Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

#### Volume 36, Number 3

May 2011



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**Image above**: Postcard with stamps celebrating honey bees, courtesy of Sheryl Johnson. The bees swarm to reproduce their colonies now as they have through the ages.... May they all find good sites this month.

As summer nears, many beekeepers have questions about colonies that sadly weakened or didn't make it through the winter (front story) as well as the proper use of newly available treatments such as  $MAQS^{TM}$  (page 7). So much to learn...!

## **READING THE (BAD) NEWS!**

Dewey M. Caron

An old beekeeping sage once remarked, "Even dead hives have tales to tell!" My modern take on this is that, as beehive stewards, we resemble the highly paid actors/actresses in the current crop of crime scene dramas popular on television. Every time we enter the apiary and open the hive, we "visit our 'crime scene' to view the 'body.'" Visits in March and April unfortunately turn up far too many dead.

What can a dead-out say to us? What can we learn from examining the dead hive? By looking carefully, we might be able to reduce losses this next month or next winter season.

**Scene 1/Body 1**: *Cluster of frozen, dead bees, worker bees head-first in empty cells, some capped brood but no honey stores (or no honey near the cluster position).* These are "classic" starvation symptoms. If it involves a very small dead cluster, capped honey may be present on adjacent frames. In this case, the bees, reluctant to abandon brood, were unable to move to it—probably due to heavy Nosema infection, which is often the cause of dramatically smaller adult populations by spring. Equipment is reusable after brushing off the dead cluster, but I recommend airing out frames for a month (store honey in freezer before reuse). Frames can be washed with a bleach solution, if you want. Give frames to strong colonies to clean, or, if wet and mushy, remove comb and replace with foundation—especially if flies and beetles are present. You could have fed heavy syrup the previous fall to ensure adequate food reserves. (Note to self: *Feed in fall if light on stores.*)

**Scene 2**: *Weak colony with small cluster and evidence of water damage to hive parts, especially the covers, and wet, soggy bottom board.* Conditions would signal a lack of proper ventilation within the hive during the winter, thus causing unnecessary "stress" to the wintering cluster and higher-thannormal adult losses. Clean the bottom board, and tilt the hive slightly forward. Break the propolis seal around the cover (avoid covers blowing off during spring winds/storms by piling bricks or stones on top), and investigate adding hive-insulation materials to absorb moisture for the next winter season. You can remove the bottom box, if empty, and clean mold from frames with a diluted bleach solution.

Scene 3: Little or no honey stores when the top box is lifted, small cluster under the covers. This indicates a colony in danger of starving in April (and into May last spring). Feed immediately with dry sugar on inner cover (if you use one), solid sugar candy, or sugar syrup. If you feed sugar syrup, do not let the colony run dry and remember that syrup will stimulate the *Continued on page 10* 

## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

It is so great to be back in Oregon again after a very extended time in California in the almonds. The weather started out so beautiful, but by the end of our stay our *shoes for the day* were always rubber boots! Instead of worrying about the colonies being small, we were again worrying about early swarming. I think that the reason some of us stay in this business is the challenge of always working to be on top of the unending problems. Plus, beekeepers are just fun folks!

Here is a question for you bee experts: Why is it that, when we put a load of bees on a semi to drive north from California, each hive loses about 10 pounds, *but* when *I* drive north (same roads) from California to The Dalles, I *gain* about 10 pounds? What's up with that!

I am sorry for the delay in the past issue of *The Bee Line*. I made an executive decision to wait for word from Oregon State University about the honey bee position, and it took a bit longer than we had planned. It is exciting to know that we have a permanent honey bee position at the university now and Ramesh can make long-term plans for his future work. I knew that you were all anxious to hear the results.

The Master Beekeeper program is on the run. There are thirteen original members of the committee and they have just recently added the individuals who have volunteered to be instructors. There will be some training during this year for instructors and mentors, and we hope to launch the program at the OSBA conference in November 2011. If you have an interest in becoming either a mentor or an instructor, please contact Carolyn Breece.

I am looking forward to getting the cherries and pears pollinated, and then moving home for our May bee work. My favorite part of beekeeping is requeening. That sounds cruel I know, but I love making all of the colonies uniform with a new MADAM. It usually takes us six weeks to complete the entire outfit.

Don't forget that the Portland Metro group is again sponsoring a Bee Day at George and Sue Hansen's place in Colton. The OSBA officers will be there to talk to beekeepers. It is always a good time. This year the event is on May 7, and as usual we will hope for the rain to stay away for the day. You can find the information for registration for the day on the OSBA website.

Have a wonderful spring and summer, and remember to enjoy yourselves every day.

#### Jan

#### **FUNDS FOR RESEARCH**

#### Paul Andersen

Research at Oregon State University is so important to all of us. Having a funded, permanent, full-time apiculture position is a triumph for all who supported it! To celebrate the new research position at OSU and to help give Dr. Ramesh Sagili's research activities a boost, we are announcing a program to support research at OSU.

For the rest of calendar year 2011, the Oregon State Beekeepers Association will provide a one-time match of *up to \$500* for research donations from any of the

OSBA regional associations, as listed in *The Bee Line*. Normally, a local association that wanted to donate to research at OSU would send a check directly to OSU. To take advantage of the matching-funds program, the association will need to make the check out the same way as if sending it directly to OSU—i.e., make it out to *Agricultural Research Foundation* and write *For Ramesh Sagili* on the memo line. Then, rather than mail the check to OSU, mail it to OSBA, c/o Paul Kowash, 5959 SW Taylors Ferry Rd, Portland OR 97219. Paul will forward the check to the university along with one from OSBA.

We will have more information available soon. Contact me if you have questions.

## Oregon State Beekeepers Association EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

## Canby, Oregon 🔹 April 14, 2011

**Attendees**: Bob Allen, Paul Andersen, Carolyn Breece, Tom Chester, Jordan Dimock, Bill Edwards, Terry Fullan, Bev Koch, Paul Kowash, Jan Lohman, and Chuck Sowers

President Jan Lohman called the OSBA board meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Jan introduced our new treasurer, Paul Kowash. Welcome, Paul!

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the January Executive Board Meeting were read by Carolyn Breece, secretary. Tom made a correction to the minutes: There are fifty members in the Klamath Basin Beekeepers Association, not fifteen! Bob motioned to accept the corrected minutes, and Jordan seconded the motion. The OSBA board members unanimously approved.

## **Treasurer's Report**

As the new OSBA treasurer, Paul Kowash is working hard to understand past procedures and develop new ones. He is developing a system where each member will get a helpful reminder 30 days prior to their membership due date. This will ensure that nobody's membership unknowingly lapses. He will contact inactive members to see if they would like to continue membership in OSBA. Paul also plans to use the nonprofit edition of QuickBooks, which will increase efficiency in accounting. For OSBA investments, he suggests insured deposits for earning interest, as they offer extra protection. Jordan motioned to accept the treasurer's report, and Bill seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved.

## The Bee Line

Rosanna did an excellent job with the directory, and we are all grateful for her work. In addition, we noted that she is doing well with *The Bee Line*. Please continue to send recipes, articles, and questions for the Question of the Month column.

## **Regional Representative Reports**

Jan reminded representatives that advertisements are not allowed in regional reports. Please keep names of

businesses and products out of the regional reports.

**North Coast**: Terry reports that the Tillamook County association is growing little by little. There are many new hobbyists who are optimistic and positive. The 12–13 members meet in an art gallery.

**Eastern Oregon**: Jordan reports no new news. He may possibly be a liaison to Treasure Valley beekeepers in Idaho.

**Columbia Basin**: Remember the young beekeepers Bill was helping earlier (March/April issue)? One of them is now his employee! Well done, Bill, in recruiting and training the next generation of beekeepers. And congratulations to his new employee.

**Portland Metro**: Bev reports a lot of new beekeepers. She has received many calls regarding the OSBA swarm list. The Portland Metro Bee Day is ready to go! See you there on May 7. Bev also reports new classes in the area at Mt. Tabor, Zenger Farm, and other places around Portland.

## **Regional Association Reports**

Klamath Basin: Tom is happy to report that sixty people attended their January meeting. Some are coming from as far away as Lakeview, and others are using video conferencing to attend meetings from a long distance. The group has 91 packages of bees on order. Yes, that means 91 new hives in the Klamath Basin area—wow! They are planning an intermediate course in beekeeping and will soon have group T-shirts.

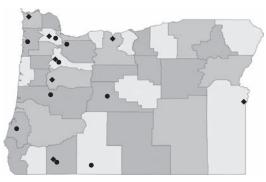
**Tillamook County**: Bob reports that the Tillamook association is a small but happy group. If you live in Tillamook County and are reading this newsletter, head on over to a meeting this month! Contact Bob or Terry for information on meeting time and location.

## **OSBA** Logo

Jan presented three candidates for the new OSBA logo. They were passed around the room and each member voted. Our new logo is:



## Oregon State Beekeepers Association EXECUTIVE BOARD AND RESOURCES



## **OSBA OFFICERS**

**President:** Jan Lohman 77225 Colonel Jordan Rd, Hermiston OR 97838 541.567.3209; 541.980.0304 (cell) vazzafarms@yahoo.com

Vice President: Paul Andersen 19255 SW Prospect St, Aloha OR 97007 503.649.5089; 503.332.5410 (cell) paulande@easystreet.net

Secretary: Carolyn Breece 743 NW 18th St, Corvallis OR 97330 541.207.3668; 541.224.2859 (cell) carolyn\_breece@yahoo.com

**Treasurer:** Paul Kowash 5959 SW Taylors Ferry Rd, Portland OR 97219 503.452.2664; 503.367.5242 (cell) paulkowash@aol.com

Past President: Chuck Sowers 26730 S Hwy 170, Canby OR 97013 503.266.1740; sowers@canby.com

## \* OSBA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

North Coast: Terry Fullan 39450 Northfork Rd, Nehalem 97131 503.368.7160; tfullan@nehalemtel.net

South Coast: Open

**Columbia Basin:** Bill Edwards 5040 Lost Lake Rd, Hood River 97031 541.354.2223

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

Portland Metro: Bev Koch 20495 S Geiger Rd, Oregon City 97045 503.655.7447; johnbev@aracnet.com **Southern Oregon:** Floyd Pawlowski 415 Pompadour Dr, Ashland; 541.482.4797 fmpawlowski@ashlandwireless.net

North Willamette Valley: Harry Vanderpool 7128 Skyline Rd S, Salem; 503.399.3675 shallotman@yahoo.com

**South Willamette Valley:** Jason Rowan 80881 Turkey Run Rd, Creswell 97426 541.942.6479; beetanical@q.com

## • OSBA REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Central Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, third Tuesday 63211 Service Rd, Suite 130, Bend **President:** Dennis Gallagher; 541.389.4776 For information, please contact John Connelly johncobka@gmail.com

## **Coos County Beekeepers**

Meets 6:30 PM, third Saturday (except December) Ohlsen Baxter Bldg, 631 Alder St, Myrtle Point **President:** Shigeo Oku; 541.396.4016 **Vice President:** John Gardner; 541.572.3847 **Secretary:** Bobbi Gardner; 541.572.3847 **Treasurer:** Jane Oku; 541.396.4016 jane\_oku@hotmail.com

## Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Meets 9:00 AM, last Saturday (except Nov/Dec) OSU Extension, 3328 Vandenberg Rd, Klamath Falls **President**: Tom Chester; 541.850.8384 klamathbeekeepers@gmail.com **Vice President**: Jim Smith; 541.892.5888 **Secretary**: Donna Schmerbach; 541.891.3066 **Treasurer**: Ed Geise; 541.892.6016

## Lane County Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene **President:** Judy Scher; 541.344.2114 judy\_scher@catdreams.com **Vice President:** Rita Ostrofsky; 541.685.2875 **Secretary:** Barbara Bajec; 541.767.9086 **Treasurer:** Nancy Ograin; 541.935.7065 woodrt@pacinfo.com **Website:** www.lcbaor.org

## Portland Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday, Clackamas Comm College, Clairmont Hall, Room 118, Oregon City **President:** Nancy McFarlane; 503.260.3930 nancymariemcfarlane@yahoo.com **Vice President:** John Keeley; 503.632.3682 keeley81@bctonline.com Secretary: Bernard Newland; 503.656.6621 berternew@yahoo.com Treasurer: Rex McIntire; 503.720.7958 remcintire\_5@msn.com

#### **Southern Oregon Beekeepers**

Meets 7:30 PM, first Monday, Southern Oregon Res & Ext Ctr, 569 Hanley Rd, Central Point **President:** John Jacob; 541.582.BEES john@oldsolenterprises.com **Vice President:** Floyd Pawlowski 415 Pompadour Dr, Ashland; 541.482.4797 **Secretary/Treasurer:** Jonathon Boulton jonnyboulton@hotmail.com **Website:** www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org

#### **Tillamook County Beekeepers**

For meeting and other information, please contact **President:** Bob Allen; 503.322.3819

#### **Tualatin Valley Beekeepers**

Meets 7:30 PM, last Wednesday OSU Ext, #1400, 18640 SW Walker Rd, Beaverton **President:** Kevin Beckman; 503.539.5996 kevin\_beckman2@msn.com **Vice President:** Herb Brasington; 503.701.4180 herb@hwbsystems.com **Secretary-Treasurer:** Jerry Maasdam 503.648.7906; jmaasdam@mac.com

#### Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Chemeketa Community College, Building 34, Room A, Salem **President:** Richard Farrier; 541.327.2673 **Vice President:** Harry Vanderpool; 503.399.3675 shallotman@yahoo.com **Secretary:** Mike Rodia; 503.364.3275; drodia@yahoo.com **Treasurer:** Patricia Swenson; pkswenson@gmail.com

#### COMMITTEES

Agriculture Liaison: Harry Vanderpool; 503.399.3675

Fairs and Exhibits: Marjie Ehry; 503.434.1894

NW Apiculture Fund for Honey Bee Research, Extension, and Education: Kenny Williams; 541.456.2631

Nominations: Chuck Sowers; 503.266.1740

Public Relations: Paul Andersen; 503.332.5410

#### HONEY BEE RESEARCH

Dr. Dewey Caron 302.353.9914 (April–October) carond@hort.oregonstate.edu

Dr. Lynn Royce 541.929.5337; mitebee@peak.org

Dr. Ramesh Sagili 541.737.5460; sagilir@hort.oregonstate.edu

#### **REGIONAL NEWS**

#### Regional Representatives North Coast

Area beekeepers received shipments of nucs and packages during the first week in April. Still, coastal weather has been very very wet and cool for us. Fortunately, we had a break in the wet weather and beekeepers worked to install bees under clear blue skies. Generally speaking, this is always a time of new interest and hope for a good beekeeping season.

R-evolution Gardens located in the Nehalem Valley held a beginning beekeeping workshop on March 20. Terry Fullan shared the basics of beekeeping with fifteen eager attendees. Participants provided great questions and enthusiasm. Workshops such as these at local CSA farms help foster new beekeepers in the area.

The Lower Nehalem Community Trust called and requested that two colonies be placed on the 54acre land preserve between Manzanita and Nehalem on Underhill Lane. These colonies will be used for education and serve as a complement to their large community garden and wetlands restoration site. They received the two colonies at the farm on April 9.

Our regular monthly meetings are 7 PM on the second Tuesday of the month in Bay City, Oregon, at ArtSpace, Hwy 101 & 5th Street. Contact Bob Allen at 503.322.3819 for further information. We continue to grow our club membership and welcome all those interested in bees and beekeeping. —*Terry Fullaw* 

#### **Portland Metro**

I had a couple of calls about how to get on the state swarm list and another from a beginner wanting advice about his hive that died out. Still more new folks at the meetings, and everyone's wondering how late the packages are going to be due to the cold, wet weather. Ruhl's is keeping folks posted. Zenger Farm continues to have meetings at the farm on the last Saturday of the month and is offering various workshops. —Bev Koch

#### North Willamette Valley

Meant to provide Bee School attendees a bit of a hands-on experience or at least a live view of working bee colonies, the WVBA held its Bee Day on April 2.

The event, which is not intended to compete in any way with the Portland Metro Bee Day, is basically a continuation of the WVBA's Bee School. At least fifty newbees and a few oldbees met at Olsen's Fruit Stand just east of Salem to observe and ask questions as Richard Farrier opened each hive, and inspected, examined, explained, and passed around frames of brood, pollen, and stores. The hives came directly from the field with no special manipulations. Buzz Hellett and Terry Adam's hives were very strong and beautifully maintained. Terry marked a queen and Richard suggested splitting at least one of the hives. No mites were found, but there was evidence of some damage in Ken Vial's hives. Mike Rodia's hive, the roughest looking of the five, was strong even though he uses only westerns for all his boxes, along with a slotted bottom board and queen excluder year round.

Other than traffic noise from nearby Highway 22, the location was ideal. Nonetheless, next year we may split the attendees into two groups to provide more of a hands-on experience. Door prizes included a donated package of bees from GloryBee Foods to a new, young beekeeper. Although the weather was cold, windy, and raining at times, the fruit stand's extended roof provided cover for the hives and examples of woodenware—and occasional shelter for attendees seeking cover from the elements. —*Mike Rodia* 

## Regional Associations Portland Metro Beekeepers

Coming up soon is the yearly Bee Day on Saturday, May 7. It is not too late to sign up. If interested, please call our treasurer, Rex McIntire, at 503.720.7958. Molly and Filipe Romero are now leaving on a motorcycle tour, with presentations in ten US states. Their aim is to inform people about apitherapy.

Our meeting in April had two parts. First a panel of old-time but young-at-heart beekeepers took questions. The consensus appeared to be that sprinkling or blowing powdered sugar onto the bees works to dislodge mites. This needs to be done with a screen or "sticky" bottom board so that the mites can't return. Jim Barlean suggested, based on some research, that this be done weekly in the spring for at least four weeks, about a cup of powdered sugar for each hive body. Next we had a PowerPoint presentation by Glen Andresen on the prevention and handling of swarms in the spring. This was full of good information on prevention, and the tools to bring and "how to do it" when collecting swarms. —Paul Jarrett

#### **Tualatin Valley Beekeepers**

The TVBA held a three-session class for beginning beekeepers at the Capital Center on the corner of Walker Road & 185th Avenue in Beaverton, Oregon. Twenty-four new beekeepers participated in the 2011 class. A year's membership is included with the \$35 registration fee.

The group recently adopted a *dues year*, which extends from April 1 to March 31. We have around sixty members with an average attendance of thirty members. Meetings start at 7:30 PM on the last Wednesday of the month. *—Jerry Maasdam* 

#### Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Our membership has grown (addition of about ninety Bee School members) such that we are rearranging meeting space so members can be "closer" to the speakers. In addition, we will keep a table or two near the front open for those with hearing considerations. Just once, Ken Vial commented that the club's officers seemed to be in charge of everything. Consequently, Kurt Swenson was "volunteered" to help and ultimately be responsible for our yearly Bee School, Jeff Milligan was "volunteered" to help with and maybe assume editorship of our newsletter, and Ken was "volunteered" to be in charge of our yearly Ag Fest participation, April 30–May 1. Watch what you comment about!

After a bit of negotiation, our Bee Cage was loaned out for use during Friday of the Better Living Home, Garden & Lifestyle Show in Portland. It is starting to get a bit worn and the roof in particular will need recovering, probably in June or July. Using a wonderful set of projections, Kurt Swenson provided an interesting and highly informative talk on bee biology at our meeting. Connecting to the Web and using a computer projector, Richard Templar gave a brief overview of his website www.templeofbees.com, which has links, training videos, copies of our newsletters, and live-action web cam views of his hives. He has also established wvba.templeofbees.com as a website.

Adapted from: WVBA Newsletter, April 2011.

## **KEEPING BEES IN MAY**

### Todd Balsiger

Similar to April, our objectives are for all colonies to be queenright, healthy, and well fed so they can build up to maximum populations in time for the major nectar flow. Consider the following:

✤ Light hives can still starve if the weather turns bad. After the maples and fruit trees bloom, there is actually a decrease in available nectar until the summer nectar flow begins in earnest. Although very infrequent, in past years it has been necessary to feed well into summer to prevent starvation. Stop stimulative feeding prior to supering!

Swarming is now at its zenith, so continue swarmcontrol practices.

♦ Nuc boxes containing one frame that has had brood (a dark frame), one frame with honey and pollen, and the balance foundation are ideal for catching swarms. Swarms quickly convert foundation into beautiful drawn comb, so you may want to capitalize on this behavior. Remember, frames need to be tight together when drawing foundation—too much space and you will likely end up with burr or misshapen comb. You can feed sugar water to accelerate and sustain growth.

Consider setting up decoy hives (like the nuc box) to catch swarms at your apiary. Make sure the mice can't get in!

More on swarms... 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 (reversing, equalizing, and making divisions).

♦ Visually look at colonies for health and investigate any that are not keeping up with their peers. Do they have an underperforming queen? Have they become queenless and developed laying workers? Do they have a disease? Have they swarmed (don't destroy the swarm cells!)? Are the bees raising a supersedure queen? Take appropriate action (which may entail doing nothing). If you don't know what to do, go to your next 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.

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 residues before use.

Bees generally work from the center up, so foundation centered in the hive will be drawn the fastest. I recommend use of ten frames when drawing foundation to prevent burr and misshapen comb. After the frames are drawn, at least for supers, I recommend nine frames to make uncapping easier.

Research indicates no difference in top-supering versus bottom-supering. Do what is easier for you. Similar to running nine versus ten frames per brood box, top-supering versus bottom-supering is a highly debatable issue among beekeepers.

I recommend queen excluders (there are exceptions). I consider brood in supers to be a big problem and hassle. Frames that have had brood are dramatically more vulnerable to wax moth damage and will require extra protection.

Bees collect water in the summer as avidly as they collect nectar and pollen. If appropriate water resources are absent, provide water early and let the bees train themselves to use it. This is especially important in urban settings, where bees may end up in a neighbor's swimming pool or pet bowl instead.

Consider sampling to estimate your Varroa mite load, and treat if it is high. This may be your last opportunity to treat with controls that have short withdrawal times before supering but require higher daily high temperatures for use.

Adapted from: *The Bee Line*, May 2010. Additional treatments have become available since Todd wrote this. Clarifications for the use of one of these, Mite-Away Quick Strips<sup>TM</sup>, follow...

## **MITE-AWAY QUICK STRIP FAQ**

David VanderDussen, NOD Apiary Products

Mite-Away Quick Strips have been in the marketplace in Hawaii for 18 months, and now parts of the United States for 2 months. There has been a lot of interest and many phone calls. Here is a *Top-10 Frequently Asked Questions* list for MAQS:

**Question**: I remove the outer plastic wrap, should I peel the inner paper wrap off of the gel?

**Answer:** The paper wrap stays on. It works as a wick to help control the vapour release.

**Question:** The label says to disturb the colony as little as possible at time of application. Can I do a full colony exam and then treat immediately, or should I wait and come back and treat?

**Answer:** The bees need to have their affairs in order when treated. When running trials it was found out that the colony assessments were best done 3 days in advance of the application. If the colonies were taken apart, assessed, reassembled and then treated shortly after we saw some absconding. It also increased the risk of queen loss. After an exam, it would be best to wait at least until the next day to apply MAQS.

**Question:** Can I really treat with honey super on? Why does it not flavour the honey?

**Answer:** Formic acid naturally occurs in honey at levels ranging up to over 2,000 parts per million (ppm). The formic acid concentration in hive air during MAQS treatment remains well below 100 ppm, so the levels in the honey do not go outside of naturally occurring levels.

**Question:** Should I leave the Screen Bottom open or close it off?

**Answer:** There was only one trial run so far with screen bottom boards open, by Randy Oliver (www.

scientificbeekeeping.com). He published the results in the February 2011 issue of *American Bee Journal*. There was a 4–5% reduction in efficacy over a solid bottom board; however, both open screen and solid bottom boards saw over 90% drop in mite loads, so it is basically up to the beekeeper.

**Question:** Should I close off all entrances except the fully open bottom board entrance?

**Answer:** The fully open bottom entrance should be seen as meeting the minimum ventilation need. Having additional entrances does not seem to affect the efficacy of the treatment. Adequate ventilation is critical with this product. For two brood chamber colonies, some beekeepers slide back the second story to create a temporary full width entrance, and then slide the boxes back square sometime after the first three days.

**Question:** It looks like most of the bees in the hive are bearding out on hive. Is this normal?

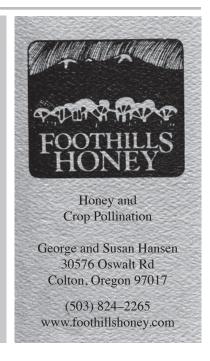
**Answer:** It is normal for the bees to beard out for the first day, especially under warmer conditions. See the University of Hawaii photos in their report from 2009, found at: www.miteaway.com/V1-wright-varroa.pdf. There may be an increase in adult bee mortality in the first three days after application. Remember natural loss of bees occurs at about the same rate as egg laying; with the formic treatment, the bees may not be able to clean away the bees as quickly as usual.

## DONATIONS TO THE NORTHWEST APICULTURE FUND FOR HONEY BEE RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION

- Make your check out to: OSU FOUNDATION
- On the memo line, take care to write: THE NORTHWEST APICULTURE FUND FOR HONEY BEE RESEARCH, EXTENSION, AND EDUCATION
- Mail to: Oregon State University Foundation at 850 SW 35th St, Corvallis OR 97333-4015

If you have any questions regarding details of the fund or how to donate, please contact Kenny Williams, Chair of the OSBA's Endowment Fund, at 541.456.2631.

**IMPORTANT:** Making your check out only as described above ensures that your donation is correctly applied to the appropriate Endowment and not to any other program.



**Question:** Will the bees continue to forage during the treatment?

**Answer:** Yes, the bees continue to forage.

**Question:** What is impact on the brood? Can I reduce the dose?

**Answer:** Studies have shown that reducing the dose reduces the effectiveness and may still cause some brood damage. What we know from trials conducted so far is that MAQS works best by the 2-strip dose. Any brood damage that occurs is quickly made up, the queen is laying throughout the cluster area by Day +7. There are often lots of eggs by Day +4, although they may be as far away from the strips as possible. Any damage is cleaned up by Day +7. The field bees can continue to get pollen through the whole treatment, so there are good protein reserves when all the larvae need feeding. The next time that MAQS is used, even if it is months later, the bees somehow know how to cope better.

**Question:** Can I move the bees during the 7-day treatment period?

**Answer:** The bees should not be disturbed during the treatment period.

**Question:** The bees chewed up some of the strip but did not remove it all. How do I dispose of the residue? **Answer:** The residue from MAQS will simply compost over time. It can be handled the same way as any other organic yard-waste material.

NHB FUNDS RESEARCH

The National Honey Board recently selected new honey bee research projects that focus on honey bee health. The projects approved for funding in 2011 include two at Oregon State University:

"Comprehensive evaluation of role of nutrition in honey bee colony losses," Ramesh Sagili, Ph.D., Department of Horticulture, Oregon State University.

"Effects of pesticides in beeswax on honeybee behavior," Louisa A. Hooven, Ph.D., Department of Zoology, Oregon State University.

## **EVENTS**

**Portland Metro Bee Day, Saturday, May 7** in Colton. For information and to sign up, contact Rex McIntire at 503.720.7958.

WSU Art of Queen Rearing, Saturday, June 4 in Brush Prairie WA. For information, contact Charles Bennett at cbennett3491@comcast.net or call 360.566. 0455/360.200.3093.

**Pollinator Week, June 20–26, 2011** throughout Oregon. For information, see: www.pollinator.org.

Western Apiculture Society Conference, September 12–15, 2011 north of Kona, Hawaii. For information, visit: http://groups.ucanr.org/WAS/.

OSBA Fall Conference, Thursday–Saturday, November 17–19 at the Seaside Convention Center.

Note: Lane County beekeepers Ken Ograin and Judy Scher describe their experiences with MAQS in the current issue of the LCBA newsletter. Ken raises the issue of blocking the screen bottom board, emphasizes the requirement that at least six frames of bees be present in the brood area, and recommends use of a respirator with a pesticide or paint fume rating during application. He also suggests a video: www.youtube.com/ watch?v=nb6pjlAv7K0. In addition, Ken provides a link to a video on the application of HopGuard: www. youtube.com/watch?v=T2y4rndPhlo. Both take only a couple of minutes to view.

Do you have questions or experiences to share? Please send them!



#### Reading News—Continued from page 1

colony, likely to result in greater swarm preparations in May. (See <u>Note to self</u>, Scene 1/Body 1!!)

**Scene 4/Body 4**: *Fall adult population dwindles rapidly, colony dies before first of year with no adult bodies present.* These are Colony Collapse Disorder symptoms. A combination of viruses and Nosema may be major factors, but nutrition or pesticides have not been ruled out. (The reason for the lack of bodies is that sick adult bees leave the hive to die outside.) Reuse equipment after airing out empty frames, and store frames with honey in a freezer until reused when you start new colonies in the spring.

Scene 5/Body 5: Fall adult population dwindles during winter, heavy Varroa numbers, "snot" brood (larvae dying with symptoms of European foulbrood, sacbrood, and chalkbrood), resulting in a small colony dying in March/ April or too weak to begin expansion in spring. This is a condition we call Bee PMS. Varroa mites apparently spread viruses causing adult dwindling, and then the mites congregate on the reducing number of adult bodies. There is not enough healthy brood to replace adult losses, so the colony barely survives the winter. Either it remains unhealthy and never rebounds to become a productive colony or it dies during a spring cold snap. Requeen if the colony survives, or bolster with a nuc to provide an opportunity to recover.

**Scene 6/Body 6**: *Acute dysentery (fecal spotting excessive)* with adults exhibiting strange trembling behaviors and/or exiting the hive on cold days to die outside, colony very weak or dies in February/March with high numbers of adults on the bottom board—often with several frames of capped honey stores. Dysentery can be due to heavy Nosema infections or poor overwinter stores or high tracheal mite infestations. The trembling bees and hive abandonment are often due to high tracheal mite numbers. The position of the dead cluster may be on the sunny side of the hive and likely smallish (grapefruit size). With heavy Nosema infection, symptoms are often similar but with fewer dead bees on the bottom board and often a small cluster is still present with adults appearing wet and greasy looking. Clean any fecal matter on frames with dilute bleach solution (be careful not to damage beeswax cells), and remove older comb to replace with new foundation.

**Scene 7**: Small cluster, surviving adults with deformed wings and Varroa evident, brood appears stunted

Early spring cluster of four frames.



and brood cells with heavy Varroa infestations. These symptoms indicate high Varroa infestation and virus disease which could be due to lack of Varroa control in the fall or ineffective treatment of Varroa. Early spring use of formic acid (new Mite-Away Quick Strips<sup>TM</sup>) might help the colony recover. Equipment from deadouts is reusable after thorough airing in sunlight as Varroa do not survive without a bee host.

**Scene 8**: *Drones present or were present into late fall, brood very spotty, and/or drone brood in worker cells.* This probably represents a queenless colony or a queen that is not properly laying fertilized eggs in worker cells (due to mis-mating or lack of genetic diversity in sperm stored in her spermatheca). Dump the colony out and start over, or bolster with queenright nuc. The colony is often too weak to attempt to requeen. Equipment can be used immediately on other colonies or to start new colony; if dead drone brood is excessive, distribute to strong colonies to clean out or remove and replace with foundation if old.

**Scene 9**: *Damage or evidence of yellow jackets, ants, small hive beetles, wax moths, and/or mice nesting inside hive.* None of these conditions result in colony death or weak surviving condition. They are, however, symptoms of a weak colony. Clean up the "mess" as much as possible before reusing frames, and seek to bolster in the fall to enable the colony to protect its environs. Remember to remove excess equipment and store off the hive over winter, thus prohibiting entry of these common fall pests.

Reading a dead-out or weak/dying colony can be tricky, and you will need to call upon your skills as a hivekeeper. I hope you had few "bodies" in your apiary to investigate this spring. If you have not filled out a hive-loss survey (mailed in March to larger beekeepers and distributed at April association meetings), please would you take a few minutes and do so NOW. If you did not get a survey, I will be most happy to immediately send you one. Contact is: carond@hort. oregonstate.edu. Thank you for your cooperation and happy spring!

## **Master Beekeeper**

Carolyn gave an update of the Oregon Master Beekeeper program. A group of 26 instructors will attend the Master Beekeeper Instructors' Conference on Saturday, April 16. We are looking forward to meeting our instructors and fine-tuning our program. We are still planning on launching the program at the OSBA conference in November. This will be the ninth state with a Master Beekeeper program in the United States! Oregon State Beekeepers Association has offered to support the Master Beekeeper program with start-up funds. Expenses include books for instructors, lunches, and travel assistance for Instructor Conference attendees. The program will be charging a fee for participants, which will allow the program to become self-supporting. Jan Lohman and Ramesh Sagili are working together on a grant to further support these efforts. The grant proposal has made the first cut! Oregon State Beekeepers Association would like to set a \$2,000 limit for the start-up assistance to the Master Beekeeper program. Paul Andersen motioned to accept this limit, and Paul Kowash seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved.

## **Endowment Funds**

Kenny Williams was unable to attend the meeting. Jan Lohman reported that, as of January 2011, the



Northwest Apiculture Fund for Honey Bee Research has \$67,707.52 in the account, \$12,063.00 of which is expendable today. The OSU Apiculture Fund has \$40,890.35, with \$1,882.00 expendable today.

## **4-H Donation**

In past years, OSBA has distributed monetary awards to 4-H winners in bee- or honey-related contests at county and state fairs. Past secretaries have had the cumbersome job of writing out many \$5 and \$10 checks. Jan suggested a more-efficient way to distribute the awards: OSBA will write one check for \$200 to the 4-H Foundation. Then 4-H will have the job of distributing the awards. Jordan suggested that we request an accounting report from 4-H at the end of the year to ensure that the funds made their ways to the award winners. Jordan motioned to accept this proposal, and Bob seconded the motion. The OSBA board members unanimously approved.

## **OSBA to Match Donations**

To encourage regional beekeeping associations/clubs to donate to Oregon State University research, OSBA will match an association donation at the rate of one matching donation per group in 2011 with a maximum match of \$500. If your group would like to make a donation to OSU, please make your check out

to "Agricultural Research Foundation" and put "For Ramesh Sagili" in the memo. Send the check to OSBA. The OSBA will match the donation (up to \$500) and forward the check to OSU. Paul Andersen motioned to accept this proposal, and Jordan seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved.

## 2011 OSBA Conference

Paul Andersen passed around the star-studded lineup of speakers for the 2011 OSBA conference in Seaside, Oregon. Headliners include Randy Oliver, Sue Cobey, and hopefully Keith Delaplane. We also look forward to presentations by our own Ramesh Sagili and Dewey Caron. Be sure not to miss the presentation on chemical safety by Michael Rodia of Willamette Valley Beekeepers Association. An alternative track of lectures may include presentations on chemical-free beekeeping, apitherapy, alternative hives, and perhaps even mead-making! A bee school will also be available for those getting started in bees. The Best Western Ocean View Resort at Seaside will offer us the same rates as in 2009. Mark your calendars for this exciting event: November 17–19, 2011. Beekeepers Association has agreed to team up with the meeting. We discussed the possibility of combining meetings with the two organizations; however, due to financial issues and event timing, we decided not to combine meetings in 2012.

## **Other Announcements**

Marjie Ehry is organizing a group to work the OSBA table at the state fair. This is sure to be a good time just come and talk bees, and your fair admission is free! Please contact Marjie if you are interested.

Thank you to Fred VanNatta, Paul Andersen, and Mike Rodia for help with House Bill 2947 regarding the standards of identity and quality of honey. The next steps involve a hearing in the Senate and vote on the Senate Floor before the bill goes to the Governor for signature. Soon we hope to rest assured that when a product is labeled *honey*, it really is just that.

Carolyn motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM. Paul Andersen seconded the motion. We will discuss the OSBA conference at the next meeting.

In 2012, the Western Apiculture Society will meet in late September or early October. The Washington State

Respectfully submitted, Carolyn Breece



## **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Please use the forms provided here, with current pricing information, to subscribe to magazines at the discounted rates offered to OSBA members. Take care to renew subscriptions before they expire to avoid lapses.

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**The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program** includes more than \$5 million to compensate beekeepers for 2010 losses. For information, visit: www.fsa.usda.gov/elap.



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**Note**: Membership information will no longer appear on the newsletter. The treasurer will send timely reminders. For new memberships and renewals, see form on page 15.



*Queen of the Sun* returned to Portland and premiered in Eugene, Salem, Astoria, and Ashland in late April! For information about the film and future screenings, visit: www.queenofthesun.com/.

## The Bee Line

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

Send news about your bees and your experiences in keeping them, as well as your corrections, letters, comments, photographs and stories (both from "old" times and "new"), interviews, recipes, and ads and requests for advertising to: Rosanna Mattingly, *The Bee Line*, 4207 SE Woodstock Blvd Ste 517, Portland OR 97206; e-mail: osba.newsletter@gmail.com.

The next issue to be printed will be the June 2011 issue. The deadline for submitting copy is May 10.

Thank you!

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