



CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

September 2017

ISSUE NUMBER 19

NEXT MEETING SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2017

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Rick Olson, Club President

Well, we survived the eclipse and the fires. The first winter storm of the season is rolling in--it looks like a full week of rain. I loaded my hives up with syrup and protein patties in mid-August and went on vacation for a month. Needless to say they had devoured everything so I'm starting a late season feeding regime to fatten them up for the winter--see Ken Ograin's article below. The mite levels are also starting to climb and weak hives are starting to show. Fall definitely is the most important time in the bee year--lots of issues to deal with. When you're not out at the apiary shoulder to shoulder with the bees, keep reading everything you can about this critical time. For a deeper understanding of bees, take advantage of the upcoming OSBA conference, Friday in the Apiary and the Oregon State Master Beekeeping program. Keeping on top of nutrition and mites will insure getting the most hives through the winter.

We understand that we missed a very successful booth that the club sponsored at the Lincoln County Fair while we were gone. Along with the regular display materials, there was an observation hive – thank you Stan for donating the use of some of your bees – and several club members assisted in helping out in the booth. A substantial number of folks signed up to get more information, potentially attend a Bee Day and maybe join the club even though Fair attendance was down due to concerns that the Eclipse would create a horrendous traffic jam.

The club still has two full scholarships for participation in the Oregon State Master Beekeeping program this coming year so if you are interested; get an application from Becca at the next

meeting. Also, the winner of our OSBA scholarship for full registration minus lodging to attend the Oregon State Beekeepers Association conference from Oct 27 - 29 has found that he will be unable to attend, so we will have another drawing at the September meeting. If you are wondering if attending the conference is a worthwhile investment, check with Patti and Pat who went for the first time last year and hear what they have to say.

NEXT MEETING –September 27th, 2017

6:30 pm at the Newport Library

PROGRAM

Lynn Royce, a PHD in Entomology, will be presenting on natural beekeeping and her tree hive project.

6:30pm – 8 pm

Honey Bee Pathogen Testing Now Available

Megan O'Neil

As the Laboratory Manager at the National Agricultural Genotyping Center (NAGC) located in Fargo, North Dakota, I am writing to you in hopes that you would forward this information to the bee keepers within your state letting them know that our honey bee pathogen testing service is now available.

The National Agricultural Genotyping Center was started as a joint project of Los Alamos National Laboratories and National Corn Growers Association. Our mission is to translate scientific discoveries into solutions for production agriculture, food safety, functional foods, and bioenergy. We are a stand-alone, not-for-profit 501 (c)5 corporation that is governed by a Board of Directors, a majority of whom are agricultural producers. This producer funded laboratory is for the benefit of producers; specifically targeting solutions for agriculture. Our ISO accredited facility includes a multi-disciplinary team of scientists that specialize in research and development of sensitive, high-throughput assays for pathogen detection.

In April 2016, we had a discussion with Samantha Brunner, the North Dakota State Apiary Inspector, during which she expressed her concern regarding the lack of services to help bee keepers diagnose diseases, particularly in identifying a variety of pathogens that have been associated with colony collapse disorder.

To help fill that gap, NAGC has recently developed a panel that can detect 11 pathogens to help evaluate the health status of honey bee colonies.

We can currently test for the following pathogens: Acute Bee Paralysis Virus, Black Queen Cell Virus, Kashmir Bee Virus, Lake Sinai Virus 1, Lake Sinai Virus II, Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus, Deformed Wing Virus, Israeli Acute Bee Paralysis Virus, and Slow Bee Paralysis Virus, American Foulbrood, and European Foulbrood.

Since NAGC is set up to conduct high throughput testing, we strive to adhere to a 30-day turnaround time or less. We would welcome the opportunity to play a role in trying to solve the current honey bee crisis with declining populations, and greatly appreciate your help in spreading the word about our testing abilities.

I would very much appreciate any feedback or discussion on how our facility can help bee keepers assess the health of their honey bee colonies. I also welcome any ideas on the development of future tests that are not included in our current pathogen panel, but would be of great interest to local apiarists.

More information on our honey bee test panel can be found at:

www.genotypingcenter.com

Keeping Bees In September

Ken Ograin

Let's hope that September will not be as hot temperature wise as July and August have been. There are conflicting forecasts for weather going into fall, *Farmers' Almanac* says it will be cooler than normal with more precipitation than normal, *US Farm Report* says just the opposite, warmer temperatures and less precipitation. In just a few weeks, it will be fall by the calendar, but as beekeepers and the bees fall management is well underway. Queens have been reducing egg laying since summer solace, bees have been storing winter food in the brood area as new bees hatch, winter fat bees are being produced and will be for several more weeks. That is assuming your colonies are healthy and Varroa are well below threshold level.

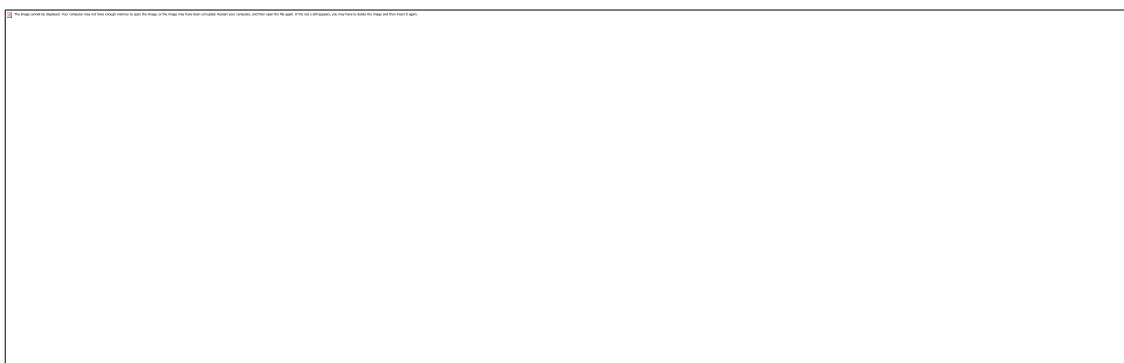
Keep your hive inspections to a minimum. Swarming should not be a concern anymore this season. Learn to listen to your bees. Healthy colonies have a low humming sound. When a colony is stressed for any number of reasons-queen problems, robbing, yellowjackets, Varroa pressure, etc.-you will hear an ever-increasing buzzing sound.

Varroa mite populations should be peaking soon, so just because you may have treated do not stop you're monitoring. In the past several years, I have noticed mite levels skyrocketing in late September to early October. There are several things that you should be doing at least once a week from now on until bees are clustering and not flying daily. (1) Check early in the day for yellowjackets trying or entering your hives. Entrance reducers will help. Try and find ground nests and destroy if possible. (2) Look for signs of robbing: bees hovering 2-3 feet in front of your hive, bees around back and sides of your hives, large wax pieces on the bottom board or sample board. The DC-Davis robber screens are a good defense. Worst case, relocate the hive. (3) Heft with one hand the back of your hive. If you can lift with little effort, your bees need food stores. If temperatures are above 50°F feed heavy syrup, 2 parts sugar: 1 part water, in an in-hive or hive top feeder. If temps are below 50°F, then feed fondant or sugar cakes. (4) Monitor for mites. I use my sample board, and I am looking for counts increasing between each sample. I am not trying to determine threshold levels, just increasing numbers of natural drop. (5) Keep a water source available for bees. If your plan is to leave full supers of honey on your hives and you have used a queen excluder, be sure to remove the excluder. Do not leave an excluder on your hive.

During the hot weather of July something came up that reminds me that we need to be thinking *Smoker Safety* year around. Smokers contain a fire inside of a metal container, but they do radiate heat. Setting a lit smoker on or near combustible material

can and has caused fires. So, treat that smoker with respect and be sure it is out before putting it away.

If you have the room on your property, two good late-season nectar source plants are buckwheat and borage. Both of these are blooming right now. Honey bees and bumble bees love them both, and if you have bees you will only need to plant them once. Borage starts in spring and continues to produce new plants until we get a hard freeze.



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 two scholarships for the 2018 class, which can be used for either the apprentice or journey level. To learn more about the program visit their website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mb/>

[Applications for scholarships will be available at the sign in table at all club meetings.](#)

BUZZ FROM THE FIELD

Mark Aiassa shared some info on his successful honey harvest this year. He had a particularly successful hive that was twice as fast at producing honey this year even with a swarm. What a Queen! There were 7 full frames and 2 half frames of honey which yielded 42 half pints of honey and there were still some blooms on the dairy where he

keeps his hives so there may be more honey to come! Here is a shot of his liquid gold pouring out of his extractor.



BEEKEEPERS HOLIDAY IN FRANCE

By Rick Olson

We were on vacation in France the last four weeks and had a great time. We took the opportunity to connect with beekeepers there so we could learn more about the issues and concerns they were dealing with in France.

The highlight was our meeting and tour with Dr. John Kefuss. We got to spend an entire day seeing his operation starting with his honey house in Toulouse. John has been keeping bees for over 60 years starting when he was 11 years old. He's developed many unique ways of keeping bees from his hardware inventions to treatment free beekeeping. He builds his own frames which are much sturdier than the wooden frames you get from suppliers in the US. He also uses vertical wiring as it's stronger for holding wax foundation. His patented hives stands are self-adjusting to the slope of the ground they are placed on. He also had a gravity fed multi-hive feeding system.



Gravity fed feeder system and hive stand.

Most interesting, he has not treated his bees since 1984. He uses drone frames in all his hives. When I asked when he removed them, he said he didn't. He needs the drones to breed with his queens and the mites to interface with his bees--more mites breed stronger bees. Treating is counterproductive as it creates genetically weaker bees and stronger mites. John meticulously selects drones and queens from hives that have strong mite resistance, calm demeanor, and honey productivity. He has an extensive queen breeding operations and supplies queens all over Europe and his son now runs the honey producing side of the business with their major source of pollen being chestnuts.

Key to his mite research is counting mites in the late stage of larval development--the purple-eyed stage. He said he'd pay us for each mite we found. We cut a 3x3" section of older capped brood and carefully pulled it apart while checking for mites. We were looking for mature mites as well as immature mites. For a mite to survive and become a problem it has to be a mature female. In our sample of 50 pupas we found 6 foundress mites and two immature mites. John indicated that this ratio is a good sign that the hive will not have an increasing mite population--equilibrium seems to have been established between the bees and the mites--no new mature mites were found.

Every apiary and honey house we visited had Asian hornets--a major predator of honeybees--probing around the hives or equipment. Hives generally had one or two hornets hovering around the entrance. Within a minute or so they would snatch a bee out of the air and fly off with it. Later in the year they will show up in greater numbers and can completely rob out a hive in just a few hours. These incredible predators were first discovered in France in 2004. They hitched a ride on imported Chinese pots. At first nothing was done about them and now it is too

late. They are found throughout France, Portugal, Italy, Germany and Spain. A few have been found recently in England.

Much time and energy is needed to ward off these predators--foragers have less time to gather pollen and honey so the health of the hive is jeopardized. Typically the bees cluster at the entrance in a defensive stance.



Asian hornet staking a hive.

We were offered 1 Euro cent for every mite we found. Here is Becca getting her 8 cents to help defray our expenses!



Reward for 8 mites!

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Oct 20th – Friday in the Apiary

Location: Oak Creek Apiary at Oregon State University, Corvallis

Oct 27th – 29th – Oregon State Beekeepers Conference

Location: Oregon Gardens in Silverton. Do not miss this excellent opportunity to hear nationally known speakers and connect with beekeepers from throughout the state. As soon as the agenda and registration materials are out we will forward them to you!

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

Rebecca Fain – Newsletter Editor

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