



The Bee Line

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Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association



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

Image above: Emily Carlson (front story) trapped pollen from sources in Oregon for pesticide residue analyses.

Pesticide Exposure in Context

Emily Carlson

The differences between pesticide *hazard*, pesticide *exposure*, and pesticide *risk* are important, but subtle. A better understanding of these concepts can help land managers and beekeepers identify the specific pesticide applications which could have the biggest impact on bee health. To explore these concepts, we'll use an example of a swimmer and a shark to illustrate how these concepts are related, but different.

Imagine that you are going for a swim in the ocean. You might want to know how likely it is that you could get bitten by a shark. In order to do that, you need an understanding of *hazard*. Is this a great white shark? Or just a little nurse shark? A hazard is anything that could cause harm, but it also tells us about the amount of harm something can cause (i.e., a great white compared to a nurse shark). You also want to know how close you will be to the shark. This is called *exposure*. Are you going swimming in shark-infested waters teeming with schools of sharks? Is the shark hundreds of miles off shore? When you combine hazard and exposure, you can understand *risk*. For example, even just swimming past a great white shark could be a high risk of a shark bite. Yet, you could swim with a whole group of nurse sharks with very little risk of a bite.

Similarly, pesticide *hazard* tells us that there is a potentially harmful chemical present in the environment. Importantly, any application is hazardous, even if a bee never touches that chemical. For example, a tree with no blooms and pesticide applied to it is hazardous. It is a thing which could cause harm. But is that harm likely to occur? Hazard does not tell us that! Pesticide *exposure* tells us how much pesticide a bee encounters in its environment. Bees can be exposed to pesticides by foraging for pollen and nectar, walking on leaves, consuming contaminated food, or living in a brood nest with pesticides in the comb. All of these locations could be sources of pesticide exposure—in other words: A place where a bee could encounter a pesticide. Pesticide *risk* is the combination of both exposure and hazard. Pesticide risk asks: How harmful is this thing and how much of it am I likely to encounter? Therefore, we think of pesticide risk as *the likelihood to cause harm*.

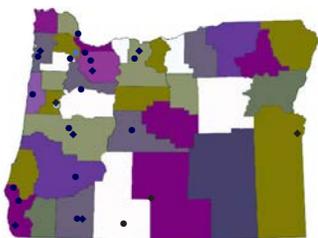
With these ideas in mind, we can ask: All pesticide applications are hazardous, but which pesticide applications are risky? Moving back to our shark example, if you have limited time and energy, you want to target your efforts to reduce shark attacks during the times of year when sharks are close to shore and hungry. Similarly, understanding pesticide risk can help us determine what pesticide applications are having the biggest impact on bee health.

This year, for my experiment, I trapped pollen in cherry, clover, meadowfoam, and clover fields. In the coming months, we will analyze this pollen for pesticide residues, thus allowing



Continued on page 3

OREGON STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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Steven Coffman—503.838.2981

South Willamette Valley

Tim Wydronek—541.740.4127; timwydronek@comcast.net

● AFFILIATED REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Central Oregon Beekeepers

Meets 6:00–7:30 PM, fourth Tuesday, virtually
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 PM, third Wednesday, Hood River
President: Jerry Frazier—jerry1.frazier@gmail.com
Website: gorgebeekeepers.org

Douglas County Bees

Meets 7:00 PM, first Wednesday, Roseburg
President: Robert Baune—541.863.9414
Website: www.douglascountybees.org

Klamath Basin Beekeepers

Meets 9:00 AM, third/fourth Saturday, Klamath Falls
President: Paul Davitt—541.591.2260
Website: www.klamathbeekeepers.org

Lane County Beekeepers

Meets 7:30 PM, third Tuesday, Eugene
President: Brian McGinley—56magoo@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 Central Coast Beekeepers

Meets 6:00 PM, fourth Wednesday, Newport
President: Stu Willason—swill29w@gmail.com
Website: www.ccbaor.org

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—beekeeperscoastal@gmail.com

Portland Metro Beekeepers

Meets 7:00 PM, second Thursday, virtually
President: Doug Sieckmann—503.854.5417
Website: portlandmetrobeekeepers.org

Portland Urban Beekeepers

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

Southern Oregon Beekeepers

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

Tillamook Beekeepers

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

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Meets 6:00 PM, last Tuesday, virtually
President: Debby Garman—tualatinvalleybeekeepers@gmail.com
Website: tvbabees.org

Willamette Valley Beekeepers

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

us to understand what pollen resources could be hazardous to bees. By connecting this to the flowers in bloom in the landscape, we hope to create best management practices that reduce pesticide risk to bees and help land managers keep pollinators safe.

Note: Emily Carlson is a PhD student in the Honey Bee and Pollinator Health Labs at Oregon State University. She presented “Pesticide Risk in Context” during the OSBA 2020 Fall Conference. We look forward to learning about her findings and recommendations!

Message from the President

Greetings, fellow beekeepers. I am writing this message from our usual location this time of year: A camper in the middle of an almond orchard in central California. After a week of all-night bee moving, I am relishing a night off while we wait out a storm to put the last of our “bees in the trees” later this week. The March message is usually the toughest one of the year to write, mostly because it is written during almond pollination when we are burning the candle on both ends, seven days a week. As I sit here in the exact same spot one year later, I can not help pondering what a crazy year it has been. Covid-19 was just entering our collective consciousness and spreading rapidly around the globe at this time last year. Reflecting back to when we were being told the myth that Covid-19 was no worse than the common flu and would go away when warmer weather arrived, I wonder how much better we would have responded to the pandemic if we had listened to the science. The truth has a strange way of always coming out.

The best tool for seeking truth is scientific inquiry. Simply put, the scientific method is why we are no longer cave dwellers, why airplanes fly, and why cell phones work. As a culture, we love it when stuff just works and problems get solved. Any tool can be used for good or ill will, and science is no different. Some would have you believe this is a reason not to trust science; however, this notion is just plain silly and akin to saying we shouldn't trust hammers because some would use them to whack you in the noggin instead of building you a house. Collectively, we have no shortage of problems to solve ranging from Covid-19 to Varroa mites. Thanks to science, we now have RNA technology that can help us with both of these problems.

Without getting too far into the weeds on basic cell biology, RNA is the biological mechanism by which an organism's DNA code is translated into proteins. RNA can come in several forms. Of particular interest to us are mRNA and RNAi. The first Covid vaccines approved are based on mRNA that help our cells make parts of viral proteins so that our immune systems can learn to recognize the virus and mount a timely defense when we are exposed. Last year we discussed how RNAi-modified bee gut symbionts could be used to control Varroa. This research is ongoing, and some of the latest involves feeding RNAi to bees that will inhibit mites from forming certain proteins specific to the mite genome. Bayer is leading the charge on this technology and has been testing a product for a few years. Here is a link [hard linked in the pdf] from their presentation from Apimondia 2019:

www.apimondia.com/en/component/easyfolderlistingpro/?view=download&format=raw&data=eNpFUM-tOwzAQ_JWV7yVJEaV1TzwOCAFC8AGVa28SS45teZ1QhPh3Ni9xsndmHzOjZFXJH5I7KergDCZxJFk-dpDBBU6GDdbxISFduyOhQTVUnRE6a5mSZlinKlmh4p_y-6leJ0mrCx2s-jXnU4lqUU47ObUWvE0cpyH-kroosrtSN-wimILG7hHhFwnVC63xed3FwPZvoOH4HMKDKI98Y-WUBESKG_gnc_Scre2Dte7e9b5wqa-CXCdwqJJHA3UKHRgc0IVofcPz8PF2Zzdn3mZgUCkFBXo5FIMwvc6s6fkKXhX1Wttx8bUUeMnLL-5p6SVwwL9FyiKu9in2rnJVuO_TcfZ5QdhkTDha_5uQ4Fa-yHVjx7x9n2ogG

Who knows if there will ever be a RNA therapy approved for bees. Perhaps, as we become more familiar with various RNA technologies and use them ourselves, more options will open up. Research is ongoing, and I would expect some more breakthroughs soon. Another option to control mites won't solve all our problems in modern beekeeping, but the breakthroughs in RNA technology clearly show that research pays dividends.

On that note, we are very lucky to have such a great bee lab in Oregon that is doing world class research. I am really looking forward to working with all of you to launch our centennial fundraiser later this year to further support this great work. The fundraising committee is meeting regularly and we anticipate launching sometime in the 3rd or 4th quarter after we hopefully begin to realize some of the benefits from the Covid vaccines. People are really struggling to get by, so relief from Covid cannot come soon enough. We will likely become more reliant on RNA technologies as the virus continues to evolve, but with any luck we can look forward to in-person meetings sometime in the not-too-distant future and another tool to manage Varroa. Thank you, science!

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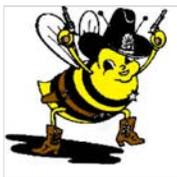
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Our membership numbers are down a bit this year, so please remind your local bee association members to join the OSBA. Each regional group needs to have at least five OSBA members to maintain affiliation in order to have a vote and participate on the Executive Committee. Affiliated groups will also be covered under the OSBA insurance policy for meetings and events. We have strength in numbers, and we can get the most done when we work together.

Spring is in the air and our bees are growing really fast this time of year, so keep an eye on stores and be ready for colonies that want to split. With any luck, that should be most of them, so have a plan for queens and equipment ready to accommodate them. Hoping your gains exceed your losses and looking forward to seeing you all on the coast this fall for the conference.

John Jacob

OSBA Executive Committee Meeting

January 16, 2021 ❖ via Zoom

President John called the meeting to Order by Zoom at 4 PM. Present were Jan Lohman, Mureen Walker, Kathy Cope, John Jacob, Harry Vanderpool, Joe Maresh, Joe Hansen, Karen Finley, Marjie Ehry, Rebecca Fain, Rosanna Mattingly, Charlie Vanden Heuvel, Maarty Van Otterloo, Brad York, Paul Stromberg, and Mike Rodia.

The group voted to accept the minutes of our last meeting as printed in *The Bee Line*.

Treasurer's Report

Joe Hansen gave the end of the year Treasurer's Report. OSBA income was down in 2020 due to the absence of a physical conference. The Zoom online conference did work out financially though, with a positive income of approximately \$8,000. Some expenses are up (stipends to Rosanna and a reprinting of the *Residential Beekeeping* guidelines.) The organization's bottom line is slightly under our targeted break even: (-\$1754). The group discussed the need to increase income or offset some expenses. Not an emergency, but will keep an eye on things. Hard to find any pattern in such a weird year. Karen Finley moved to accept the report, Rebecca Fain seconded.

Vice President's Report

Joe Maresh is working on the speakers for our fall conference. It is very hard to plan on whether it will take place in person, online, or a likely hybrid of these. Juliana Rangel, Jennifer Berry, and Samuel Ramsey are likely speakers. A poll of the membership will be taken in June to help determine how to proceed on physical/virtual questions.

Zoom Account

The TVBA and PMBA have both seen the need to use a "bigger" Zoom account for talks by Tom Seeley and Randy Oliver that drew more than the expected 100-person limit. As of today, associations can use the Zoom account of the OSBA for meetings, especially when there is a larger attendance expected. Our Zoom experts are working out the details and procedures.

Regional Reps and Affiliated Association Reports

Christy VanRooyen: The Klamath gang is gearing up for future

Zoom meetings and has Dennis Heinz lined up to talk about some pro-tips. Charlie Vanden Heuvel reported the Columbia Gorge group has the same membership, same officers. Brad York: Raffle hive's on display. The Tillamook Cheese Factory has been very supportive of the association. Facebook page is down. Kathy Cope/Becca Fain: Both remarked on 2020's good coast bee weather and bees starting to stir in 2021—Acacia is blooming. Debby Garman said TVBA has moved to the Wild Apricot platform and loves it. Having some master beekeepers join the board has bumped up the level of association activity and know-how. Mureen Walker said the low tech, geographically dispersed S Oregon group has been pretty quiet the second half of 2020.

Foundations/Grants

Jan Lohman discussed the current balances of the OSU Foundation-managed research funds.

Agriculture Liaison Report

Harry Vanderpool is working with the ODA, which is working up an Asian Giant Hornet survey; also the ODA is planning on training bee atlas people on the Asian (and other hornet) identification, and also following the Christmas tree pest/export issue. Marjie Ehry initiated a group discussion about the role of OSBA in state business and the need for beekeepers to have greater visibility in agriculture. Harry and Mike reassured the group that the OSBA has good contacts and involvement at state level. Having a regular ODA speaker/legislative summary at the annual conference was suggested.

Membership

Rosanna Mattingly proposed a postcard mailing at the end of this year for those who have not responded to e-mail reminders. Membership is down over 25 percent. Joe Maresh moved, R. Fain seconded on plan to send reminder postcards. Rosanna will do some checking to see patterns of membership. With centennial, there is an opportunity to promote OSBA membership.

There were unprecedented difficulties with regional associations in meeting the criteria for affiliation this year. Rosanna will

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adhere to the process as established for responses that are incomplete, inaccurate, or have otherwise failed to follow through as indicated on the application in the future.

Joe Maresh requested that monetary details of treasurer’s reports not be published with minutes in the newsletter. They are available as needed by contacting the secretary.

Activities Director

Bonnie King will be ready if and when the state fair decides to re-open.

Fundraising Committee

According to Rebecca Fain, giving is down due to 2020. She thinks it best to delay launch. Lots of great logo submissions, Karen circulated the top 10 for a vote; so far, we seem to have about 8 different favorites.

A social media czar and landing sites are needed to support

centennial and crowdfunding campaigns—Debby and Becca are on it.

Other Outstanding Business

OSBA needs a vendor for hats/t-shirts once the logo project gets moving, and a person conversant with the swag business to act as the go between. JIT inventory and direct ship would be great. Contact Karen F. to discuss.

Should the board try to amend article IV of both By-laws and Constitution? Is there need to update these documents to reflect the new reality of Zoom meetings, online voting, etc.? As it stands now, we will not be able to add or formalize a business membership category until the General Membership Meeting at the OSBA Fall Conference.

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Finley

Centennial Logo!

Karen Finley

Lisa Hardeman is the winner of the OSBA centennial logo contest! She is a graphic designer and friend of Ben Jarrett, whose dad Paul is active with both Portland Metro Beekeepers and OSBA. Lisa was raised on an eastern Oregon cattle ranch, and now lives in Lake Oswego. She studied visual communications at OSU, has worked in advertising business, and continues to work her own freelance design business LH Creative (lisahardman.portfoliobox.net/) and with NorthFork503.com.

The Executive Committee had a hard time selecting from a number of contest submissions: It is clear that the OSBA has all kinds of talent within it. Beekeepers and their families are a creative and talented lot. We extend our thanks to all of those folks who submitted designs. We may still call on you in the future!

As the winning designer, Lisa will receive a \$300 award. We are excited to showcase her work while helping the OSBA continue to raise funds to support pollinator research at the OSU Honey Bee Lab.

We look forward to making her cool design into some swag to promote and celebrate our 100 years centennial!



An OSBA Member “To Do” List

Wishing everyone an exceptional bee season! For some, the season is in full swing in the almonds; for others, it is only just beginning as we break propolis seals and bear witness to the efficacy of our winter preparations. We share much in our love of the bees. As we move into the 2021 season, let’s consider what of the following might be added to our “to do” list:

1. Membership Directory

Make use of the 2021 OSBA Membership Directory, mailed in early February. There you will find contact information of others who share your commitment to beekeeping practice, a listing of the 2021 Executive Committee, and

information about affiliated regional associations. In addition, you can check out the OSBA Constitution and Bylaws as well as various research funds and their respective requirements for making donations. Your involvement and support are invaluable for OSBA and its ongoing work in all realms. Also please welcome additional new and renewing members who have joined since the directory was printed—along with one member whose name a mischievous little gremlin removed prior to printing. They include: Bob Arnold, Steven Coffman, Victoria Craft, Gina Eilerson, Maria Garofoli, Matt Hansen, Meagan Hansen, Timothy Hutchinson, Pam Leavitt, Susan Nolte, Michael Sheffield, Chris Smith, and Craig Thornton.

2. Best Management Practices

Periodically make a focused review of best management practices. Guidance for all beekeeping operations emphasizes *safety first*. Those beekeepers who work in residential areas may want to review specific practices periodically, including those encouraged in the OSU Extension publication, *Residential Beekeeping: Best-practice guidelines for nuisance-free beekeeping in Oregon*.

3. Swarm Call

Claim your space on the Swarm Call Listing, which is now open for 2021. For listing, please send your name, phone number (and if okay to text), limits on availability, and up to ten locations for collection to: orsbawebmaster@gmail.com. As differentiated from bee removal, swarm collection has generally been understood to be without cost. That said, some beekeepers are now requesting payment, so please also indicate whether or not you require a fee. If not indicated, the assumption is that there is no charge. Also please keep in mind safety, respect for those requesting services as well as fellow beekeepers, and the opportunity thus provided to educate others about the bees and their care!

4. OSBA Forum

Participate in the OSBA Forum, which continues now as it has in years past. You can make and respond to inquiries, and share information at: orsba.proboards.com.

5. Question of the Month

Ask researchers in the field a question that has your curiosity stoked. It's been quite some time since any questions for *Question of the Month* have been submitted for the newsletter. Surely there are questions? We take them seriously. Please send them to: osba.newsletter@gmail.com.

6. Ask A Beekeeper

Ask an experienced beekeeper your questions about the bees and their management. Glitches in the e-mail link to *Ask A Beekeeper* have been remedied, which means this service is again available. Send your questions about bees and beekeeping to: ask-a-beekeeper@orsba.org.

7. Online Classified Ads

Advertise products from your hives and beekeeping services. OSBA members receive four free online classified ads per year. For listing, send timing for the ad/s, item name, description, photograph(s), and cost along with your name, e-mail address, and phone number to: orsbawebmaster@gmail.com.

8. Discounts on American Beekeeping Journal

Receive a discount on subscriptions to American Beekeeping Journal. As in years now past, members

receive a discount on *ABJ* subscriptions. Please contact osba.newsletter@gmail.com for the form.

9. Facebook

Check out our newly hatched OSBA Facebook page!

You might even like us :-)) You can find the page at:

www.facebook.com/Oregon-State-Beekeepers-Association-106259011502343

10. Speaker Listing—New!

Make a presentation relative to bees and their care. The OSBA membership is rich in experience and expertise. We are setting up a listing of members who are interested in presenting during regional association meetings, in K–12 classrooms, and for organizations interested in aspects of bees and beekeeping practice. We will refine the process over time to meet expressed needs. In getting started now, if you are interested in sharing, please send your name, a recent photograph, brief bio, your location, contact information (phone and/or e-mail), and title/titles of presentations/s that you are qualified and interested in giving to orsbawebmaster@gmail.com. Please also indicate if you are willing to travel/approximate distance, open to presenting by way of Zoom, and if you charge a fee or other cost related to your service. Keep in mind that, similar to the Swarm Call Listing, you will be working out the details directly with the person contacting you about a speaking opportunity.

11. Events, Reports, and More . . .

Please continue to send events, stories, photos, reports, recipes, and other items to osba.newsletter@gmail.com. Also, along with bee days and schools, it's not too early to plan participation in this year's events such as Pollinator Week!

12. Hive Registration

Be prepared to count of your colonies. As the Oregon Department of Agriculture states, "Every person who owns, or is in charge of, five or more colonies of bees located within the state or Oregon, must register their hives each year with the Oregon Department of Agriculture." For questions and a link to the registration application, visit: www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/IPPM/InsectsSpiders/Pages/BeesApiaries.aspx. The number of colonies that must be registered is equal to the highest number of full-strength colonies managed within the state at any point during the previous year, i.e., prior to the registration deadline of **June 1**.

13. Spam

Continue to check the email address of suspicious inquiries before responding. These arrive in the form of a request that you phone an officer of the respective organization and a request for funds, e.g., a purchase and mailing of gift cards. There are many variations on the theme.

—RM

Keeping Bees in March

Jason Rowan

Note: Reprinted from the March 2020 issue of *The Bee Line*.

I'm optimistic about the future of beekeeping. I believe we've turned a corner. Welcome back, a new bee season is upon us. March usually marks the start of the beekeeping season for some of us. However, this winter may have seemed cold to you, but from what I have seen in the bees they think otherwise. One of the best and worst things about being a commercial beekeeper is that the break in the season of beekeeping is relatively short. Only a few months go by until we re-enter the hives to start checking them for the almond pollination. This allows us an opportunity to address the needs of the hive that may otherwise end up unchecked for many months and would lead to most certain death. What I have seen in the bees this winter has made me very pleased and very troubled at the same time. Many of our hives even without stimulation began raising brood at a rate seen by myself only once some years ago. Every year is different, but the end result of the aforementioned year was a swarming season followed by massive mite loads. So, be on the lookout. If til now, a cursory glance at the entrance or taking a look under the cover is all we have done, it may be time to take a deeper look into the hives.

The beginning of spring gives us the opportunity to wipe the slate clean and get a fresh piece of chalk to start the new season. Mistakes may or may not have been made. Regardless, make note of what worked and didn't, and these can be tools to use in the season to come. Studying bee culture through books, meetings, or YouTube is a great way to prepare. Do your homework. Learning about what you are doing is the only way to be successful. During the month of March, I like to think of the hive as a garden and the work that I do now is the seed that I will watch grow for the rest of the summer. Take great care to stay ahead of your bees. It is the only way to help these creatures grow to their full potential.

First, let's unwrap the hive for the warm season to come. Take off all covering and insulation, including moisture traps, if you desire. Hopefully, your hives are waterproof enough to make it through the spring rains. If not, leave the moisture traps on, but that does not excuse you from looking into the hives.

Pop open the lid and take a look. I would assume that you would wear all the necessary gear, plus smoker. Do things gently, move smoothly. There is no rush. Jarring and making bees fly when the temps are not optimal can cause their death or unneeded stress. Working bees when the days are dry and around 50°F is great, but you can check for weight even when the temps are much lower. You may be able to see the honey and determine that there is plenty or not. You may be able to take a stored frame and pop it in. If you have none, then a

winter patty or some fondant may be used as an emergency feed. Starvation is one of the only things that you can control, so be responsible. You may want to try feeding a heavy syrup or a light syrup to simulate a flow. Putting pollen supplement on is a great way to get a jump start on the season, but know the costs. Every action causes a response in the bees, so think ahead.

If March marks the first time you have looked into your hive, you may have found it to be "deed." Fear not, you have just joined the rest of us who have found that to be the case as well. Bee keeping is a labor of love and cannot be marked by successes and failures. Just as your hives may have made it through the winter perfect for the second year, do not begin to believe that you have it all figured out. Being a beekeeper is a entomological journey into the world of the wild. Our poor human brains can hardly begin to understand the complexities of the natural world, so don't beat yourself up. Learn from what has happened and move on with open eyes and mind.

Having said that, why has your hive died? Much can be learned and you can make the appropriate management changes because something clearly did not work. Get a good book or talk with other beekeepers about what you have seen, and you will find that the knowledge gained from those interactions can make a world of difference in the path of a new year. Clean that puppy out. Get rid of old drone combs and junky boxes. Start the year off right. Leaving your dead, AFB hive out to rot because you think you might catch that 100 percent disease-resistant free swarm is not a service to anyone, most of all the bees. Packages and nucs are getting built this month. Get ready. They are coming, so let's make it work.

If you are one of the lucky ones and your hives came through great, take a look inside. Make sure that hive has a queen. If not, add it to another hive if possible. If one of your hives is weak and one strong, move a frame or two over with brood and bees (no queen) and give the weak one a boost, but mark her for re-queening.

Get those queens and supplies ordered and on their way. Don't be left out when things need to be done.

The last thing I would suggest for starting your garden off right is year is to be diligent about your pests and diseases. This may be a great time to treat for mites and brood diseases. Nontemperature-dependent mite control measures would be best. Please do not think that this is the last of your spring treatments. I have found more and more that the efficacy of most miticides has been greatly exaggerated. Bee aware and keep bees with care. Happy Keeping.

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BEEKEEPER EVENTS

— 2021 —

ABF Conference & Tradeshow. Postponed until 2022.

May 20: World Bee Day. *Information:* www.worldbeeday.org/en.

June 21–27: National Pollinator Week 2021. *Information:* www.pollinator.org/pollinator-week.

July 26–30: Eastern Apicultural Society 66th Annual Short Course and Conference, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA. *Information:* www.easternapiculture.org.

August 23–27: Oregon Bee Atlas 2021 Beginner Bee School. Oregon State University. Corvallis. *Information:* extension.oregonstate.edu/program/all/bee-atlas/events. (See also for additional events.)

October 1–2: Washington State Beekeepers Association 2021 Conference. *Information:* wasba.org/events/conference-info.

October 22–24. Tentative dates for the OSBA 2021 Fall Conference, when we hope again to meet in Florence. Updates will be posted at: orsba.org/osba-fall-conference.

November 16–18: California State Beekeepers Association Convention 2021. Hilton Santa Barbara. *Information:* www.californiastatebeekeepers.com/annual-convention.



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REGIONAL NEWS

Regional Representative

North Coast

It's typically rainy on the coast, but we are fortunate in that we do periodically have some clear, even sunny, days between the storms giving bees a chance to get out to take cleansing flights and do a little foraging. I haven't seen much in bloom yet besides heather and daphne, but the huckleberries should be out soon as well as other early spring flowers. I have heard of some weakened hives that will probably not make it, but overall the beekeepers I've spoken with say their hives are active and growing. Everyone is so looking forward to being able to get together again and share their beekeeping experiences. But in the meantime, wear your masks and stay safe. *Kathy Cope*

Regional Associations

Central Oregon Beekeepers

March is the most confusing month in Central Oregon. We start getting the more frequent warm and calm days. The crocuses, willows, and snowdrops start blooming, all with oddly, or interestingly, colored pollen. The bees start flying more regularly, and folks get that itch to start working their bees. THEN March tends to be the heaviest snow month of the year (at least from the amounts of snow). It's not rare that we'll get a 3-foot (or more) dump. People seem to handle it okay after a fashion; however, many of our hives seem to have an issue and die off. Haven't yet figured out the cause.

After many requests from members and the public, we are proceeding with a virtual beginner's bee school. Doing it over

four days, two hours each evening. It's a new concept for us, the virtual portion; however, we believe it'll help many of our newer folks get a more stable start.

We implemented a poll on the outcomes from last year. The results were not as positive as hoped, so we'll be looking at how to help our members improve their results for the upcoming season. For the time being, we will continue our monthly meetings virtually on the 4th Tuesday of each month from 7 to 8:30 PM. *Allen Engle*

Columbia Gorge Beekeepers

The commercial beekeeping operations have already enjoyed the pollination wonders of almonds in northern California. The backyard beekeeper awaits the close of winter in hopes their hive(s) have survived. Winter in the Columbia Gorge has been mild, a bit of snow, a bit of rain, but nowhere near the heights of the extreme years. The greatest spring challenge for the bees comes down to rain coupled with cold (<50°F), conditions frustrating the girls in their foraging efforts. Honey storage last year left many a hive wanting for winter supplies. If the stress of pests and diseases is not enough, the lack of vital stores brings deleterious outcomes to the hives. No way to know at the time of this writing the percent of loss. The depressing events of 2020 may find beekeepers in the Gorge further impacted. But beekeepers continue to have hope. Shifting focus from the "reactive" to "proactive" is the mantra of 2021. Our association continues to meet via Zoom. Last October, Christopher Adams, Hood River Extension, offered the shifting perspective toward pests and diseases in the local ag community. This was followed by Angela Lai, Master Gardener/Journey-Level Master Beekeeper, offering Integrated Pest Management perspective in honey bee management. Hope is eternal as beekeepers in the Gorge continue to assimilate

the relationship between bees and the environment they thrive in.

Jerry Frazier

Linn Benton Beekeepers

Hope everyone is well. As you know, our year here in parts of Oregon has started with a big wisp of a wind storm; we lost three large fir trees and then the flood,



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followed by a beautiful white snowfall. And yes, the bees made it through all that. Hopefully everyone else did, too!

Our fearless leader Everett Kaiser has been trying to keep us on track by organizing our Zoom meetings. We are doing pretty well on lining up guest speakers for 2021. We still do not have a summer field day planned. Looking like a 2022 event.

Will keep you posted on any new developments; until then, be kind and understanding to all.

Ray Juhasz

Portland Urban Beekeepers

It always feels like such a tease when the warm weather of random February days drops into our lives. I can't help but think maybe an early spring is upon us and start looking for crocuses. I do see my tulips starting to come up, so it can't be that far away. Before we go any further, I need to give a shout-out to our OSBA 2020 Fall Conference speaker and 2020 American Honey Queen, Mary Reisinger. In her presentation, she highlighted her family's banana bread recipe which uses honey instead of sugar. When I found 11 (!) frozen bananas in my freezer the other day, I knew it was time. The results were delicious and I wanted to share a link to her recipe here: Substitute Honey for Sugar in Your Favorite Recipes [www.youtube.com/watch?v=T_YXoAD9lao].

We were so fortunate to hear from Dr. Tom Seeley for our February meeting speaking about Darwinian Beekeeping. This evolutionary approach to beekeeping focuses on reproducing conditions the bees have in nature. Small hives, minimal manipulation, swarm promotion, and low honey production are all aspects to this fascinating approach. There are some real challenges to working this method in an urban environment where other colonies and beekeeper methods can intersect, collide, and contradict. I couldn't help but think of the discipline such an approach requires: Resisting honey production, euthanizing mite-loaded colonies, encouraging brood breaks—all of the things that go against the lauded goals of increased brood expansion and honey production. At the same time, I appreciated his reinforcing the idea that all the ways of keeping bees are valid, just different. His talk made many of us think about why we do what we do when it comes to our bees. By taking the time to really think about what our individual goals are related to beekeeping, the better beekeepers we have the potential to be. *Jessica Anderson*

Tillamook Beekeepers

We at the coast can't wait until the weather is warm enough to hold outside apiary meetings. The February meeting was Zoom with twenty-nine folks attending. Quite a few people have lost hives this year. We will do a more in-depth analysis over the next month. We talked about our nuc and package order and also about our raffle hive. More on that in a moment.

We like to have something educational as a part of every



meeting. Most of our members are new or relatively new beekeepers. So, at this meeting, we showed a few short videos on waxing plastic foundation. The first one was an experiment by David Burns who put a super on a strong hive with various treatments to each frame. He showed us the results after eight days. It was very impressive: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uljvno09MuA. Then we watched two short videos on how to apply wax: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cDtVdpGox94&t=3s and www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHANcER-eRk.

Every spring we raffle off a hive to raise money for the association. The Tillamook Creamery actively participated in the hive this year and is also offering gift certificates for second and third place winners. The first raffle is at our April 9 meeting. We will also be raffling off a second hive exactly like the first one at the August County Fair. Anyone who buys raffle tickets for the first drawing is automatically still in for the second drawing in August. If any of you would like to purchase tickets, go to www.tillamookbeekeepers.org. Tillamook Bay Community College offered a six-hour Intro to Beekeeping class, which we led. Due to Covid restrictions, class size was limited to fourteen. It was very well received. Six hours gives one enough time to go from knowing nothing about honey bees to almost feeling comfortable installing a nuc. There will be another class at the end of February. The Covid rules for colleges offer more freedom than the rules for associations and meetings.

Claire Moody

Tualatin Valley Beekeepers

Tualatin Valley members enjoyed a fabulous virtual online presentation from Dr. Tom Seeley on Darwinian Beekeeping in January. There's been a lot of good conversation continuing among members about the ideas presented.

In March we'll be offering an online virtual Bee School in three sessions as well as our annual nuc sale for members. Check our website at tvbabees.org for costs and details.

Bees have been flying on the sunny 50°F February days around Hillsboro. Fingers crossed for an early spring!

Debby Garman

2020 Fall Conference

The OSBA 2020 Fall Conference was an event rife with firsts, thus reflecting the entire year 2020 in most all of its realm.



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Going virtual for the first time itself provided challenges (*aka* opportunities) in abundance.

First up in navigating the ropes, our conference moderators—Carolyn Breece, Paul Stromberg, and Cheryl Wright—skillfully wove together the narrative our enthusiastic, informed presenters provided during weekend and Wednesday evening sessions.



Our advertisers and online exhibitors provided a welcome foundation throughout (see: 2020 Conference Program: orsba.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-conference-program-reduced.pdf).

Those who managed the online auction—Emily Carlson, Priyadarshini Chakrabarti, Ellie Chapkin, Hannah Lucas, Jen Holt, Lindsay Sandusky, and Charlie Vanden Heuvel—built a solid platform from which we were able to work to meet our perennial objective to donate to honey bee research. It was those who so generously bid on donated items who made it a reality. There are not thanks enough. Items themselves came from a number of donors (many responsible for multiple items), including: Pam Arion, Artistic Bliss Portraits, Todd Balsiger, Ted Carlson, Laurie Chapman, Columbia Hardware, Dadant & Sons, Allen Engle, Rebecca Fain, Karen Finley, Jerry Frazier, GloryBee, George Hansen, Heitkams' Honey Bees, Foothills Honey Company, The Honey Store, Brent Hefley, Carlen Jupe, Angelina Lai, Lane County Beekeepers, Nicholas Licouris, Jan Lohman, Joe Maresh, Rosanna Mattingly, Old Sol, Amanda Shaw, Ellen Steel, Charlie Vanden Heuvel, Mureen Walker, and Western Bee Supply. Further, Marjie Ehry, Honey Judge, ensured that the (honey) show went on. She has announced the winning entry—Joe Maresh's fireweed honey (photo, upper right).

We don't know where 2021 will lead us—perhaps again going virtual, perhaps meeting in person, or some combination of the two. As we prepare for the 2021 season, let's consider what we want to learn, what may be of use, and communicate with the conference chair, Joe Maresh. Now is a good time as well to plan to enter the honey show and to keep an eye out for items to donate, items that may become someone's 2021 treasures!

—RM

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Update: The True Source Honey program has enhanced standards for certification in 2021. See: truesourcehoney.com

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 **April** issue, 2021. The deadline for submitting copy is **March 10, 2021**. 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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