



# CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

April 2018

ISSUE NUMBER 25

NEXT MEETING APRIL 25TH, 2018

**ATTENTION!!! – Remember that the April meeting – and only the April meeting – will be held at the OSU Extension Office in Newport at 1211 SE Bay Blvd. We will be back at the Library in May.**

## President's Message By Patti Johnson

It was great news to hear that we would be receiving our bee orders a little earlier than anticipated, but if you are like me, there were a few things to be done before their arrival. A hive stand needed to be finished and secured in place, another inventory check to ensure that there was adequate equipment for the additional hive, division of the brood frames that had comb and honey to provide each of the new packages a head start, and research on the oxalic spray treatment.

I chose the oxalic acid spray for a couple of reasons; one, the arriving packages would be broodless and this would be a great time to treat the phoretic mites, giving the colony an opportunity to get stronger, and slowing the mite reproduction. And the second reason, it was

on hand. I have used oxalic acid before, doing the dribble method on an established hive, and then again at Friday in the Apiary. But spraying the packages is a little different. The broodless package first must be sprayed with a 1:1 sugar solution two hours before spraying with the oxalic. This is done to fill their stomachs to reduce ingestion of the oxalic solution. But there is the calculation to make an appropriate strength solution. I often seem to make it more difficult than need be, especially when converting liters to quarts, milligrams to ounces and so on. Math was never my strong suit, but it all worked out, and the line on the syringe matched the dosage I calculated to be sprayed on each package. (Maybe that is why the line is there in the first place!)

Then I read with the next sentence, "it is recommended the bees have another 72 hours in a cool, darkened room before hiving". I had a choice... follow the directions and wait for three days or treat with something else. There was no way I was going to wait an additional three days before hiving the packages, and it has been drilled into all of us to follow the directions. So, I found an alternative. Well at least I got some practice in converting units.

But back to receiving our bees... what a great service provided by Rick and Becca to deliver our orders, almost to our doorsteps. Thank you! I am always a bit taken by so many giving individuals in our club.

So enjoy the arrival of your new bees and take a few moments to stand back and watch them. As we all know, they are truly fascinating creatures.

**Our next meeting is Wednesday April 25<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm at the **Newport Extension Office**. We will begin the meeting with a half hour to socialize and ask questions about our hives followed by a presentation by Mike Rodia, the Agriculture Liaison Chair of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association. He will present "Best Practices Guidelines for Nuisance-Free Beekeeping in Oregon". This is a document that municipalities across the state will be receiving to guide the development of any local regulations that they may choose to adopt regarding keeping bees in their jurisdiction. We all need to know what the document recommends to be prepared to address any recommended changes in the regulations in our local areas.**

## March Board and club meeting highlights

### March 28, 3018 CCBA board meeting

Gaelyn gave a report as new treasurer. Present balance is \$2741.53. She made some suggestions as to possible changes in the treasurer's position which can later be formalized and used as training information for new treasurers.

Becca made a motion to allow Gaelyn to purchase materials she needs for the duties of treasurer. Motion was seconded and passed.

Becca also moved that we add Patti and Jon as signers to the bank account. Motion was seconded and passed.

Tillamook Bee Club is now a 501(c)3 and Becca discussed this club's reasoning for why this was not pursued. OSBA requires that their member clubs need to be registered non-profit clubs but not 501(c)3 organizations. After discussion the board decided that at this time, CCBA is still not interested. Later, a cost/benefit analysis should be developed. Pat will take that on.

Becca recommended that we establish a point in the year when a late membership continues through the rest of the year. Consensus was that membership should continue January through December but that we might give an extended membership to people who sign up at the county fair. This will be finalized at the next board meeting.

The next board/general meeting will be held at the extension office.

Future Club Meeting topics:

April's meeting will cover residential beekeeping best practices with Mike Rodia from OSBA.

Jim will report on the Trifecta in Hood River for the May meeting.

Becca suggested that we have a pollinator-related discussion in June that will coordinate with the Master Gardener plant sale.

July could cover extraction.

Stan requested that sanitation be covered in one of the later months.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:00.

## **March 28, 2018 CCBA Member meeting**

Raffle tickets are available for a variety of products...2 tickets for \$1. A bee suit, mouse guard and in-hive feeders were chosen.

Jars of honey, fire-starters and candles from the Yachats Honey-Lovers Festival were also for sale. Proceeds go to the OSU Bee Lab.

Next meeting will be held at the OSU extension office.

Anne, coordinator for the OSU Master Beekeeper apprentice classes, thanked fellow instructors, Max and Rick.

**Guest speaker:** Carolyn Breece spoke on “Let’s Get Started with Bees!”

Carolyn had cards, developed by Dewey Caron, which were passed to be used to report winter hive progress.

Time, space, money, work, commitment to management, commitment to education, forage are needed to successfully get started with bees. Start up costs average \$700.

Estimated time commitment:

Spring: frequent visits and swarm control

Summer: fewer visits for general inspections and monitoring

Fall: mite monitoring and control (and throughout the year)

Winter: equipment repair, feeding

Installing packages – Bees come in a screened box with a feeder tin and a queen in a cage hanging inside the package. Bees can be shaken in or allowed to follow the queen in on their own. Installation video was shown.

Remove syrup can.

Remove queen cage.

Shake bees into hive box.

Remove cork from queen cage and insert a marshmallow and install the queen.

Put in syrup can.

Put hive back together. Do not disturb for 10 days at which point there should be larvae giving off pheromones that establish the hive.

Installing a nuc: Lift frames out of the nuc box and install them in the hive box in the same order and configuration.

Management:

1. Food: buy lots of sugar to feed them until a good honey flow is established. Nutritional additives are optional.

Spring: Are Bees flying?

Yes: use 1:1 syrup

No: use non-cooked fondant

Late summer: 2:1 syrup

2. Feeders: in-hive feeders, Boardman entrance feeders, several top feeder options

3. Management:

Inspections: recognize the different types of bees: Queen, workers, drones

Queen: retinue of workers, moves purposefully across the comb

Workers: jobs are related to age

Drones: large, all eyes

4. Inspections: look for signs of the queen (eggs, larvae); healthy-looking brood.

5. Mating: Requires good weather for sufficient mating. Excessive amounts of drone brood indicates a poorly mated queen: multiple eggs in a cell indicates a laying worker.

6. Frames: a good frame should have a solid pad of capped brood surrounded by a line of pollen and capped honey in the corners. Check regularly for honey and pollen.

7. Feeding:

Pollen patties: place over the cluster

Dry sugar or fondant if weather is cold/rainy. Syrup as weather warms.

**Varroa mites:**

Ubiquitous, difficult to be seen because they establish under the bee and in capped brood.

1. Monitor for mites:

**Sugar shake:** 300 (1/2c bees) into screen-topped jar, 2 Tbl powdered sugar, shake 1 minute, let sit, shake vigorously onto white base, spray with mist to dissolve sugar, count mites. 2-3% or less is recommended (6-9/300 bees).

**Sticky board:** monitors mites that drop from the phoretic (moving) bees.

Visual: Look for deformed wings, damaged pupae, mite excrement. Drones are capped for several additional days and can produce more mites.

2. Treatment/Handling

Chemical

Splits/Brood break

Mite-resistant stock/mite-resistant

bee breeding

Drone frames

Advocate for research

### 3. Monitor after treatment

An Oxalic acid spray can be used on the packaged bees before installation to kill mites before there is any brood. Check the Honey Bee Health Coalition/varroa: tools for Varroa management for information and videos

Keep good records in whatever way that works for you.

Hive:

Brood boxes

Honey supers

Endless amount of other stuff

Learning:

Books/journals

Web sites

Mentor

Bee clubs

Conferences

Bee schools

Oregon Master Beekeeper program

Friday in the Apiary at OSU: third Friday

(3-5 pm) (except in April)

Ask for help!

## PNW SURVEY OF BEE HEALTH & NATIONAL SURVEY

There are two survey's that we urge our members to take. They are the PNW Honey Bee Survey, [www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/survey](http://www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/survey). This helps all of us know what beekeepers are doing to combat varroa as well as their overwintering losses/successes. The second one is the Bee Informed Partnership survey [http:// beeinformed.org](http://beeinformed.org). Please take the time to complete them this month.



## Busy April in the Bee Hive

### by Dr. Dewey M. Caron

April is a potentially busy bee colony management month. In my experience it is the toughest month to ANTICIPATE and STAY AHEAD of colonies. It is all about the weather. Colonies can starve, they can expand much too rapidly, exhibit steady growth or simply stay weak all in the same apiary. You must check when you can. Avoid the urge to open hives if too cool or windy and limit openings to as short a time as possible.

If you like/wish to manipulate your hives....

Depending upon the season and the colony, in April you can manipulate a lot or only a little. Feeding colonies (at or within the top) is often helpful but feeding stimulates growth and can result in colonies too powerful which might then starve or swarm. If you feed syrup do not let feeders run dry. Consider protein patties in addition to syrup. Strong colonies require as much, if not more attention, than the weaker colonies, but it is often the weaker colonies that command our attention. Weaker colonies after all are so much easier to inspect and manipulate, but it is the strong colonies that get foulbrood, will starve, or swarm.

In April we start new colonies as packages or nucs to make up losses or increase colony numbers. If you successfully overwintered, split strong colonies allowing divides to rear their own queens or adding purchased queens. We can cull older, darker frames and substitute new foundation, since we always need more drawn comb. We generally get better, more uniform drawn frames in the spring. We can reverse boxes or checkerboard top boxes since most colonies will be under the top cover. To expand colonies, open the brood area and help reduce brood nest congestion. We should start to look for developing queen cells (mainly between the brood boxes) and when we discover them, practice a more proactive swarm control (splitting, opening brood area and relieving congestion in the brood area). **Remember it is not the size of the colony, but the degree of congestion in the brood rearing area and age of queen that leads to swarming.**

Aggressive mite control management will mean integrating mite population reduction controls - drone brood removal, splitting colonies and organic acid ProFormic are all useful.

Whew!! April is a busy time!!! - April colony stewardship requires skill and experience....and patience, and don't neglect to fill out a survivorship/loss survey for the [pnwhoneybeelosssurvey.com](http://pnwhoneybeelosssurvey.com)

Or if you prefer a more let-'em-bee approach.... Swarming from smaller-sized cavities (single box for brood) is "nature's way" of bees making up winter losses and avoiding death from diseases, such as American Foulbrood, and their major way of reducing populations of too many mites. If you are just unable to or too busy to manage your bees in April **and** you keep bees where swarming is not going to alarm neighbors **and** there are nearby wooded areas that include abundant cavities for new home-sites **and** you do not re-establish dead-out colonies with a package or nuc **and** you are not interested in honey production, letting bees swarm from smaller hives may be your stewardship preference. This "natural" or "Darwinian approach" method is not for beekeepers with neighbors or a good idea for urban/suburban apiaries. If you can capture some of the swarms, your own or from feral colonies, put them in dead-out equipment. You may have better acceptance if you clean the boxes and



frames of dead bees first, but it is not necessary. This let alone method is designed to eventually help develop bees better able to fight mites, although it will take a lifetime to see any difference.

## **Bait Boxes to catch SWARMS !**

**Morris Ostrofsky**

Bait boxes are a good way to increase your bee numbers and genetic diversity, as well as an opportunity to catch feral swarms. Two weeks prior to swarming, bees will produce whole frames of drone brood. White wax on the top of the frames indicates honey flow. You may also see scout bees in strange locations, looking for new homes. A beard of bees which forms in the front of the hive, especially in the morning, can indicate swarming. Swarming starts around April 1, peaks in May, and ends in July. The swarms in the early season are more valuable - they are bigger and have the nectar flow to prepare for winter. Set up bait boxes three weeks before swarms start in your area.

The location for a bait box should be away from managed hives and in a shady, secure, and level spot. Make sure to cover the bait box to prevent any moisture & light inside; scout bees like dryness and darkness. A standard Deep-box is preferred (or about 4 cubic feet as a cardboard box), with a 5" opening, and a solid bottom board. If you use a cardboard box, it should measure 20" x 16.25" x 10". The entrance should be 1.25" square, in the middle of the long side of the box. Have handles on both sides to make it easy to carry. (You can staple the handles in to interior supports for the frames).

Only put foundation strips in your bait box. Use frames with support wires, because the bees wax will be soft and need support. A drawn frame (previous combed frame with propolis) is very attractive to the bees, so put at least one in the box, on the opposite side from the entrance. XenTari can be used to control wax moths when leaving a drawn frame in a remote location.

Check the bait box every three days. Lemongrass essential oil helps to attract the bees. There are also a product available that is formulated to attract swarms: Swarm Commander, available online and most bee supply stores. Put one spray on the drawn frame and one spray right next to the entrance or push in a cotton ball sprayed with it.

## **Oregon Dept. of Agriculture Apiary Registration**

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 with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. If you currently own less than five hives you are not required to register your bees at this time. The current cost of apiary registration is \$10 with an additional charge of \$0.50 per colony for five or more hives. After July 1, the registration fee will increase to \$20. The fee per hive remains at \$0.50 per colony for five or more hives.

Click below to view Oregon's apiary registration rules and regulations:



<http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/shared/Documents/Publications/IPPM/ApiaryRegistrationFAQs.pdf>  
Click below to access registration form:  
<https://apps.oregon.gov/SOS/LicenseDirectory/LicenseDetail/606>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

**May 20th—Trifecta Beekeeping Event**, Sponsored by Brushy Mountain Bee Farm & BG Bees

**Location:** Hood River, Oregon

**Speakers:** Thomas Seeley, Andony Melathopoulos, Alison McAfee

For more information and registration:

<http://bg-bees.com/seeley-melathopoulos-mcafee>

Register by March 31st for early bird registration discount.

This event may fill up quickly so register early if you plan on attending.

**June 16<sup>th</sup> - Seal Rock Garden Club flower show and plant sale**

**Sept 15th - Tom Seeley Event** Location: TBD somewhere in the Portland area Cost: Early Bird by Aug. 15th \$40, after the 15th \$50 Sponsored by: Portland Urban Beekeepers Assoc. For more information: <https://portlandurbanbeekeepers.org/seeley2018/>

APIMONDIA 2019 congress which will take place in Montréal from September 8 to 12, 2019 [www.apimondia2019.com](http://www.apimondia2019.com).

**October 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> Oregon State Beekeepers Association annual conference at the Salem convention center.**

Mark your calendar now and more information will be coming once the agenda for the conference is finalized. Several club members have attended over the past few years and have found the presentations and networking to be very valuable.

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