



The Bee Line

Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

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August 2020



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OREGON STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
orsbawebmaster@gmail.com

OREGON MASTER BEEKEEPER PROGRAM
*A Joint Venture of OSBA and the
Oregon State University Extension Service*
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Image above: 1980 USPS stamp on embossed envelope. We have experienced decades of altering beekeeping practice with each new species introduction and know we can count on *change*. We have control over much, including our care in observation, heeding established best practices & informed guidance, searching out appropriate training and treatments (& following the label in use of any chemicals), committing to continuing education & ongoing learning, questing for understanding, and remaining open to what may be coming down the pike. Stay safe, everyone. Stay well.

PRIORITIES FOR KEEPING HONEY BEES

The Oregon State Beekeepers Association has established the following set of priorities to support and promote the beekeeping industry and the general public. The association invites members to take an interest in, and adhere to, these priorities. Take care to address priorities in the order in which they are listed. Employment safety management, which is part of Safety First, includes one's self as well as others and remains paramount in these days of COVID-19.

Safety First

The safety of the public and the beekeeper is a top priority. This includes, but is not limited to:

- ❖ Employee safety management
- ❖ Care in hive transport and placement
- ❖ Vehicle and machinery fitness for use
- ❖ Product safety
- ❖ Maintenance of colony health
- ❖ Training for new beekeepers

Quality Second

Quality standards affect the public, beekeepers, and the industry. They include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Strength and suitability of hives for pollination
- ❖ Hive product standards consistent with local ordinance(s)
- ❖ Maintenance of colony health
- ❖ Training for new beekeepers
- ❖ Quality of employee work experience
- ❖ Thoughtful interaction with and consideration for fellow beekeepers
- ❖ Professional conduct and behavior

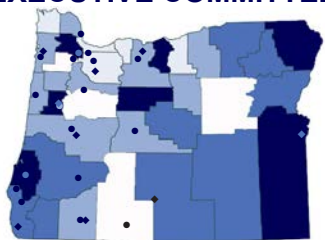
Production Third

Once safety and quality issues have been addressed thoroughly, beekeepers are in a good position for setting up and maintaining a healthy and productive business.



Oregon State Beekeepers Association

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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Steven Coffman—503.838.2981

South Willamette Valley

Tim Wydronek—541.740.4127; tim@aldercreekhoney.com

• AFFILIATED REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Central Coast Beekeepers

Meets 6:00 PM, fourth Wednesday, Newport
President: Becca Fain—rfain18@gmail.com
Website: www.ccbaor.org

Central Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:00–7:30 PM, fourth Tuesday, Bend
President: Allen Engle—aengle@bendbroadband.com
Website: www.cobeekeeping.org

Columbia County Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:00 PM, first Thursday, Deer Island
President: Linda Zahl—503.799.7073
Facebook Page: ColumbiaCountyOregonBeekeepers

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

Meets 6:15–8:15 PM, third Wednesday, Hood River
President: Jerry Frazier—jerry1.frazier@gmail.com
Website: gorgebeekeepers.org

Coos County Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, third Saturday, Myrtle Point
President: Randy Sturgill—541.430.4095; randys@rfpco.com

Douglas County Bees

Meets 7:00–8:30 PM, first Wednesday, Roseburg
President: Jack Reilly—douglascountybees@gmail.com
Website: www.douglascountybees.org

Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Meets 9:00 AM, third/fourth Saturday, Klamath Falls
President: Paul Davitt—president@klamathbeekeepers.org
Website: www.klamathbeekeepers.org

Lane County Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Eugene
President: Mike France—michaelj62@gmail.com
Website: www.lcbaor.org

Linn Benton Beekeepers

Meets 6:30 PM, third Wednesday, Corvallis
President: Everett Kaser—everett@lbba.us
Website: www.lbba.us

Oregon Prison Beekeepers

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

Oregon South Coast Beekeepers

Meets 6:00 PM, third Tuesday, Gold Beach
President: Jesse Fletcher—jesse.l.fletcher@gmail.com

Portland Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday, Gladstone
President: Doug Sieckmann—503.804.5417
Website: portlandmetrobeekeepers.org

Portland Urban Beekeepers

Meets 7:00–9:00 PM, first Wednesday, Portland
President: Cheryl Wright—cwright80@hotmail.com
Website: portlandurbanbeekeepers.org

Southern Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:30–9:00 PM, first Monday, Central Point
President: Risa Halpin—rhalpin906@gmail.com
Website: southernoregonbeekeepers.org

Tillamook Beekeepers

Meets 6:30–8:00 PM, second Tuesday, Tillamook
President: Brad York—dbradleyyork@gmail.com
Website: www.tillamookbeekeepers.org.

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Meets 6:00 PM, last Tuesday, North Plains
President: Debby Garman—debbygarman@gmail.com
Website: tvbabees.org

Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, fourth Monday, Salem
President: Richard Farrier—rfarrierfarms@gmail.com
Website: wvbahive.org

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Perfect Storms

Greetings, fellow beekeepers.

I hope this message finds you and your bees well. August is such a crucial month for us. This is the last window we have to clean up any Varroa issues so the bees have enough time to raise some long-lived healthy bees to form the winter cluster. We need a very healthy crop of brood this month so that this generation of bees can then raise the brood that will become the winter cluster over the next two months. Mite-addled bees are full of viruses and do not do a good job of raising a long-lived generation of bees that we need to successfully overwinter. The bees we grow throughout August and September are the most important bees we raise all year long, so spare no effort and expense in helping the bees do what they need to do.

Speaking of things we need to do, we need to remain vigilant to the spread of the Asian Giant Hornet. I am including a link with plans for building a trap for these hornets. The plans are from the Washington State Department of Agriculture and are for “Washington State residents only.” That said, Washington is a neighboring state that we share a long border with, and last time I checked hornets do not tend to recognize any borders. Early detection and monitoring will be key if we are to have any hope in mitigating this damaging invasive pest. Here is the link for building the traps: cms.agr.wa.gov/WSDAKentico/Documents/Pubs/841-AsianGiantHornetBottleTrapInstructions.pdf. If you find these hornets, here is a link on how to report for the State of Oregon: www.oregon.gov/ODA/shared/Documents/Publications/IPPM/AsianGiantHornetPestAlert.pdf.

To date we have not had any sightings in Oregon; however, they have been found in Washington both last year and this year, so it may only be a matter of time before they cross the border and call Oregon home. The last thing our industry needs is another challenge.

On the subject of challenges facing our industry, it has come to my attention that the US Post Office may only have enough funding to last through September, and, to make matters worse, coronavirus relief funds are also being withheld. As Oregonians and beekeepers, this should be of great concern to all of us no matter our political stripe. The USPS is still one of our best options for shipping and receiving queens, not to mention that we also need it to vote by mail. Private carriers cost twice as much, and shipping fees can often be more than the price of a queen. The Post Office has been around nearly 250 years and is an essential service for many small businesses and citizens. Currently,

the Post Office receives zero federal funds and is financed through the sale of stamps and shipping fees. According to the Federal News network, “The Postal Service remains the most popular federal agency in the public opinion. In a Pew Research Center poll of more than 1,000 adults . . . more than 91% of respondents said they have a favorable opinion of USPS — a rating higher than the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or the Census Bureau.” The reasons for such high regard for the Post Office are manifold, but one of the biggest is that the USPS will go where many private carriers will not due to necessary profit motives. Many rural Americans depend on the Post Office to receive medicines and other essential correspondence. Long story short, it may be time to rethink how we fund the Post Office, and it is definitely time to contact your state representatives and let them know how important the Post Office is.

The year 2020 has been a milieu of perfect storms for many of us, and things do not appear to be getting any easier. At the time of writing this, I am already hearing from almond growers about extremely low almond prices. As of early July, prices are down about \$1 per pound from last year and sliding further. It is a perfect storm of overplanting, a bumper crop for the last four years in a row, an extended economic downturn, and a global pandemic to top it all off. Some growers will not make it under these market conditions. As we all know, almond pollination is the lifeblood of the commercial beekeeping industry. I have also heard from many growers that they may not be able to take as many bees at the current rental fees. If your business depends on almond pollination to be solvent, I would recommend extreme caution for your 2021 planning. High winter losses, low nut prices, some growers going out of business, and low honey prices could spell real trouble: A perfect storm of perfect storms, if you will.

With all of these tribulations facing our industry and our nation, it can be difficult to remain optimistic, and yet somehow I do. We continue to make advances in honey bee health and research. This is more important now than ever. Humans are at their best when they work collectively like bees do. We are all in this together, and it is by working together that we will weather the storm. We are really looking forward to our Centennial and upcoming crowdfunding campaign to help support the work that Ramesh and the bee lab perform. I am optimistic that we can achieve a lot by working together and pooling our social media resources to reach more donors than ever.

I am really looking forward to when we can meet in person again, and hoping that we all rise to the occasion. Here is to fat bees and calmer seas ahead.

John Jacob

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KEEPING BEES in AUGUST

Matt Allen

Every month is a busy month for a beekeeper, but August is particularly important. The weather is hot and dry, maybe with the occasional thunderstorm. It feels like the peak of summer, but this critical month is when we need to start thinking towards winter. It's time to strip the rest of your honey crop. Will they be heavy enough for winter or will you need to feed? Are there enough bees in the hive? Will the queen be viable until next spring? And probably most important for this month is, Are your mite levels under control?

August is the month to harvest the remainder of your honey. In many locations, even earlier. By mid-August, most marketable honey flows have tapered off. Pull your supers and start to focus on fall. Buckwheat is a notable exception. Be aware that, if you decide to go after this potential honey crop, it may be difficult to get your mite levels under control in a timely manner. Make sure you have a plan in place. More on that later.

Queens availability will also begin to taper off at this point in the year. It is important to realize that new queens will not be available again until next spring. Are your queens laying a strong pattern? Do they have a good retinue? If the colony is weak or spotty, now is a good time to requeen. Requeening now, in concert with timely feeding, allows enough time and resources for a weak colony to turn around and build up before winter. If your queens are failing now, they will be failing in a month and failing in the spring. Failing queens are a major cause of colony loss in the spring. Replace her while you still can. It is generally easier to find queens in August than in September, and definitely easier to find queens in August than in March.

How big are your colonies? If a colony is not solidly filling a box and a half with bees, it will require some additional attention. What is the brood pattern like? If spotty or drone-y, it may need requeening. A steady diet of supplemental protein and sugar syrup may work to build up some small colonies, provided strong queens and healthy brood. Otherwise, it is a good idea to start combining weaker colonies to get them ready for winter. Be sure to ask yourself why a colony may be small before combining. Combining sick colonies with healthy ones may be detrimental to your operation (AFB!!).

There are many opinions regarding supplemental feeding in the fall. At the minimum, it is a good idea to heft your hives to get a feel for weight. If it feels moderate or light, feed. If it hurts your fingers to heft, it might not need feeding. It's a good idea to look at those extra heavy hives.

They could be queen-less or weak. Regardless of weight, you might consider supplemental syrup and/or pollen feeding in order to stimulate brood rearing and help carry brood rearing later into the fall. This can help ensure a large healthy young population headed into winter.

Lastly, and probably most importantly for August, is the ever-present issue of Varroa. August is a critical month for Varroa management. Take an alcohol wash sample. August brood will become the bees that raise your winter bees. If you have not read Randy Oliver's series on Fat Bees, you should. If you have, great. Re-read it. This series does a great job of explaining exactly why you need to have your mite levels down in August and keep them down through the remainder of the brood-rearing season. You can find the article here: scientificbeekeeping.com/fat-bees-part-1. There are 4 parts. Boiling it down, Fat winter bees have increased vitellogenin in fat bodies to help carry them through winter and give them the energy and nutrition to commence brood rearing in the early spring. The amount of vitellogenin corresponds directly to how well fed they are as larvae, which corresponds to a large healthy population of nurse bees. The health of these nurse bees depends on having low parasite levels when they were developing. That is why August is so critical. August brood raises the brood that raises winter bees.

A side note, we now know that Varroa feeds not on hemolymph, but directly on fat body tissue (Ramsey et al. 2019). In addition to being critical for winter, the fat body, with vitellogenin, much like our liver, also provides some important detoxification function in bees.

Formic Acid, Thymol, and Amitraz are all reasonable treatments this time of year. Make sure you READ AND UNDERSTAND the label before applying. Each material and formulation of each material has its own requirements for maximum efficacy and beekeeper safety. THE LABEL IS THE LAW! After you treat, take another mite sample to gauge the efficacy of your treatment. For a detailed look at available management tools and monitoring techniques, check out this PDF from the Honey Bee Health Coalition: honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/HHHC-Guide_Varroa-Interactive-PDF. I have noticed a real challenge is not only getting Varroa mite levels low, but also keeping them low through the remainder of the fall. Be vigilant and continue treatments as necessary.

Keep in mind, when shopping for feed and treatments, supply houses are backed up this year and may take longer than expected. Plan ahead.

Enjoy the honey harvest. Smile at those big healthy bees. Happy Beekeeping!

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OSBA 2020 FALL CONFERENCE

It is with great regret that I have had to inform you all this fall we will not be holding our fall conference in Florence, Oregon, due to COVID-19. **The Oregon State Beekeepers Association will hold an online conference in October.** This is new ground for all of us, and I am committed to make this conference as informative and successful as possible. The format will most likely be Zoom, but that is not 100 percent yet. The conference will look something like this: Once a week in October, on a week day evening, we will have a program of two-and-a-half hours, from 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM, and then on the weekend of October 24 & 25, both days, would be four-hour sessions. We do intend on having our auction and annual membership meeting online also. There will be a commercial beekeepers workshop. Please have patience with us. We will be publishing information on the conference website as it becomes available. Our speakers will be Ramesh Sagili, Andony Melathopoulos, Shelley Hoover, George Hansen, Harry Vanderpool, Priya Chakrabarti Basu, Ellie Chapkin, Emily Carlson, and more.

Joe Mares

— 2020 —

August 8: Klamath Basin Intermediate Beekeeping Class. KBREC, 6923 Washburn Way.

August 15–30: Mite-A-Thon. *Sign up and participate:* www.pollinator.org/miteathon.

September 12: Game Changer Virtual Conference. *Registration:* bg-bees.com.

October 3–4: Washington State Beekeepers Association Conference. Central Washington Univ. Ellensburg.

October 24–25 & days tbd: Oregon State Beekeepers

Association 2020 Virtual Conference. *Information soon at:* orsba.org.

November 17–19: California State Beekeepers Association Convention. *Information:* www.californiastatebeekeepers.com/annual-convention.

— 2021 —

July 8–10: Annual Western Apicultural Society Conference, and **July 11 & 12–13:** Technology Demonstration Field Camp & 4th International Conference on Bee and Hive Monitoring. Missoula, Montana. *Information and updates:* westernapiculturalsociety.org.

REGIONAL NEWS

Regional Representatives

North Coast

Beautiful weather at the coast with just enough rain to keep the landscape exploding with color. This is the time of year that makes me really glad I live at the coast . . . both weeks. But seriously, it's been gorgeous and with reports of the Southwest anticipating temperatures as high as 120 coming up, it's hard for me not to feel a little smug.

Both the Central Coast association and the Tillamook association have been meeting via Zoom, but both are anticipating upcoming activities where members will meet in person, safely and joyfully. I had the experience of collecting my first swarm along with my Master Beekeeper student. It went well, but the bees didn't make it easy. They had gathered on a chain link fence that was entwined with branches of a large spruce tree. As we scooped bees up on one side, the ladies would perversely move through the wires to the other side (sigh). But all are happily ensconced in a new hive, and good luck to them and to their keeper, Joe.

Kathy Cope

South Coast

Invitations to attend other beekeeper meeting and events throughout Oregon and beyond via Zoom or such are an appealing new development. Being able to go to the website to easily locate and access the links to such events could be a boon. We are missing all the beekeepers' round-table sharing as well as the ever-delightful potlucks at every meeting. Our group at the southwest corner is not up to managing Zoom meeting. Some members were pleased to be able to attend the webinar from OSU.

Buzz around here is that overwintering went well, blackberry honey production was high, and swarms are abundant. The winter was wet, but not frigid. No moisture mortality reported, so far, a main factor usually.

The most popular honey bee queen and colony of the county, which was featured all four days of the Curry County Fair and managed by OSBA president, Jesse Fletcher and Carla, his wife, founder of the local educational apiary, produced an impressive abundance of honey and an excessive amount of new queens. All eight swarms were revived on site, with considerable effort. Carla says they are usually reluctant to



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support swarm queens, but the production was so excellent. If all the daughters follow suit, next year could be a very busy buzzy one!

Coos County beekeeper Kelley Argienta and her husband responded to a swarm call from an assisted living facility. *Special European bees* is how the person described the intruders, who took up residence in a bird house that was temporarily on the floor of one of the two decks. The only access was through the hallway of the facility. The beekeepers had to abide by all COVID-19 guidelines besides having their temperatures taken and answering to everything on the questionnaire. The bees were all in an artistically ornate box designed to resemble the cartoon cat that wanted to eat Tweety, but that bird house failed to attract any birds. Back home after retrieving the nuc-size yard art, it was finally discovered that the *special European bees* were bumble bees.



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by Oregon Master Beekeeper Apprentice Michael Hewgill, were both full to the max by the end of June. We adjusted to allow for more honeycomb and were pleased to find no sign of any inclination to swarm. Michael is very impressed with the manageability of the Carniolans after losing Italian colonies for two years, mostly due to winter moisture and starvation. The bees are attaching a small portion of some of the combs to the glass. They didn't do that when the windows were plastic, Michael noted. Most of the comb is free-hanging, with no more than a couple of inches attached to the sloping wooden sides. Impressive strong comb. Delicious delicate treats for the beekeeper family and helpers. Why does this comb seem to be waxier by the bite than what we have bought, Michael asks.



There were still some blackberry blossoms into mid-July, some Eucalyptus. Much more bee foraging along the Rogue River. Master Beekeeper Program Apprentice Kathleen Blue, before hiving her first two colonies, had the good fortune of assisting the local commercial beekeeper couple Russ and Babette Rose with hiving all 24 of their new packages this spring.

Mureen Walker

Regional Associations

Central Oregon Beekeepers

Aaaah, August in Central Oregon. The occasional storms and clouds from June and early July are gone. We usually have a couple of days to a week in the 90s and 1 or 2 days just above 100. This summer, so far, has been quite dry. We're formally in a drought. So far, it has mostly affected irrigators and native plants (although it's always impressive to see how well the native plants produce flowers even during a drought, at least once). However, in the future . . . fire season usually starts ramping up now as things finish up drying out and with the warmer weather. We're hoping, once again, for a mild fire season with reduced smoke.

From the native forage point of view, we've finished the sagebrush (usually a short bloom during earlier July) and will be having the rabbitbrush later in August. One of the conversations we're having is a good way to establish what point sources our bees are



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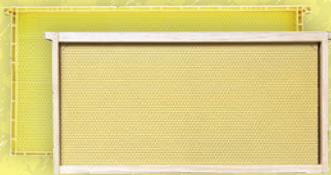
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visiting, if it's not obvious.

We did have a spate of late swarms in early July. As there were no reports of hives swarming, the thought is they were either from feral colonies or from hives which weren't being actively managed. Also, in July there were quite a few reports of queen losses. We'll be doing a poll to attempt to discern the reasons for future planning.

In June, we had a wonderful discussion about the Pacific Northwest honey bee loss poll presented by Dr. Dewey Caron. More things to think about for the future. In July, we had a discussion about hive manipulations for achieving particular goals led by a commercial beekeeper member. We're looking at future talks which will work via Zoom.

In the near future, feel free to attend our Zoom meetings from 6 to 7:30 PM on the 4th Tuesday of every month. The invitation can be found on our website: www.cobeekeeping.org.

Allen Engle

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

Boy oh Boy! This season has witnessed significant swarms. Still getting notifications in late July. Several swarms were from 5-frame nucs installed in early April. Crowding was not an issue as empty frames were available. Something in the Air! Judy Scher spoke to honey bee pheromones in July. What an awesome talk advancing our understanding of honey bee communication. Varroa mite counts have been rising above the one percent threshold. The early spring with warmer than normal temperatures in February supported increased brood rearing, which unfortunately resulted in increased mite production. Due diligence and a proactive management regime are clearly required. The unfortunate side effect of our not being able to meet in person at the Hood River Extension is the opportunity to have our in-hive demonstration each month. The lack of sharing hopefully will not translate into greater colony losses. Our association has been supporting three hives at the Hood River Extension Office. Those outside the Columbia Gorge are missing the devotion of the area Master Gardeners who lovingly devote hours of their time manicuring the surrounding oriental gardens.

The availability of honey bees enhances their efforts. A recent change to the hives were two new sets of hive boxes graciously and artistically offered by a beekeeper from Ridgefield, Washington, who has advanced to the Journey level of the Oregon Master



Beekeeper Program. Our officers continue to dedicate their time toward bringing education to the beekeepers in the Columbia Gorge.

Jerry Frazier

Lane County Beekeepers

Beekeepers Strong

The year 2020 has been a year like none other in our lives (unless we know someone who lived through the Spanish Flu Epidemic in 1918!). We are faced with challenges that bring out the best in some people. I'd like to share this story:

Lane County Beekeepers canceled our annual Bee School, all in-person meetings, and attendance at local events such as Honey Lover's Festival and the Master Gardener's Fall Festival where we are able to sell jars of honey to raise funds to donate to the Honey Bee Lab at OSU. We decided to be resourceful so we could still make some money.

We have several members who are selling the association's honey at their homes. One created a wonderful stand which catches the eye of walkers down her neighborhood street. I am fortunate to live in a very walk-friendly neighborhood, and my sign has attracted lots of buyers. A family around the corner from me also keeps bees. Their son, Eli Turanski, has a regular customer base to sell the honey harvested from their hives. When I put my sign out, he had already sold out of his previous summer's extraction but wanted to join with LCBA to help. He was given honey from his grandmother's hives, with a suggestion he donate half of the sales to the Honey Bee Lab, but he decided he wanted to give it all to help the bees! This young man demonstrates the goodness in people and is an inspiration. Thank you, Eli, for your efforts to help this important program at OSU.



P.S. Some of you may recognize his last name. Yes, his grandparents are Dick and Pat Turanski, founders of GloryBee.

Pam Leavitt

Oregon Prison Beekeepers

Prison Beekeeping Amid the Coronavirus Crisis

Last year was a difficult one for the fledgling beekeeping program here at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution. On paper, it looks simple enough: Set up two hives, purchase nucs, put the class of eight into two groups and

we would be up to our elbows in honey by the end of the season.

What actually happened was a vastly different picture. We lost a queen to a swarming event and then stepped on her replacement during a routine hive inspection. We combined the two remaining hives, bought a new queen late in the season, and then overwintered—dazed but not defeated.

Flash forward to March 2020. The four aspiring Journeymen hold our first meeting to discuss what we learned in the previous year and how to approach the next season. As the plan unfolds, all of the failures from the previous year are addressed.

Instead of scraping those pesky swarm cells off the frames, we decide to split the hives to multiply our apiary and provide room for crowded colonies to grow. We decide to limit our hive inspections and rely more on deciphering peripheral cues as signs to treat or invasively inspect. We also decide to use smoke properly, closing the lid after smoking and waiting a few moments will allow the bees to begin their gorging and keep calm. Being more cognizant of where we step is also a concern that is brought up. No more stepping on queens this year! We will treat early in the season during the first brood cycles with HopGuard®

It followed by Formic Pro™ treatments during the summer honey flows, and at the end of the season with an oxalic acid drip before tucking the bees in for the winter. After just a few hours of discussion, all angles are covered.

On March 13, in response to the coronavirus outbreak, the Oregon Department of Corrections issued a modified lockdown order for all prisons in the state. This means no visitation, no education, and no programming or group meetings for at least 90 days. Since the EOCI beekeeping program falls into the program and category, we faced a major roadblock. But we did what beekeepers do in times of adversity: We adapted.

This year we have a new brood cycle of beginning beekeepers. Twelve new students are now engaged in the Washington State Beekeepers Association educational curriculum. In order to continue with certification on schedule, we are working with the EOCI multimedia program to record classroom lectures to be aired on the institution channel. Now the class participants can view video lectures, study their manuals, and take quizzes and tests via correspondence with the program facilitators.

As for fieldwork experiences, class participants will be called out to our apiary in teams of three to do routine hive inspections, Varroa treatments, and behavior studies

New Avenues in Honey Bee VIRUSES ~ PESTS ~ NUTRITION

Samuel Ramsey, PhD, Studied at Cornell University and University of Maryland, completing his Doctoral Thesis on Varroa Destructor Mites. His thesis articulated that mites were feeding off the 'Fat Body' predominately, rather than the bee's hemolymph. Dr. Ramsey, currently employed at Bee Research Lab, Beltsville MD, is currently in Thailand researching the Tropilaelaps Mite.

Michelle Flenniken Ph.D. is an assistant professor in the Plant Sciences Department at Montana State University. She is a microbiologist investigating honey bee host-pathogen interactions, and she also serves as a co-director of the Pollinator Health Center at MSU.

Vanessa Louise Corby-Harris Ph.D.
USDA, Honey Bee Research: Tucson, AZ
The common goal uniting Corby-Harris's research is understanding the ecological and physiological mechanisms that enable organisms to respond to their environment.

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while maintaining social distancing requirements. Here on my housing unit, I'm lucky to have a few beginning beekeepers I can mentor and a bunch of free time to write and submit articles to newsletters and magazines earning points toward my Journeyman certification.

This is a hard time for all of us. The EOCI currently has zero confirmed cases of coronavirus, but our thoughts go out to everyone outside who has been affected. I know that we will come out of this as a stronger, more united country. Thank you Patrick Gazley-Romney and the other beekeeping program facilitators, and Mr. Peters, the institution work program coordinator, for keeping the program running during the coronavirus pandemic.

Jonathan Montes

Portland Metro Beekeepers

It is early July and we in the upper Willamette Valley are in full-on nectar flow. Except, it doesn't seem to have fully kicked in. Shortly after blackberries started fully flowering, cool, wet weather paid us a visit. Bees seemed reluctant to fly on some days. A number of association members have stated that this year's honey crop may not be bountiful. Those who have bees in pollination services may fare better. The cooler weather has also delayed the ending of blackberry flowering, and much can change in the course of a few weeks. I'm crossing my fingers for a few more weeks of good nectar flow.

Everbearing raspberries are beginning their second round of flowering, and I've seen lots of bees visiting them. Borage and lavender are blooming, as are Phacelia, globe gilia, and oregano. Lots to choose from for our busy workers. There are lots of other flowers blooming, too, so there appears to be sufficient forage for our hard-working explorers.

Our June virtual meeting had a good turnout, with 70+ members in attendance. John Edwards of Hive and Garden (hiveandgarden.com) gave a very detailed and well received presentation of Varroa mites and the numerous methods and treatments we can use to monitor and manage mite populations throughout the beekeeping year. Managing Varroa is never far from a beekeeper's mind, and John's presentation was a timely reminder for us to monitor and manage Varroa to assist our bees throughout the year. Every year, I learn something new about Varroa and appreciate the insights from others with more experience than me. During the June meeting, we were able to split up into virtual breakout rooms, allowing smaller groups for questions and discussions. Participants appeared to like the smaller groups and the sharing of knowledge and experiences in a smaller group setting. Also during the June meeting, we were able to randomly draw names for giveaways of 8-frame woodenware and 400 pounds of sugar.

Due to the ongoing uncertainties related to the COVID-19 outbreak, the PMBA has canceled its annual picnic/potluck for August. Likewise, we have canceled the 2020 Bee Day event, originally scheduled for May. It was hoped that a later date could be scheduled, but, with the uncertainty of events and with concern for the health of our members, it was decided it best to cancel.

As I gain experience with keeping bees, I am learning to plan ahead in the beekeeping season. To that end, I am anticipating and planning next steps with my colonies. Whether a hobbyist with 1 or 2 hives or a commercial beekeeper with scores of hives, we are optimistically looking ahead to pulling supers off hives and beginning the extraction process. We are also planning for late-summer and fall activities to keep our bees healthy and abundant. The life of a beekeeper is as busy as the workers who inhabit our hives.

David Schwartz

Portland Urban Beekeepers

Having survived a wetter than usual June, the greater Portland area is finally getting its summer weather and the bees are loving it! The PUB apiary is doing well, and our bee school participants have enjoyed some socially distanced hive time.

Several local bee association volunteers, led by Dewey Caron and OSU researchers, are launching a regional task force to help new beekeepers identify disease in their colonies. Portland Urban Beekeepers, Tualatin Valley Beekeepers Association, and Portland Metro Beekeepers volunteers will be trained to identify American and European Foulbrood, along with Varroa mite infestation. Beekeepers who are concerned about their colonies failing to thrive, or with unusual odors or frames, are invited to complete a Google form that can be found on each association's website. The task force volunteer (assigned by ZIP code) will contact the beekeeper to arrange for a colony inspection. Field tests for AFB/EFB will be available, if clinical suspicion for either disease is high. Mite counts may be done as well. After the inspection, recommendations will be made and a fact sheet on AFB and EFB will be left behind. Portland Urban Beekeepers had its first request this



past weekend, and two volunteers accompanied Dewey Caron for the inspection. A mild case of European Foulbrood was diagnosed. If your association is interested, please contact Dewey Caron at dmcaron@udel.edu or Portland Urban Beekeepers at officers@portlandurbanbeekeepers.org.

In the Portland area, hybrid poppies continue to be one of more interesting sources for the bees, and cosmos will bloom shortly, as will goldenrod. Chestnuts and lindens are almost past, along with wild blackberries and most fruiting trees. Of note, wild bergamot/bee balm, also blooming now, is a favorite of pollinators; however, the red version is not so attractive to honey bees, though bumble bees enjoy it.

Our July meeting featured Dr. Priya Chakrabarti of Oregon State University's Honey Bee Lab. Dr. Chakrabarti's research focuses on bee nutrition and identifying the micronutrients which support healthy bee populations, in particular, phytosterols. Sterols are important precursors for certain functions like molting. If the bees can't obtain the right sterols, they suffer as individuals, cannot provide sufficient nutrition to larvae, healthy brood decreases, and the entire colony is affected. The study of bee nutrition has been largely stagnant for decades, but new research has the potential to greatly improve our understanding of what bees need, and make adjustments. For instance, her research demonstrated that commercial diets are insufficient in critical micronutrients. To compensate, Dr. Chakrabarti suggests adding borage oil to the commercial diet, planting borage to supplement their needs, or trapping for natural pollen and mixing it into your commercial mix. Oregon is so fortunate to have cutting-edge research happening right in our backyards!

Jessica Anderson

Tillamook Beekeepers

This seems to be the year of swarms. I have heard dozens of stories of Tillamook Beekeepers losing swarms far more than in previous years. I have personally had five swarms from two separate hives. Two of the swarms were on the same day, and two others came from the same hive. Today, I was able to catch an exceptionally healthy swarm to help offset my losses. We all think we are doing the right things to stop the swarms, but the bees seem to just be in the mood this year. Nevertheless, many reports from our beekeepers here in Tillamook are incredibly positive. Almost without exception, everyone I have talked with is having a healthy and successful year thus far. Collectively, we are treating for mites more often. We hope to have a much better winter than we had last winter because of that.

We are meeting in person in July at the parking lot of our Honey House at the Port of Tillamook Bay. In addition to conducting some business and having a question and answer session, we will be having a Beekeeper Swap Meet. Members are bringing excess beekeeping items for sale, trade, or giveaway. This should be fun and beneficial, too. We then will have a field trip a few hundred yards away to Claire Moody's place to demonstrate hive inspections with a couple of her hives and visit her awesome bee-

friendly gardens.

Without the Tillamook County Fair and or the Oregon State Fair, the Tillamook Beekeepers Association is going to have its own honey contest in September. We will be using the OSBA judging standards (modified) for extracted honey, comb honey, creamed honey, beeswax candles, and beekeeping photography. We hope to get a sufficiently knowledgeable nonpartisan person to do the judging. My family members apparently are too biased to be asked.

Here's to a great summer!

Brad York

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

The TVBA board and membership meetings continue to be facilitated virtually online, but the board decided to make the TVBA honey extraction facility available to members with implementation of plenty of new COVID-19 safety and sanitizing measures in place. The year 2020 was an active swarm season for many in our area; the jury is still out on honey harvests at this moment in time.

Hillsboro celebrated their annual Pollinator Palooza virtually during National Pollinator Week in June in honor of their Bee City status and programs. The link to their program of daily online activities is here: www.hillsboro-oregon.gov/our-city/departments/parks-recreation/our-recreation-facilities/jackson-bottom-wetlands-preserve/pollinator-palooza.

Debby Garman

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If you have any questions regarding details of the fund or how to donate, please contact Jan Lohman, Chair of the Northwest Apiculture Fund for Honey Bee Research, Extension, and Education, at 541.567.3209; 541.980.0304.

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.



Oregon State Beekeepers Association Membership Form

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, swarm call listing, four free online classified ads per year, discounts on publications, 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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Thank you!



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*The lovely flowers embarrass me,
 They make me regret I am not a bee.*

Emily Dickinson

The Bee Line

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

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 **September** issue, 2020. The deadline for submitting copy is **August 10, 2020**. Please let me know if you find difficulties with the deadline so we can work out the space and timing for the material.

May all be well!

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