



# CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

June 2018

ISSUE NUMBER 27

NEXT MEETING JUNE 27TH, 2018

## President's Message By Patti Johnson

In our June meeting, we will be celebrating "Pollinator Week" with an informative talk given by our own Anne Schatz, Master Gardener and beekeeper. Anne is locally renowned for her knowledge of bee friendly plants, pollinating insects and is enrolled in the OSU Master Beekeeping program. She has put together a comprehensive chart entitled "Garden Plants for Honey Bees" that can be found on our club website: <http://www.ccba.org>

As beekeepers, we celebrate pollinators on a daily basis, yet sometimes forget our own importance in the process. What we do to keep our honey bees healthy also helps to keep other pollinators healthy. Think about some of those things:

- Provide a diversity of plants that grow in succession though all of the seasons.
- Plant several colors of flowers knowing that blue, purple, violet, white and yellow are especially attractive to our bees.
- Work to keep flowers in clusters instead of individual, scattered plants.
- Include different shaped flowers for different sized bees and other pollinators.
- Provide an area with clean water and devoid of pesticides.

- And last but not least, care about not only about our own bees, but the bees of other beekeepers as well as native bees.

While some may suggest that honey bees displace native bees and can have a negative impact on other pollinators, I would contend that the list of positive things we beekeepers do to protect forage, water sources, and reduce pesticide contamination also helps to protect them. With that said, we all need to continue our education, which perhaps might include exploring some different perspectives regarding the special habitats and needs for our native bees and other pollinators that inhabit our beautiful coastal region. Many people think of beekeepers as “good stewards of the environment” ...and I proudly tend to think we are!

Our June meeting is Wednesday June 27<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm at the **Newport Library**. We will be celebrating Pollinator Month with a presentation on how to set up a pollinator garden to support your bees and other pollinators by our own Anne Schatz, followed by an opportunity to make seed balls and plant some seeds to take home.

## NEED YOUR HELP AT THE LINCOLN COUNTY FAIR

Hi, Folks. As most of you probably know, the Lincoln County fair is early this year...July 6, 7 and 8. We're going to have a booth and need volunteers for Saturday and Sunday. The shifts will run from 10:00-2:00 and 2:00-6:00. It basically just involves talking about bees with people and helping them find the queen in the observation hive. It's really a lot of fun (because what beekeeper doesn't like talking about bees!)

If you are interested in helping out, please call Kathy at 541-264-9222.

## “Reading Frames”

by Morris Ostrofsky

The bees are telling us the story about what is happening inside the hive. It is our job to read and comprehend what is being said. Reading frames means you have opened and entered the hive. I advocate, “minimally invasive beekeeping.”

Chapter 1-Where things should be: Frames have their place in the hive. Starting from one side going to the other they are numbered one to ten. It doesn't matter whether you start numbering from one side or the other because the right side of the box should be a mirror image of the left side. The #1 (same as #10) should contain mostly honey while #2 will usually contain pollen in an established hive. Also in an established hive brood is located in frames 3 through 8 with the greatest proportion in frames 5 and 6. What is important about the #3 frame is that it reflects changing conditions within the hive.

Chapter 2-The nectar flow is on: White wax on the top bars of the brood chamber tells you that the honey/nectar flow is on. This is a major milestone for both the bees and beekeepers. Why are they making the wax? Because the nectar stimulates wax production. This is the same reason you fed your package sugar water after installing it. You wanted to stimulate wax production so the bees would draw out the frames. Why is the wax white? Answer: it hasn't had a chance to get travel stained. When 70% of the frames are being used, it is time to add either another brood box or a honey super.

Chapter 3-Staying ahead of the bees: An important part of spring beekeeping is anticipating and preventing swarms. Reasons for this are: 1) depletes population, 2) possible reduced honey harvest, 3) can ruin relationship with your neighbors. By reading frames one of the things you can anticipate is an impending swarm. The environmental conditions will tell you that the bees are thinking about propagation. The bees are setting the pace and you need to keep ahead of them. One of the first indicators that you need to start doing something is when you see lots of drone brood. This signals that the bees are thinking about swarming and are preparing to raise queens. The drones come first because of the long time it takes them to become sexually mature. It also takes them 24 days to develop as opposed to the 16 days for the queen.

Chapter 4-Aging or poorly mated queens: A queen normally mates with 12 to 15 drones and that results in enough sperm to last a life time. The indicators for an aging or poorly mated queen are similar. One big distinction is the time of year you see the indicators. Aging can occur anytime there is brood present. Poor mating occurs in spring. A well mated, performing queen produces an abundance of queen pheromone. When this happens, you will find a strong circle of workers surrounding the queen. You can think of it as the cohesive force of the hive. When it's weak or lacking, the social structure of the hive breaks down. The most immediate response to this situation by the workers is to supersede. This is the reason why five days after a queen is introduced you look for supercedure cells in the hive she is being introduced into.

Chapter 5-Missing queens: Why would a queen be missing? On a mating fight she may lose her way back to the hive or may have been eaten. If there is a situation where the queen is gone and there is still young larvae in the hive, the bees can make one or more emergency queen cells/queen. If they lose their emergency queen, the bees will run out of resources. Without the queen or brood pheromone the workers take matters into their own hands and lay multiple eggs in the cells. This is called a laying worker colony. The eggs are all unfertilized so all develop into

drones. Such colonies are usually doomed. It is very difficult to requeen a hive with laying workers.

Chapter 6-Mellifera mysteries: The white spots on the cell walls is guanine, also known as Varroa poop. Hives can be so heavily infested with mites that it can lead to the demise of the hive. Varroa mites also can vector a variety of viruses. Bottom line: Varroa can cause the ultimate disappearance of bees.

If you open up a hive to inspect the honey reserves and you find that all the honey is gone, it was probably robbed out by a neighboring hive. If you see a jagged appearance on the cells and it looks chewed up that is definite sign of robbing.

Chapter 7-What the pollen band can tell us: The brood frame consists of a brood, pollen and nectar. As the brood chamber expands the pollen band expands. You need pollen for brood production. Looking at the width and position of the pollen band can indicate the general conditions of the colony.

## May meeting highlights

May 23, 2018 CCBA Member meeting

6:00-6:30 provided a social time.

Meeting opened with the raffle.

Visitors were welcomed by Patti.

Member reports:

-Charles Dallmann is moving out of state and is selling western and deep boxes and frames as well as nucs.

-Buck Bowling discovered that he is allergic to bees and to honey. He is selling his 3 hives, tools and other equipment as a lot for \$500.

-Kathy reported that we are going to try to get a booth at the County Fair and passed around a sign-up sheet for volunteers.

-Marion Warfield reported that she has developed a healthy tea blend and will bring some to sell at the next meeting.

-Jim Parrish reported on the Hood River Trifecta. Charlie VandenHeuvel of BG Bees and John from Brushy Mountain hosted the event. The pre-event the day before was held at Charlie's apiary. Four stations were led by Andony Melathopoulos (hive examination), Dewey Caron

(horizontal Langstroth hive and mite testing and treatments), Alison McAfee (testing for hygienic behavior in bees) and Tom Seeley (bee dances in the observation hive, correlation information from the dance to plot locations on a map).

These four also spoke at the main event the next day. The talks were pertinent and those of us who attended strongly recommend that members consider attending next year.

The meeting ended shortly after 8:00.

## SAVE THE BEES

by Dr. Dewey M. Caron

.. As beekeepers we have the occasion to see lots of websites with information about how we can 'Save the Bees.' There have been, through the years, discussions regarding the appropriateness of including honey bees in efforts relative to the essential ecosystem service of pollination. Honey bees are dismissed in such efforts, by some, calling it a managed livestock species of agriculture and its distribution outside of agricultural settings might not be beneficial to the native pollinators.

Writing in *Science*, one of the most prestigious Journals of science, Cambridge University (England) scientists Geldmann & Gonzalez-Varo , argues in a recent editorial *Conserving honey bees does not help Wildlife* (Vol. 359, Issue 6374):

*"The crisis in global pollinator decline has been associated with one species above all, the western honeybee. Yet this is one of the few pollinator species that is continually replenished through breeding and agriculture, ... Saving the honeybee does not help wildlife. Western honey bees are a commercially managed species that can actually have negative effects on their immediate environment through the massive numbers in which they are introduced".*

Negative effects cited include *"wild bee declines through resource competition and spread of disease."* The authors maintain *".... Environmental initiatives promoting honey beekeeping in cities or, worse, protected areas away from agriculture, is only likely to exacerbate the loss of wild pollinators."*

Another recent editorial in leading Journal *Conservation Biology* *Questioning public perception, conservation policy, and recovery actions for honeybees in North America* by York University (Canada) professors Colla & MacIvor (Vol 31 # 5) includes a literature review and covers the major talking points of those who believe honey bees should be excluded as they potentially can be harmful to native pollinators and vegetation.

Some federal agencies and agencies that manage wild lands exclude honey bees, while allowing other livestock. Lack of sufficient forage has been increasingly discussed as one of three to four major factors in negative honey bee health. Our pollinating bee colonies need a *"time out"* a period of "clean" forage away from pesticides to re-build populations and produce fat fall bees adequate to overwinter. If honey bees are excluded from forage areas on the pretext that they cause harm to native pollinators and that honey bees should not be included in conservation efforts, such forage opportunities might be denied. The consequence for the low-cost food we eat, courtesy of bee pollination, might then be in question. (NOTE: If you would like copies of these two (short) editorials I can send as

email attachments. [dmcaron@udel.edu](mailto:dmcaron@udel.edu)

In Oregon we do NOT exclude honey bees. The latest quarterly newsletter of the Oregon Bee Project <https://www.oregonbeeproject.org/> includes a report of current commercial pollination efforts of honey bees (see the great photo of bees pollinating radish) and some other bee pollinators (mason and alkali bees and BOB - Blue Orchard Bees). There is also a week-long bee school for taxonomy/identification of native bees in July (an advanced training different from the one-day Bee ID workshops), plus some of the announced happenings of National Pollinator Week <http://pollinator.org/pollinator-week> June 18-24. If not already receiving the OREGON BEE PROJECT newsletter you will need to sign up to receive it.

### **PollenCheck**

Are you interested in looking more closely at honey bee forage? Check out **PollenCheck**, a new mobile application from The Beelformed Partnership (BIP). We are well aware, especially in the spring months, that pollen is a key resource for honey bees, a resource they must be able to find in sufficient quantity and quality in their local forage. Yet, we know little about the quality of forage available to honey bees. Collecting and processing pollen can inform us about bee health, give us a pulse of their surrounding environment, provide a historical and geographical context and help make predictions on colony productivity.

**PollenCheck** is designed to facilitate the collection of pollen data and encourage individual "citizen scientists" to use a mobile application running on smartphones. The app provides information on a proposed protocol allowing the entry, collection and aggregation of geocoded data into a centralized cloud-based database. The new BIP application will include entering colony health measurements, such as queen status, colony size, amount of uncapped brood and mite count. The specific pollen information required includes total volume collected and number of colors in a 100 pellet sub-sample, as well as the number of pollen pellets of each color.

To participate in **PollenCheck** you need two colonies in the same location, two front porch pollen traps (available from Brushy Mountain with a discount code), a **PollenCheck** pollen processing kit available from BIP (\$25) and a smartphone (iPhone or Android device) to download the **PollenCheck** mobile application which is available in the app store. To learn more about the **PollenCheck** program and view the tutorial videos visit: <https://beeinformed.org/programs/pollencheck/>.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

**June 18<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> - National Pollinator Week**

**June 23rd - Brushy Mountain Field Day Location: Wilsonville, OR Cost: \$45 Click here for more information.**

**July 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> – Lincoln County Fair in Newport at the Fair Grounds. We have a booth and need your help to run it!**

**August 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> – Western Apiculture Conference – Boise, Idaho.  
[www.westernapiculturalsociety.org](http://www.westernapiculturalsociety.org)**

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

**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/>**

**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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