouraged to follow the Best Practices. It is to our benefit as beekeepers that this is done, so as to avoid the adoption of restrictive and/or punitive codes and rules instead of the preferred use of the more flexible and reasonable nuisance ordinances that are applied only when and if a problem arises because a residential beekeeper failed to practice nuisance-free beekeeping.

To help carry out the outreach activity as consultants to beekeepers and local governments, the OSBA would like each OSBA regional association to have at least one member who would be designated as the Residential Beekeeping Consultant and who is able to respond to and assist those in their regions. The consultant may be called on and spend a bit of time in this capacity during the initial compliance with the statutes. It is then expected that, after the local governments conduct their reviews and make any code revisions, the consultants will then be available to help ensure that new beekeepers are aware of the Best Practices and then as requested assist and advise beekeepers and enforcement agencies, if residential beekeeping issues arise. To facilitate this interaction, the OSBA will make available and distribute the consultant contact information . . .

Note: The material here represents only a portion of Mike's article, adapted for space. The text provides a history and background as to how and why we have a new law and the Best Practices for Residential Beekeeping. See the *real (complete) thing* at: orsba.org.

CHOOSING THE BEST HIVE

Charlie Vanden Heuvel

The new beekeeper is faced with a plethora of choices when considering his or her first hive.

Top Bar ❖ Log Hive ❖ Warré ❖ Skep ❖ AZ General ❖ Langstroth ❖ and many more

Which is the best hive? Is the choice better for the Northwest area we live in or not? Will the receptacle be conducive to mite control? Does it emulate a natural bee environment? The list goes on . . . Kinda resembles current discussions concerning which is a greater risk to the bees: Pesticides or Varroa mites?

Having worked with most of these hives, I have been forced to research and appreciate all the questions and more. All beekeepers, similar to car or computer owners, have their own preferences. Of course, all will readily share their thoughts. But, for me, it seems to come down to *hive management*. We beekeepers, especially in the beginning years, are faced with so many issues, so much to learn and assimilate. Hopefully, as the years unfold, the beekeeper formulates a management plan. Michael Bush often speaks of being a *lazy beekeeper*, which, he relates, means constructing his apiary to require the least amount of effort. The *treatment-free* beekeeper seems to translate the management plan to mean do nothing.

The experienced apiarist, whether formally or through learned experience, becomes proactive in management. Les Crowder has incorporated a seasonal set of practices for his Top Bar Hives. For the novitiate, start with the monthly articles appearing in *The Bee Line* newsletter from the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. In the end, though, each geographic location requires different timing in applying the seasonal interactions with the hive. Consider:

Coming out of winter, assess hive weight. Many a colony has starved in the months from January to April as the girls arise from slumber to support the queen in her eagerness to replace winter bees with a new set destined to forage during the nectar flow season.

Assess mite levels beginning in March or April, preferably a monthly check with documentation or graphing for reference.

Monitor brood for a full healthy pattern as the weather warms to stimulate the queen to full-force production.

Add additional space for storing nectar and pollen.

These are but a few of the major categories to be considered in formulating each apiary's practice. The most important focus is to become *proactive* rather than a novitiate who chases his or her tail in *reactive* management.

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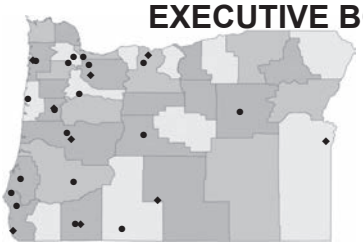

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Independence 97351; 503.838.2981

South Willamette Valley
Tim Wydronek, 541.740.4127; tim@aldercreekhoney.com

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Meets 6:30 PM, fourth Wednesday
Newport Library, 35 NW Nye St, Newport
Information: centralcoastbeekeepers@gmail.com
Co-President: Patti Johnson—pattiandpatt@comcast.net
Co-President: Pat Wackford—pwacky@charter.net
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 December)
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 Leem | 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: Randy Sturgill
randys@rfpco.com; 541.430.4095
Vice President: Ron Mueller
Secretary: Ken Denton
Treasurer: Jane Oku
541.396.4016; janeoku1958@gmail.com

Douglas County Bees
Meets 7:00–8:30 PM, first Wednesday, Douglas County Courthouse, 1036 SE Douglas Ave, third floor, Roseburg
Information: douglascountybees@gmail.com; 541.375.0393
President: Ivory LosBonos
503.758.4692; ivohart@gmail.com
Vice President: Kevin Hansen
Secretary: Gina Holgate | Treasurer: Beau Bogus
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 7:30/6:15 PM early session, third Tuesday (except Dec)
Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene
President: Pam Leavitt
541.344.4228; pamseaver2000@yahoo.com
Vice President: Mike France
541.232.1610; michaelj62@gmail.com
Secretary: Jodi Wiktorowski
541.543.1737; yodi10@hotmail.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
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541.928.5259; 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: Harvey Young
541.661.0031; fishawk51@hotmail.com
Vice President: Daniel Strom
Secretary: Shelley Pottmeyer
shelleypottmeyer@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Barbara Fitts
541.698.0300; bgfitts@gmail.com

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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: Nancy Winston | 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@portland urbanbeekeepers.org
President: Mandy Shaw—503.740.2913
president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Vice President: Simone Miller
vice-president@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Secretary: Simone Miller
secretary@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Treasurer: Cheryl Wright
treasurer@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org
Website: portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

Southern Oregon Beekeepers
Meets 6:30–8:00 PM, first Monday (demos, 6:30 PM), Southern Oregon Res & Ext Ctr, 569 Hanley Rd, Central Point
For information, e-mail: sobeekeepers@gmail.com
President: John Jacob
541.582.BEES; oldsolbees@gmail.com
Vice President: Risa Halpin—rhalpin906@aol.com
Secretary: Shari Shattuck—541.951.9265
Treasurer: Cheryl Housden
541.659.6654; chousden@earthlink.net
Website: southernoregonbeekeepers.org

Tillamook County Beekeepers
Meets 6:00–8:00 PM, second Tuesday (except December)
OSU Extension Office, 4506 3rd St, Tillamook
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: Micky Lyski—lyski1978@yahoo.com

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: Eddie Frie—ejfrie@frontier.com
Vice President: Paul Andersen
Secretary: Richard Baker— r.s.baker@mac.com
Treasurer: Julie Schmidlkofer
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

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BEE EVENTS

March 8, 16, and 18. Tualatin Valley Beekeepers Bee School. *Information*: tualatinvalleybeekeepers@gmail.com.

March 10 (9 AM–4 PM). Astoria Bee School. Clatsop Community College, Columbia Hall Room 219. $25/$35 (cash/check; register at the door).

March 10 (8:45 AM–5 PM). Lane County Beekeepers Association Bee Class. Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene. *Information*: Pam Leavitt, pamseaver2000@yahoo.com, 541.344.4228.

March 17 (9 AM–2:00 PM). Klamath Basin Beekeepers Begining Class. *Information*: www.klamathbeekeepers.org.

April 7 (9 AM–4:30 PM). Southern Oregon Beekeepers Bee School. $45. *Information*: southernoregonbeekeepers.org.

April 7–8. Tillamook County Beekeepers at Home & Garden Show. Tillamook County Fairgrounds.

April 14 (9 AM–3 PM). Honey Bee Festival. *Information*: see ad, page 10.

April 21 (10 AM–3 PM). Portland Urban Beekeepers Welcomes Solomon Parker. McMenamin's Kennedy School. $30/$40 after March 21. *Information*: https://orsba.org/events/13879/.

April 28. Portland Metro Bee Day. *Information*: portlandmetro.org.

June 18–24. National Pollinator Week. *Information*: http://pollinator.org/pollinator-week.

July 14. Southern Oregon Summer Bee School.

August 3–5. Western Apicultural Society Conference. Boise, Idaho. *Information*: www.westernapiculturalsociety.org.

August 13–17. Eastern Apiculture Society. Hampton, Virginia. *Information*: www.easternapiculture.org.

October 26–28: OSBA Fall Conference. Salem Convention Center, Salem.

REGIONAL NEWS

Note: All associations invite and welcome visitors to join them at meetings! See pages 6–7 for meeting time and place, website, and/or contact information. Many regional associations also offer additional opportunities for learning, which are posted on their websites as well as on orsba.org and under events.

Regional Representatives

North Coast

As signs of spring on the North Oregon Coast, huckleberry, heather, and thyme have my bees' attention when the weather allows. I expect to lose two of five hives, my fall mite treatment the probable cause. *Stan Scotton*

Regional Associations

Central Coast Beekeepers

Prior to our January meeting, we held the Oregon Master Beekeeper's Mentor Meeting and the Apprentice Orientation. Morris and Rita Ostrofsky were in attendance and spoke to the new Apprentices. Classes for the Master Beekeeper Program are being held at the OSU Extension Office in Newport. The association decided that it would be nice to have some time before each meeting to visit with friends and fellow beekeepers. It was also a time for the new Apprentices to meet with their Mentors. We then held our membership meeting where we introduced our new Board Members. We discussed that it was the time for ordering Nucs and Package Bees. We now need to be assessing weak hives and replacing lost hives. A huge event we have coming on February 17th is the Honey Tasting Event in Yachats, which is being sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. We will have a display table with honey tasting and information about our association and Beekeeping. Some members have volunteered to *bee* in costume as Honey Bees and others will wear their bee suits and answer questions. There will be activities for the kids and speakers throughout the event. Dr. David Gordon will talk on "Pollinators for Orchards and Gardens," Dr. Andony Melathapulos will discuss "Keeping Oregon Bee Friendly," and Carolyn Breece will talk about "Do You Want to be a Beekeeper?" *Pat Wackford*

Central Oregon Beekeepers

This has been and continues to be a very unusual Central Oregon winter, or maybe lack thereof. Normally, our hives will remain inactive until late February with no forage to speak of until then. This year, however, it seems we didn't actually get a winter. We've had several weeks' worth of 50- to 60-degree days. Bees have been active and several of our plants (willows, manzanita, and daffodils) are blooming early. We're waiting for the big frost that's going to knock all the fruit trees and flowers down. :-(

In early February, we taught our annual beginners Bee School with about 65 students. It's great seeing continued interest in local beekeeping. We had a great talk about races of bees and how/where to acquire them in January. Both of these had lots of input and teaching from our Oregon Master Beekeeper participants. Our February talk will be a continuation of the beginner bee school with Q and A that wasn't covered on that day. The March talk will include splits and swarms, and alternative queen production for hobbyists. *Allen Engle*

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

What a difference a year makes. Here in the Columbia Gorge, we've hit 60 degrees a couple times, although the wind is unusually from the west and is cold. Not complaining, mind you, but the bees can't make up their mind. Nice to

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see some out, but very little pollen available at this time; dandelions and lawn weeds are where I've seen most of the little traffic there has been. Some hive loss reported with some late-October absconding and possible mite-related loss, but overall there appears to be more hives still alive to-date than last year at this time. Now just have to feed, feed, feed (& keep our fingers crossed about the weather). A lot of bud-swell going on.

The association resumes meetings in February with local Extension Agent Rachel Suits doing an interest survey of members. March we have John Edwards (Brushy Mountain Bee Farm) presenting on the evolution of miticides, where they are going, and impact on bees. Looking forward to a great bee and beekeeper year. *Zip Krummel*

Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Here in the Klamath Basin the calendar says *winter*, but reality disagrees. No snow on the ground, 60-degree days, some plants and trees starting bud already. Members of KBBA are checking stores and feeding drivert sugar or bee candy to hives to ensure that hives that have survived so far will make it until plants really start to bloom. During our January meeting, Katharina Davitt, the Educational Officer, gave a presentation titled "Treating Bees for Varroa Mites Using Lithium–an Accidental Discovery." This presentation covers the very preliminary discoveries and applications of lithium salts and their effect on Varroa mites (see: www.tinyurl.com/yarsme5d). Our February meeting, we'll have elections for board officers. Katharina will reprise a presentation on the different types of sugars, explaining why winter feeding sugar must be drivert sugar or bee candy.

We will continue to take bee package and nuc orders. We had an educational exhibit at the annual PLAY Now Youth Outdoor event at the Klamath Fairgrounds on the 20th of January and an educational booth at the Winter Wings Festival on 17 February at Oregon Institute of Technology.

Paul Davitt

Lane County Beekeepers

The unusually warm weather has brought the bees out in large numbers. They are busy cleaning their hives, bringing in pollen of a couple different colors, and using up the fondant and protein patties placed in the hives. All this activity reminds us to heft our hives to ensure adequate food stores.

The association sponsored a booth at the Good Earth Home Show January 19–21. This was a great opportunity to educate people about the importance of bees. The interest that is shown by the public helps us to realize that the threat to the pollinators certainly is known and many people want to be able to be knowledgeable on how they can help.

Our February meeting will feature Kelly Goodwin, who will share her expertise on Spring Management. Kelly has completed both the Apprentice and the Journey levels of the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program, and is currently working on her Master level. We are registering people for our annual bee school and look forward to sharing the importance of being well informed about bees so people can make a good decision about beginning this very interesting pastime.

Lane County beekeepers at the Good Earth Home Show.

In March, we will have an early session presented by Morris Ostrofsky on "Bait Boxes." The general meeting will cover what is happening in the hive as bees are building up, preparing for spring and the nectar flow. In addition, we will present information on swarms and making splits. This informative meeting is aimed at both new beekeepers and those who have had their first hive overwinter. *Pam Leavitt*

Linn-Benton Beekeepers

Puxsutawney Phil saw his shadow and that means six more weeks of winter. However, he forgot to tell the Pacific Northwest that it is still winter! Trees and shrubs are budding in the Willamette Valley, and the bees are bringing in pollen. To get ready for spring, this March's speaker is Darren Morgan of Shonnard's Nursery in Philomath. Darren's presentation is titled, "Economical Ornamentals for Bee Forage." The discussion topics will include: annuals (reseeding or not); perennials from seed and from bulb; native plant options; and a quick overview of some relevant plant options by bloom season. Our January meeting focused on beginning beekeeping and resulted in several new members joining.

Amber Reese

Tillamook County Beekeepers

The winter has been so mild. The daffodils are beginning to bloom, and the bees get a chance to get out a couple times a week when it's not raining. Almost half our association of forty members have a year or less experience with bees, so the February meeting was devoted to talking about bees rather than beekeeping. Jim Fanjoy led the section on worker bees, Stan Scotton did queens, and Claire Moody did drones. It was not just beginner info, and the more we know about bees the better beekeepers we can all be. We ended the meeting by taking pictures of the group, which will be included in a directory. It's lovely that people are actually getting to know each other.

We've had some phenomenal successes with overwintering this year, but it's too early to say that definitively. One of our

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beekeepers with 16 hives lost only one, and another with 26 colonies also lost only one. In general *so far* it looks pretty good. Most of the colonies lost were lost last November. Not sure what was going on then other than yellowjackets.

We are quite excited about having an association hive, which will be an eight-frame Langstroth with local bees from a local queen raised by one of our own beekeepers, next door to where we meet. It could become a premeeting educational opportunity.

Instead of our usual Bee Day, we are having a huge booth at the Tillamook Home and Garden Show. We'll have an exhibition of various kinds of hives, demos of other equipment, products of the hive and our observation hive. We also expect to have a collection of some of the pollinator plants we recommend for our area. It's possible there will be some for sale. We'll collect names of people who are interested in learning more about bees and beekeeping and do an educational follow-up a few weeks after the show.

Claire Moody

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Tualatin Valley members are embracing the early spring with both joy and apprehension. Those of us who have lived in Oregon over the years are familiar with weather patterns that lure us into a false sense of safety in planting, only to surprise us with a hard frost in March. So, we chomp at the bit and debate planting our gardens. One true harbinger of Spring we are seeing is the elusive and prized Yellowjacket Queen. We joyfully bait our yellowjacket traps with queen-luring pheromones as we remember the anguish of an extended—and extensive—invasion of our hives last fall.

In the meantime, the Board paired a group equipment purchase with a presentation by John Edwards of Ruhl/Brushy Mountain Bee Supply for the February program. Add in a demonstration on hive construction by Past President Debby Garman, and members will feel well stocked and prepared for purchasing and catching bees. Our March presentation will be on "Products of the Hive." Bee School runs in March with a full roster.

Yvonne Shaw and *Eddie Frie*

Survey Participation Requested!

Rose Briggs, a student at the University of Colorado, is doing her honors thesis on honey bee colony loss. She highly values the opinions of bee keepers on this issue and seeks your input for her research. Your participation in this short survey would be much appreciated.

Visit: **http://www.tinyurl.com/beekeepersurvey**

KEEPING BEES in MARCH

Jason Rowan

Beekeeping is a fluid art. Existing in that flow can be both fantastic and frustrating, usually at the same time. Reading the weather, the bees, and your own self admits you into the club of beekeepers that have existed for thousands of years. Many years may pass where you feel as if Mother Nature has given you a gift of honey and strong hives, only to have it pulled from you in a matter of weeks. Do not fret though. Keeping bees is not a win-or-lose battle from year to year, but a measure of commitment throughout the years. For many of you, March will be the first time you look in your bee-loved hives this year. In our operation, it is a source of excitement and dread. But what is done is done, and the spring represents a renewal of life and the continuation of the cycle.

Here are some guidelines for starting the bee season on the right wing:

Removing the dead. When you have had the chance to pop your lid for an early spring inspection, you may find that some of your hives have died. You may find a hive full of honey and no bees. Deciphering why the hive died can be a useful learning tool for the upcoming season. It is often best to take honey frames away to conserve for a rebuild in the upcoming months. During cold, wet winters (like the one we suffered this year), you may find bees that look to have starved but are surrounded by honey. Cold temps can restrict the bees movement and can cause some or all of the bees to starve. Whatever the state of your dead hive, it must be cleaned out and checked for drone comb, broken frames, and rotten boxes, lids, and bottoms.

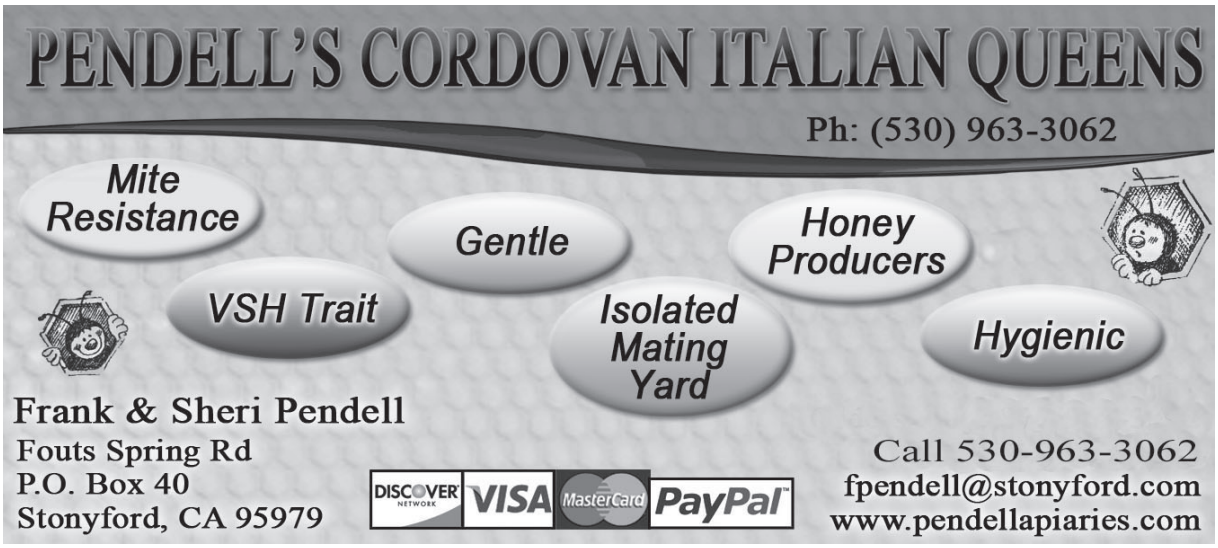
Dealing with live hives. Hives that have made it through the winter by this time should have eggs and brood. The rearing of bees requires lots of honey and pollen. You may place your extra honey combs in hives that are under weight, or you may feed them a light 1:1 feed (sugar:water) to help them along. If your hive requires feeding and you have no honey frames, keep a watchful eye on them for starvation. Pollen supplement can be added to help them when rainy weather restricts them from foraging. Combine weak or queenless colonies when the weather permits you to do so. Know what your treatment strategy is going to be for the upcoming season; mites and disease can quickly become a nightmare if left unchecked.

Planning. Planning is the most important thing that a beekeeper needs to do in early spring. Queens, packages, and some supplies need to be ordered in advance of the upcoming season. Staying ahead of your bees is the best strategy.

Watch the weather from here on out. Warm up in February then followed by a cool down could greatly reduce your hives honey stores. Getting your mites in check sooner rather that later needs to be a top priority. Many of challenges of beekeeping are out of our control. We can only facilitate our colonies the best that we can, and the rest is left to fate. Knowing what you can influence is the biggest part of the equation, and experience is the only real solution.

SWARM CALL

The Swarm Call List is now open for 2018. Log in to sign up for up to 12 locations at orsba.org. Previous entries have been deleted. Similar to the past couple of years, names are randomized rather than arranged alphabetically or on a first-come basis. Please note that the list is open to current members only and that members first need to be registered on the website for access. If not registered, click at the upper right corner at orsba.org and follow the steps given. Once logged in, members also have access to past issues of the newsletter in both pdf and flip versions that can be downloaded and/or printed.



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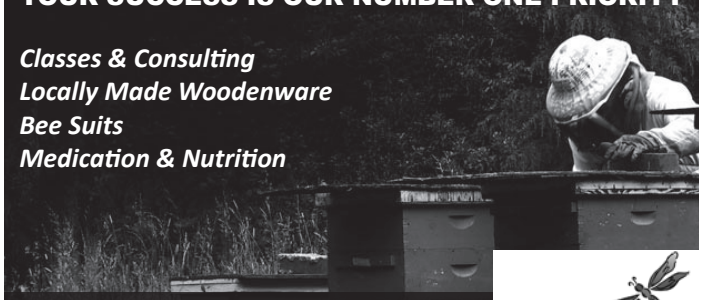

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Please send check made payable to OSBA with a ***completed form for each individual*** *to:*

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Note: To renew or join online, please visit:
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Thank you!

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The bee's life is like a magic well: the more you draw from it, the more it fills with water.
— Karl Von Frisch, *Bees: Their Vision, Chemical Senses and Language*

Reminder: The date on the mailing label is the expiration date for membership.
If the date is March 2018 (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 April issue, 2018. The deadline for submitting copy is **March 10**, **2018**. 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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