



# CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

March 2017

ISSUE NUMBER 12

NEXT MEETING MARCH 22, 2017

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Greetings Central Coast Beekeepers--

We had our usual winter hiatus with nearly two weeks of mid 50s temps in February. Acacia and pussy willows blossomed and the bees got out in search of pollen. But March has typically been the cruelest month here on the Oregon coast so anxiety runs high. In spite of the wind, rain and even snow I was able to pop fondant and homemade protein patties into the hives before the snow started again. When the weather turns I feel compelled to help them. Checking again later in the week, half of the patties were gone!

Don't forget to monitor for Varroa. As the queen begins to lay, so the mites begin to hatch out--by some studies .72 per worker cell and 1.62 per drone cell. I use a sticky board during the winter--it's too cold to be opening the hives for any length of time for a more intense mite count such as using a powdered sugar or alcohol shake. A sticky board is not as accurate but it does give an indication and a trend of mite population growth. Remember to keep your screened bottom boards clear of debris. I use a yard stick to scrape them off every 3-4 days.

Also, be on the lookout for yellow jacket queens. They're beginning to come out of their winter sleep searching for nest sites. If you manage to kill or trap

them now you will be eliminating 2000-5000 yellow jacket workers! I'll be going over some strategies for controlling them at the March meeting.

I hope you caught our very own Anne Schatz giving her talk "Strategies for Augmenting Honey Bee Forage" at our February meeting. Anne is an Oregon Master Gardener and is well on her way to her BeeHD! Her understanding of the mutual partnership of plants and bees is amazing. She gave us many advanced strategies for designing a nourishing environment for our honeybees.

Max Kuhn, journey beekeeper with a dozen years of experience, will be giving a talk on spring management at our March 22 meeting. In April, Dr. Ramesh Sagili, assistant professor of apiculture from OSU, will be speaking on honey bee nutrition and in May, Carolyn Breece, faculty research assistant and OMBA board member, will be speaking on integrated pest management. In June, Ken Ograin from the Lane County Beekeepers Association will be giving his talk on "Reading Frames". Lynn Royce is coming out in August to talk about her research findings on wild bees and how it applies to keeping our domestic bees alive. These speakers all bring invaluable information and experience for getting strong healthy hives ready for the honey flow so be sure to check them out at our monthly meetings.

We are always looking for photos and stories to include in our newsletter. So, even with this unpredictable winter weather take a camera when you inspect your hives and share your winter successes and disappointments for the betterment of our coastal beekeepers.

**Rick Olson, Club President**

**NEXT MEETING – March 22, 2017**

**6:30 pm at the Newport Library**

**PROGRAM**

**Max Kuhn, journey beekeeper with a dozen years of experience, will be giving a talk on spring management**

**6:30pm – 8 pm**

## Honoring Past Club Leadership

Being a young club – only a bit over 2 years old – we want to take a moment to thank the folks who got us where we are today. When 7 of us sat down in 2014 and said we wanted to start a bee club on the coast to provide an opportunity to discuss the unique issues of raising bees in a coastal environment, we never thought that there were so many others who also wanted this opportunity. It took hard work and commitment which has paid off tremendously. Over the past 2 club meetings we took the time to thank the folks who provided the leadership to move the club forward from an idea to reality.

In January, we provided Anne Schatz with a plaque and a gift in recognition of the tremendous job she and Nancy McDowell did in 2016. Nancy has not been able to join us in 2017 yet, but we also have a plaque and gift for her. These ladies took on the job of co-presidents and were able to expand educational opportunities for club members by bringing in exceptional speakers and also setting up a baseline organizational structure to move us forward.

Here is a shot of Anne accepting her plaque.



In February, we had the opportunity to recognize Dan Speers who served as the club's first president and who helped to expand membership by assisting with booths at the Master Gardeners plant sale in Newport and at the Lincoln County Fair in 2015.

Here is a shot of Dan getting his plaque and gift.



## [Got a Hornet or Yellow Jacket Problem?](#)

Hello Central Coast Beekeepers,

I am a collector of hornet and yellow jacket nests and their occupants, based in Corvallis. Venom is extracted from the vespids and is then used in the manufacture of life saving allergy shots

Please visit my site for further info on this FREE service:

[www.oregonwasp.com](http://www.oregonwasp.com)

As a beekeeper myself I know the vespids can be quite troublesome to a beehive. I collect the hornets and yellow jackets throughout the Valley (roughly Cottage Grove to Salem) and want to expand my collection service to the Coast surrounding Newport. I'm hoping your group will welcome this service.

I've attached my cell number in case you have any questions at all. It's through the cell or this email that I can be reached to schedule a removal of a nest. 541-753-6861

Many thanks and best of luck in your upcoming bee year.

## Ross Conrad at Willamette Valley Beekeepers

Rick Olson, Mar 10, 2017

We drove up to Salem for the Willamette Valley Bee meeting to hear their guest speaker author Ross Conrad. The topic was Natural Beekeeping in the Age of Neonicotinoids & CCD. He started out by saying that he'd gotten into bees just as Varroa became an issue in the US. He didn't treat and initially his bees died but eventually he was able to keep a large percentage of them alive. Today he utilizes a multifaceted approach to combat Varroa and CCD. He loses an average of 15% when he doesn't do any form of treatment and 10% when he treats.

Step one: Remove stress

CCD seems to be brought on by stress indicating that the first defense is eliminating these issues. Do not give hives junk food like sugar and protein patties--this causes nutritional stress. Feed honey and pollen frames from strong hives and only feed if bees are in danger of starvation. The typical hive needs 80-100 lbs. of honey to make it through the winter. Don't use store bought honey as foulbrood spores may exist in it and only use cane sugar as beet have been grown from GMO treated seeds and contain significant amounts of pesticides.

Other stress factors include monoculture pollination where bees do not receive the full complement of proteins that they would get from natural foraging. In addition, the 40% rise in CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere seems to lower the amount of protein in pollen. This tied with the fact that the seasons are shifting with temperature shifts in the environment, has led to the situation where some of the flowering of plants that bees rely on for pollen and nectar may now have their bloom out of sync with the traditional forage cycle of bees.



Pesticides such as Neonicotinoids are systemic, persistent and water soluble. They cause memory and learning problems in bees and they take longer to develop as well. Seeds are treated prophylactically. The decline of native pollinators seems to be correlated to this treated seed usage. They get exposed through pollen and nectar. The Rusty patch bumble bee has just been put on the endangered species list. Also, fungicides and herbicides thought to be harmless are now being found to be synergistic when used together causing far greater harm than either one of them alone.

Pests such as wax moths that eat the wax of weaker hives and Varroa mites are also causing stress. For wax moths, if you match the cavity size with the number of bees, they will take care of the moths. Varroa mites present a more difficult challenge. Mr. Conrad suggested that organic chemicals such as formic and oxalic acid work well. Essential oils also work but are temperature sensitive. Hop guard seems to work in his apiary. Powdered sugar dusting works but you have to apply every three days for a full brood cycle (21 days).

The Varroa mites emit a chemical that suppresses the bees' immune system so that the wound they make to suck out hemolymph remains open. These mites double in population every 21 days. Mite resistant bees include Russians (but they swarm a lot), hygienic bees, VSH bees (Varroa Sensitive Hygiene) and African bees. Hygienic bees seems to be able to hear the mites under the capping and will remove the larva.

Other stressors include Nosema Cerranae which is not visually detectable. Formic acid seems to work as a treatment and you can also use a "drench" of essential oils (ProHealth, HoneBeeHealthy) and spray or pour it on bees. This will work for both Nosema and CCD. With strong nutrition Nosema will remain in the bee's gut but bees seem to survive it. Nosema Apis does not seem to be much of a problem anymore.

Another major stressor is AFB whose spores live for up to 80 years. The symptoms are sunken greasy caps with pin holes, black scales which contain thousands of spores and a foul smell. Use a twig or match stick to do a ropy test. If you try to save old hives--shake all bees into new equipment and burn the old frames including wax, honey and propolis where spores reside. Swarms may not carry it. Old comb does however. You can scrape and scorch old boxes but sadly, the only sure way to eliminate AFB is to burn all equipment as well as the bees.

Step 2: Break brood cycle

He also believes strongly in letting splits make their own queen to break the brood cycle as an effective tool against Varroa.

Step 3: Good genetics

When you buy queens, you have no idea how strong their genetics are or how tuned to your environment they are. You are much better off raising your own queens

Step 4: Replace comb regularly

Replace about 20% of your comb annually. It contains chemical residue and even residue from non-chemical products that you utilize on your hives. He mentioned that small cell comb doesn't seem to work as a mite deterrent but makes for more natural sized bees.

#### Step 5: Screened bottom boards

Always utilize screened bottom boards as they enhance ventilation and may assist in Varroa control.

#### Step 6: Cull drone brood

Monitor:

- Synthetic chemicals (tolerance will build up in 3-5 years)
- DWV (deformed wing virus) indicates Varroa
- Look for mites on bees
- Keep hive drone rite as well as queen rite (you can monitor mites in drone comb and brace comb)

Autopsy dead outs immediately. Antibiotics kill good as well as bad bacteria and disrupt the microbiologic environment of hive.

Further comments:

- Honeybees are buffered from Neonics--beekeepers are conscientious in caring for bees by treating and feeding when necessary.
- Native bee diseases and honeybee diseases are spread to each other from flowers .
- Top bar hives may survive better as they are prone to swarming and comb is destroyed when harvesting honey. This leads to fewer mites.
- A good nuc doesn't need to be fed.
- Sick bees can't raise healthy bees so treat early so they can raise healthy fat winter bees.
- If you feed do so in early fall and late summer and feed a lot as it takes 5 gallons of sugar syrup to fill one super.

## UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Wednesday, March 15 – Linn Benton Beekeepers** at the Corvallis Waldorf School, 3855 NE Hwy 20, Corvallis. 6:30 pm to 8 pm. Speaker: Kenny Williams. Topic: He will be speaking on re-queening a hive for the backyard beekeeper.

**Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup> – Portland Urban Beekeepers** present Michael Thiele speaking on the Biodynamic Approach to honey bees. 9 am to 4 pm at 5830 NE Alameda St in Portland. The price for participant is \$30.

**Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> – Lane County Beekeepers** at Trinity Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd in Eugene. 6:15 pm presentation on Bait Boxes by Morris Ofstrosky, 7:30 pm presentation on Swarm and Hive Management by Karessa Torgenson.

**Wednesday, March 22 - Central Coast Beekeepers** at Newport Library from 6:30 pm to 8pm. Club member and Journey Beekeeper in the Oregon Master Beekeepers program, Max Kuhn, will present on “Spring Management”

**Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup> – Tillamook Beekeepers Bee Day** with Dewey Caron. \$15 per person. Please contact club Treasurer, Stan Scotton at [centralcoastbeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:centralcoastbeekeepers@gmail.com) for more information and tickets.

**Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup> – Southern Oregon Beekeepers Spring Bee School** with Dewey Caron, Tom Chester and Karessa Torgenson. 9 am to 4:30 pm at 569 Hanley Rd., Central Point, OR. Price is \$45 and you need to bring your lunch and protective gear.

**Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup> – Linn Benton Beekeepers** at the Corvallis Waldorf School, 3855 NE Hwy 20, Corvallis. 6:30 pm to 8 pm. Speaker: Morris Ostrofsky from Eugene. Topic: Swarms are coming – Are your bait boxes ready?

**Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> – Michael Bush talk – 10 am – 4 pm at 1785 Meyer Parkway in Hood River.** Cost is \$30 and registration at [bg-bees.com/event/michael-bush](http://bg-bees.com/event/michael-bush).

**Wednesday, April 26 - Central Coast Beekeepers** at Newport Library from 6:30 pm to 8pm. Dr. Ramesh Sagili, Assistant Professor of Apiculture at OSU will present on “Honey Bee Nutrition”.

**Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> – Randy Oliver and Morris Ostrofsky – 10 am to 4 pm at 4565 Riordan Hill Drive, Hood River.** Cost is \$60 and registration at [bg-bees.com/event/randy-oliver](http://bg-bees.com/event/randy-oliver).

**Wednesday, May 24 - Central Coast Beekeepers** at Newport Library from 6:30 pm to 8pm. Carolyn Breece, faculty research assistant at OSU and Program Director of the Oregon Master Beekeepers Association, will present on “Integrated Pest Management”

**Wednesday, June 28 - Central Coast Beekeepers** at Newport Library from 6:30 pm to 8pm. Ken Ograin, long time beekeeper and Board member of the Oregon Master Beekeepers will join us to discuss “Reading Frames”.



**Wednesday, August 23 - Central Coast Beekeepers** at Newport Library from 6:30 pm to 8pm. Lynne Royce, insect identification specialist with the Oregon State University Extension Service, will present on her research on wild bees and how it applies to keeping our domestic bees alive.

## Ohio State University Bee Lab Webinars

The 2017 webinars will be available in March. The 2016 webinars are posted on their website.

<https://u.osu.edu/beelab/courses/>

## Kelly's Beekeeping Website: "Lane County Hiveways"

Follow Kelly as she does her inspections, observations, and other beekeeping activities.

<http://lanecountyhiveways.com/>

This is the official publication of the Central Coast Beekeepers Association (CCBA) for the purposes of informing and educating its membership. Any use of the materials included in this newsletter for other reasons must be approved by the board of CCBA. The information and opinions expressed by the authors in this newsletter are for informational purposes only and are not necessarily endorsed by the Central Coast Beekeepers Association.

To arrange for publication or distribution of this material, please contact the organization through their e-mail account at: [www.centralcoastbeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:www.centralcoastbeekeepers@gmail.com)

Rebecca Fain – Newsletter Editor

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