CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

June 2017

ISSUE NUMBER 16

NEXT MEETING JUNE 28TH, 2017

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Rick Olson, Club President

Greetings Central Coast Beekeepers--

Oh, boy. Just when we thought spring had sprung the rain sprang back. My bees started the month depressed--the Himalayan blackberries were just opening their petals the first week of June and then the rain began beating them back. Last year the bees ignored them and I think it was because of this late rain on the blossoms. I attended Randy Oliver's session in Hood River last month and he says they have the same problem in California. A very bad start to the honey flow!

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

Last month Carolyn Breece came out to the coast and gave a good overview of Integrated Pest Management. We're lucky to have such expertise and talent so close. Thanks, Carolyn. Ken Ograin from the Lane County Beekeepers will be our next speaker to discuss reading frames and

preparation for the honey flow. Club members can bring in frames that they have questions about for analysis.

Friday in the apiary has been delayed a week due to weather and is scheduled June 23rd. Possible topics: basic hive inspections, colony management during the nectar flow, pests and disease, splits and re-queening, or anything you want to talk about! This is a great opportunity to work with experienced beekeepers. The hives at OSU are in various states of health so you can see the good and the bad and learn the latest techniques for keeping them healthy.

We had a follow up question and answer session for our OMBA apprentice class. Lots of questions and stories from our apprentice beekeepers as they get more involved with their bees and their bee paradigms evolve.

We manned a booth at the Connie Hanson Garden Festival on Saturday, June 17th. Because of the vagaries of the weather this year, they were not able to have the private garden tours that have always been a high point of the festival. So this year they turned it into a pollinator event. That included two 1-hour presentations, one on honeybees and native pollinators, the other on herbs and pollinator for age. There were some vendors scattered around the garden, a couple of artists painting or sketching in the garden, musicians and a beautiful, big pollinator booth put together by Kathy Cope and seen in the picture below.

Kathy gave the honeybee presentation to about 25 interested folks; Stan and Neill donated honey for the honey tasting and Stan manned the pollinator booth,

and Max brought his observation hive up which,

of course, was a high point for everybody that came to the garden. The sun came out in the afternoon and it turned out to be a wonderful day. Thanks to Cathy, Neill, Stan and Max for making this such a successful event! And special thanks to Max's grandkids for doing such an excellent job of decorating his observation hive. It is beautiful!

Kathy, Patti and Jon put together a basics introduction to beekeeping class that will be held this evening, June 21st from 6-8 pm at the Newport Library. This should be very helpful in determining if beekeeping is the right fit for participants and we expect a good crowd.

Congratulations to Ramesh Sagili for his promotion to Associate Professor **with Tenure!** Very well deserved and recognition for the excellent apiculture program at OSU!

NEXT MEETING –June 28th, 2017

6:30 pm at the Newport Library

PROGRAM

Ken Ograin, a long time beekeeper and board member of the Oregon Master Beekeepers Program, will be talking on Reading frames and preparation for the Honey Flow.

6:30pm – 8 pm

National Pollinator Week is a time to celebrate pollinators and spread the word about what *you* can do to protect them.

Ten years ago the U.S. Senate's unanimous approval and designation of a week in June as "National Pollinator Week" marked a necessary step toward addressing the urgent issue of declining pollinator populations. Pollinator Week has now grown into an international celebration of the valuable ecosystem services provided by bees, birds, butterflies, bats and beetles.

The Pollinator Partnership is proud to announce that June 19-25, 2017 has been designated National Pollinator Week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of the Interior.

For more information go to: www.pollinator.org

MITE KEEPING 101

Morris Ostrofiky

We are all beekeepers. We also all keep mites. As the Honey Bee Coalition states, "We all need to accept the fact that we have an extra member of the family - the mite - and its here to stay."

We are all beekeepers. We also all keep mites. As the Honey Bee Coalition states, "We all need to accept the fact may understand bees well, but now we need to do the same with regard to the Varroa mite. Without action on our part, beekeeping can quickly morph into mite keeping. Mites are in all of the hives; you'll never get rid of them all. The question is, will the mite population take control turning you into a mite keeper rather than a bee keeper?

This presentation provides tools you can use to keep you and your bees in control of your hives. The focus is a practical approach to managing Varroa mites over the course of the year. Recognizing mite indicators both inside and outside the hive is important.

Some indicators outside the hive:

- Bees crawling in front of the hive
- Evidence of viruses like deformed wings
- Discarded larvae on landing board
- Mites visible on a sticky board

Some indicators inside the hive:

- Perforated caps
- Spotty brood pattern
- Phoretic mites visible on bees
- Quanine visible on the sides of the cells

The only way mites can sneak up on you is if you are not watching. How to avoid a sneak attack:

- Know the signs of Varroa
- Determine your mite numbers
- Look at number trends
- Make a treatment decision based on the numbers.

Three ways to monitor:

1. "Jar" samples-ether roll or powdered sugar shake; alcohol or detergent wash
2. Brood sampling with a cappings fork
3. Natural mite fall caught on a sticky board

While genetics is the vehicle to reach the gold standard of Treatment Free, it is not a short-term answer to mites. As Jerry Hayes said, "Genetics will work if you have about 500 years." There are several reasons for this, including drifting, no control of the drones a queen mates with, and Varroa mites on flowers waiting for a ride.

The impact of mites on the colony's ability to raise "fat" winter bees is critical to their survival. Winter bees have lots of Vitellogenin, a molecule made by the bees that contains proteins, fats, and carbohydrates. This food storage reservoir makes it possible for the bees going into to winter to survive for months rather than weeks. It allows the bees to come out of metabolic retirement and switch roles back to nurse bees to raise the next generation. The bees getting ready for winter need to store energy (Vitellogenin). Bees infected with Varroa mites do not produce this critical survival tool.

I only treat if the numbers indicate the necessity and if I treat one colony, I treat all in the apiary. Using the *Tools for varroa Management* publication, treatment strategies that have worked for me over the course of the four population phases of the honey bee and Varroa life cycles are as follows:

- Population Increase - Api Life Var
- Population Peak - Mite-Away Quick Strips
- Population Decrease - Mite-Away Quick Strips
- Dormant - Oxalic acid

It is important to take a count after any treatment to verify its efficacy and to know whether or not you have to do something more.

The importance of starting fall treatment plans as soon as honey supers are

removed is a vital step in helping the bees' successful overwintering. Starting early and monitoring mite drops after treatment allows a beekeeper to go to Plan B should the first treatment fall short.

The take home message:

- Know your mite loads whether you plan to treat or not
- Know your mite load at the time you treat & post treatment
- Follow the product directions EXACTLY
- Talk to experienced, successful beekeepers to learn what has worked for them
- Ultimately, it is your decision

Note: In addition to all that Morris provides here, authors of an article soon to be published in the Entomological Society of America's *Environmental Entomology* note that Varroa mites take advantage of current beekeeping practices. Because the mite has made use of honey bee behaviors that allow for its wide dispersal, the researchers cite the need for *new* integrated pest management strategies to treat *Varroa destructor* as a migratory pest, as well as for further research into the specifics of Varroa dispersal. Until the article is available, see more at: www.morningagclips.com/how-varroa-mites-grow-and- spread/#sthash. 9m 1 C9GQH .dpuf.

Also of interest may be "Ecology, Life History, and Management of Tropilaelaps Mites" by Lilia I. de Guzman
et al., who note the similarity of the life history and the food requirements of this parasite to those of the Varroa mite. The paper can be found at: https://doi.org/10.1093/jee/ tow304.

Looking For Local Queens?

Well I guess that depends on your definition of local. But the Big News is a member of the Tillamook Beekeepers, Garrick Gordon, is raising queens and selling both queens and nucs. Garrick can be reached at 503 812-7106, preferably by text message, for more information. Please mention to him how you heard about the queen and nuc sales. He is selling his queens for $25.00 each and the nucs for $100.00 each but does not include delivery. I suggest you talk to Garrick about delivery and exactly what you are getting when you purchase a nuc.
Kathy is getting a nuc from him and I will be getting a queen. Early reports from other beekeepers are both the queens and nucs they got are doing well.

Stan Scotton

OREGON MASTER BEEKEEPER PROGRAM

The Oregon Master Beekeeper Program is preparing for the 2018 apprentice class which will begin in January. If you are interested be sure to put your name on the waiting list at www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org. The date a person's name is placed on this list helps determine whether or not they are accepted into the program.
CCBA is supportive of the program and will again offer scholarships for the 2018 class. Scholarships pay half of the registration fee upfront with the balance being paid to the recipient upon receiving their "Apprentice Certification" or finishing their Journey level. To learn more about the program visit their website: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mb/

Contact Rick for applications for scholarships.

Do you own 5 or more colonies? Its renewal time for apiary registration fees if you own 5 or more colonies. New apiary registration guidelines are now in place. Register now to avoid a late fee!

The following annual apiary registration fees are established by authority provided in ORS 602.090: Every person who owns or is in charge of five or more colonies of bees located within this state must register the colonies with the Department of Agriculture. Each registration shall be accompanied by a fee, which shall cover each colony of bees owned by the registrant.
1. For registrations made before June 1 of each year, the annual registration fee shall be $10 per registration and $0.50
per colony.
2. The number of colonies that must be registered shall be based on the high number of full strength colonies managed
within the state of Oregon at any time during the previous year.
3. For registrations made after July 1 of each year, the annual registration fee shall be $20 per registration and $0.50 per
colony.
All moneys collected pursuant to ORS 602.090 shall be spent on pollinator research that is predominately focused on honeybees.
For registration information go to
https://apps.oregon.gov/SOS/LicenseDirectory/LicenseDetail/606 .

Swarm Season

Swarming is a complex phenomenon and may be influenced by laying space, weather, nectar and pollen sources, genetics, excessive feeding and other conditions such as the age of the queen and the strength her pheromones. Younger queens with strong pheromones are less likely to swarm than older queens. But if the conditions are right any hive may swarm. We usually see swarms on the coast right after a few days of rain when resources are abundant. My first swarm this year was the first sunny day right after a week of rain--text book swarming. Unfortunately it was near the top of a tall fir tree and when it left it ignored my bait hives.

Preventing swarming As we come out of the rainy season we begin the delicate balancing act of developing strong colonies while trying to control the swarming impulse. is of primary concern to the beekeeper especially if honey production is the main goal. A hive weakened by swarming will spend precious resources building the colony back up--as much as 60% of the hive may leave in the primary swarm. Secondary swarms will weaken the hive even more.

There are three types of swarms--reproductive, congestive and absconding swarms. A reproductive swarm is an intrinsic urge of the hive super organism to reproduce itself. It ensures the survival of the species.

When the hive expands during the nectar flow, overcrowding can lead to a congestive swarm. "Honey bound" colonies have to swarm to make room for the queen to continue laying eggs.

An absconding swarm occurs when the entire colony leaves the hive due to threats from pests, chemicals, disease, poor hive conditions, and insufficient hive space and may happen at any time of the year.

There are three ways queen balance can be regained after the initial swarm when the old queen leaves. If the remaining queen cells hatch there may be queen to queen battles until the strongest survives. In other cases the first queen to emerge will kill the other queens before they hatch in what is called "pre-emergence destruction". Thirdly, there may be smaller after swarms. Typically these have a much harder time surviving and may leave the hive too weak to survive as well.

The first indicator of the swarm impulse is production of drones. This will occur four to six weeks prior to swarming. There is quite a bit of flexibility in the timing due to forage conditions and here on the coast, weather conditions.

An initial check for swarm cells can be made by tilting the upper brood box up and looking for them along the bottom of the frames. For a thorough check you have to examine each frame as queen cells may be tucked into corners of the brood comb and can be hard to find. Swarming generally happens after the queen cell is capped and before a new queen emerges. Cutting out these cells is not generally effective.

There are several methods in quelling the swarm impulse. Give the bees more room. If the cluster has moved up during the winter, reverse brood boxes. Adding supers will give them more room as well. Checker board the brood chamber with drawn comb but be careful not to disturb the brood chamber too much. The removed brood comb can be added to weaker hives.

Since older queens are more prone to swarming you can pinch her and add a new queen. Stronger queen pheromones keep the swarming impulse to a minimum.

You may isolate the queen until the swarm season has passed with more exotic techniques like the Demaree Method, the Snelgrove Method or the Ohio modified two-queen system. I haven't used any of these systems but some experienced bee keepers swear by them. Another technique to try is caging or removing the queen for specific periods of time. This will also break up the brood cycle and help control Varroa mites.

If there are eggs present or you see a queen you can place the frames with queen cells into a nuc box. Make sure to add a frame or two of brood, a frame of drawn comb and a couple of frames of capped honey. If all goes right you'll have a new hive in six weeks--one week for the queen to hatch, a couple of weeks for her to get her wings, mate and begin laying, and three weeks for the first hatch of new bees.

If all these methods fail and the bees swarm anyway you may be able to lure them into a bait box or capture them as they cluster in a tree or bush. Capturing swarms is a whole other topic outside the scope of this article.

By Rick Olson

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wednesday, June 23rd – Friday at the Apiary. Monthly meeting at the Oak Creek Apiary at OSU in Corvallis to provide hands on experience with hives and bees. **RESCHEDULED FROM 6/16**

Saturday, June 24 – Ruhl Bee Supply in Wilsonville Field Day. This is an annual event and this year they have 2 folks leading the field day – Dr. Juliana Rangel from Texas A&M University, a noted educator and researcher in the Department of Entomology and George Hansen a well-known commercial beekeeper here in Oregon. It runs from 9 am to 5 pm and costs $40 which includes lunch. Bring your bee suit as hives will be opened and assessed. Go to www.BrushyMountainBeeFarm.com to register.

Tuesday, July 11th - Tillamook Beekeepers Tillamook Beekeepers are moving their meeting to the OSU Extension Office at 4506 3rd St Tillamook 97141. Essentially across third street for the Fair Complex and the Community College Complex. Same day, second Tuesday

Board members of the organization, identified below, can also be reached at this address

President – Rick Olson

Past President – Nancy McDowell

Co- Vice President – Anne Schatz

Co- Vice President – Kathy Cope

Treasurer – Stan Scotton

Secretary – Rebecca Fain

At Large – Patti Johnson

At Large – Jon Sumpter

At Large – Neill Crawford