



# CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

June 2016

ISSUE NUMBER 4

NEXT MEETING JUNE 22, 2016

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Co-Presidents Nancy McDowell and Anne Schatz

The flowers are blooming! Do you know where your bees have been? If you haven't already, this is a great time to start a bloom log of what blooms around your area, when it blooms and what your bees seem to favor. Although the times will change slightly from year to year, this ongoing document will help you determine when your flows and dearths take place so you can be ready to take the appropriate action. This log can also help you know what window to aim for when adding forage plants to your landscape. Check out the Garden Plants for Honeybees spreadsheet on our website to get ideas and go on a bee and bloom walk today.

Check out the article on the booth we did at the Master Gardener Plant Sale and Garden Fair. We had a great time, met some awesome people, educated the multitudes on beekeeping and pollinator support, and bought some cool plants. Staffing a booth is a lot of fun. If you missed this opportunity, we'll have a booth at the Lincoln County Fair in August and will help staff the Oregon State Beekeeper's Association booth at the State fair. Good times ahead!

Now that we're knee-deep in swarm season, this is a great time to educate neighbors on the wonders, and benefits, of honeybees. Ask your neighbors to let you know if they see swarms, then craftily turn the conversation to explain that swarms are not dangerous (despite appearances otherwise) and wax poetic about this fascinating behavior. Education is the best way to combat fear. You may also want to discuss the benefits your bees bring, such as enhanced pollination of fruit and berry crops. Anne's neighbors are raving about the record

setting fruit set on neighborhood trees and berry crops are coming in stronger than ever. Make honey bee public relations part of your beekeeping tasks!

Soon you may start thinking of harvesting some of your beekeeping bounty. Perhaps you could also think about donating some of that bounty to the club for fundraising. Honey sales is a common beekeeping club fundraising option, and one we'd like to explore.

The June meeting is just around the corner. There will be a brief presentation regarding the Master Beekeepers Program and then the rest of the meeting will be informal, which gives us a chance to share our successes and raise questions. If you have a particular piece of equipment you love, or have discovered a better way of doing something or found a solution to a common problem, bring it up! Show and tell is always fun. See you on the 22<sup>nd</sup>!

### NEXT MEETING – June 22, 2016

6:30 pm at the Newport Library

#### PROGRAM

Rita Ostrofsky, from the Oregon Master Beekeepers Program, will be making a brief presentation regarding the program and then we will have open discussion, questions and answers as well as show and tell.

6:30pm – 8 pm

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE APIARY .....

### Rescue Colony Update

by Stan Scotton

This is an update on the colony that Anna Russo and I rescued from a rotted pile of wooden ware and wax on Panther Creek in north Lincoln County. You may recall that the wooden ware was rotted, wet, and had numerous slugs inside the hive. The frames were rotted and falling apart. We were only able to collect the queen and less than one frame of bees and put them in a five frame wooden nuc box. That was on March 29, 2016.

On March 30, 2016, I set them up in my backyard and started feeding sugar syrup. At this point I wasn't sure what to expect. On April 11, 2016, I went in and checked the nuc and found the queen, larvae and capped brood, with an excellent brood pattern no less. Still feeding I then had to decide if I was just warehousing a queen or was I interested in building a full strength colony. On May 1<sup>st</sup> I made the decision to go for a full strength colony and added two frames of brood, with bees, from my Indian Shores hive.

On June 12, 2016 the colony was finally ready for a ten frame deep box. There were about four and half frames of bees and one uncapped supercedure cell. Once the blackberries came out I discontinued feeding syrup. During the blackberry nectar flow, at least, they are on their own. As of June 12<sup>th</sup> the colony looked good, pollen was coming in, there was no sign of disease, and they are very calm and gentle. Stay tuned.



## Central Coast Beekeepers at the Lincoln County Master Gardener Plant Sale



A lively contingent of Central Coast Beekeepers staffed an informational booth at the Lincoln County Master Gardener Plant Sale and Garden Fair on May, 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016. The plant sale is an annual fundraiser for the Lincoln County Master Gardener Association and this year the sale moved to the fairgrounds. With the additional space, the sale became the Master Gardener Plant Sale and Garden Fair, incorporating informational booths from the Master Food Preservers, the Extension Nutrition Specialist, our own Central Coast Beekeepers/ Oregon Master Beekeeper Program (OMB); and informational displays on pollinators, adaptive gardening, composting, rainwater collection, and cloche building.

As usual, there was a long line of both local residents and area visitors waiting for entry to the plant sale. But this year, shoppers were greeted with many of the over 4200 available plants sporting a cheery bee-adorned stake to indicate good choices for pollinator support. Interest in pollinator plants was high with Master Gardeners this year and many changed their growing plans to incorporate plants better suited to pollinators. Gone were the usual assortment of pollen-less sunflowers and instead an extensive selection of those with pollen intact. Handouts helped shoppers choose pollinator-friendly plants.





As people entered the sale, they were drawn to our colorful booth with observation hive (thanks, Dan!), conveniently located next to the pollinator informational display. Club members staffed a table with club and Oregon Master Beekeeper Program information before a wall of banners and colorful posters. The observation hive was off to the side with plenty of space to access from all sides and to view the honeybee lifecycle information. There was a near-nonstop parade of interested persons peppering Becca Fain, Rick Olson, Dan Speers, Stan Scotton and I with all manner of questions from gam right up until the sale concluded at 2pm. There was also an extended opportunity to answer questions from Master Gardeners in the two days of set up prior to the sale.

Several club and OMB members (Mary-Ellen Townsend, Anna Russo and Kristi Kind) were working on the Master Gardener side of things, but stopped by to visit, as well as several club members attending the sale as shoppers. All the interest made our area a busy place!

Overall the booth was a great success. Plant Sale Coordinator Cathi Block was very pleased with our display and felt it added energy, color and great interest to the overall 'sale experience' and hopes to see us at future sales. We raised interest in our club (two new members!) and the OMB Program while enticing some bee-curious people to our club meetings. But most important, we were able to gain access to a large group of ecologically-minded people with a great interest in

pollinator health and give them information on how to support this vital segment of our natural world. We, and the bees, had a great day!

*Anne Schatz has been a Master Gardener since 2008, is at the Journey level in the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program, and is Co-President of the Central Coast Beekeepers Association.*

## Detecting and Controlling Swarms

By Rick Olson

Swarming is the method by which a hive, as a super organism, reproduces itself. For the beekeeper it can be detrimental as the hive loses nearly half its population. But if he is lucky enough to capture the swarm he will have a new hive. In addition, swarming helps to break up the varroa mite cycle because the colony stops producing brood in preparation for leaving. Most of the varroa mites, however, at this point are within the remaining brood cells. This means that first generation of new bees produced by the new queen in the old hive can be heavily predated by varroa! Mite treatments timed 3-4 weeks after a swarm event will be extremely effective because all the mites are in the phoretic cycle on the emerging bees.

The newly captured swarm will have only phoretic mites so this is a perfect time to treat.

Colonies start raising queens and then swarm for complex, inter-connected reasons:

1. A rapidly expanding adult population. Congestion of the brood nest (too many adult bodies on brood frames), brood areas limited by heavy left-over winter honey stores or new honey collected from spring flowers or over feeding. Be careful of swarming when you stimulate your hives with spring feeding. Feeding stimulating syrup will increase brood rearing and subsequent need for stores.
2. An older queen, unable to supply sufficient queen substance to her daughters, is thought to be the major factor. Colonies with older queens are twice as likely to swarm (older than 2 years).
3. Poorly drawn combs with lots of drone cells.
4. Frames of foundation not yet drawn. Packaged bees hived on new foundation may swarm if they are unable to draw out the comb quickly.
5. Bees stuck in the top box only slowly expanding downward or sideways with their brood.

6. Poor hive air circulation.
7. Dampness and other factors are additional contributors to brood congestion and poor circulation of the queen chemicals.
8. Temperature increases. On the Oregon coast, the on and off availability of nectar because of the rain or a natural nectar dearth often triggers bees to swarm. It is not uncommon for swarming to occur on the first warm sunny day following spring rain.
9. Small colonies can swarm too for some of the other mentioned reasons.
10. Some bees are just genetically prone to swarming.

When inspecting your hive, look for crowding because of a quick population increase, few eggs as the queen readies herself for leaving the hive, or swarm cells (not just cell cups) indicate the bees have definitely decided to swarm.

## June Pollinator Plant Profile – *Cotoneaster sp.*

*By Anne Schatz*





Cotoneaster is an extremely diverse genus in the rose family with up to 300 (depending on classification) different woody perennial plants native to Europe, Asia and North Africa. They range in form from ground covers to small trees, evergreen to deciduous. Most flower from spring to early summer and produce decorative, generally red, berries in fall that remain through winter and really pop against the dark green foliage of the evergreen varieties that are most common locally. In my neighborhood, a large, beautifully shaped tree-sized specimen with arching branches dominates the pollinator scene throughout June and delights passersby and birds with the fall and winter display of berries.

Cotoneaster generally favors cool climates in USDA zones 5-8, although there are exceptions at both ends. The evergreen varieties are largely hardy to zone 7. These plants can tolerate partial shade, poor soils, wind, and coastal or urban conditions while still performing beautifully for pollinators and producing abundant showy fruit that provides a steady, if not particularly choice, winter food source for birds. Sandy or clay soils aren't a problem, as long as they are well-drained. Once established, most varieties are fairly drought tolerant and require little if any, care.

Flowers can be singular or grouped into clumps and are very attractive to a wide variety of pollinators, particularly bumble bees and honey bees. A large plant will hum with activity when in full bloom. Although pollinators love them, deer generally don't.

Because of the great species diversity, it's best to do a little research on the best type for your application. There are ones that are excellent for pruning into formal hedges and ones that have an attractive fountain shape just made for specimen plants that look best without pruning.



There are groundcover types that are great for inaccessible slopes (*Cotoneaster horizontalis*, *C. dammeri*) and some that are very tolerant of salt spray (*Cotoneaster adpressus*). Personally, I enjoy the taller types that flower in clumps because they attract more pollinators and I think the clumps of bright berries look amazing.



One way of getting a variety you like, particularly when there are so many to choose from, is to find one you admire growing in a friend or neighbor's yard and propagate your own. Whereas birds are the biggest propagators of cotoneaster (when they eat the berries and spread the seed), most varieties can be propagated with softwood cuttings taken in early summer. Low growing varieties can be layered and small, self-seeded plants can after be found in the vicinity of mature specimens and transplant very easily. In some locations, this self-seeding can lead to invasiveness, but that doesn't seem to be a problem around here. Extra plants are easy to remove and are something you can share with friends.

Overall, these are wonderful, carefree plants that effortlessly fulfill many landscapes roles while providing an ongoing excellent annual forage source for pollinators. When looking for plants to meet your particular landscape needs, strive to find ones that also benefit pollinators and there is often a cotoneaster that will fit the bill. Keep an eye out for the many varieties when wandering your environs to see which might be best for your own yard.

*Anne Schatz has been a Master Gardener since 2008, is at the Journey level in the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program, and is Co-President of the Central Coast Beekeepers Association.*

## **“Smoking Bees”**

### **by Dr. Dewey M. Caron**

Do you smoke the colony entrance before opening a hive and then wait several minutes before starting your colony examination as recommended? - Most of us don't – we smoke then open in next movement.

Do you tend to be a “nervous” smoker, using ever more smoke as you get deeper into your hive? Did you happen to notice that it wasn't working? Despite smoking, have you ever been stung by a bee that makes a bee-line for your face immediately as you open a colony or reach over the open hive? What is that all about?

If you answered YES to any of these questions you might want to review your “smokin' behavior. Smoking a bee entrance before opening a colony is “standard” recommendation and considered good bee stewardship. But is it a good idea? When we smoke the entrance, the guards and ventilating bees go inside - only foraging activity continues. The smoking recommendation includes waiting a minute to several minutes after puffing smoke in the entrance before continuing hive manipulations. Most of us don't - we smoke then open in next movement. Unless we step in front of the colony entrance, which is not recommended, we are not likely to get stung by a guard bee. Those bees that come out from the top when covers are removed or from between frames with the top box is exposed or from between the boxes when we seek to remove the top-most boxes to examine lower boxes, are not those same guards – we term them soldier bees. Soldier bees are older workers that respond to the hive invasion. Smoke can be useful on these bees, if we apply it skillfully. Smoke drives such bees downward into their hive before we hover over it.

Smoke is useful for moving bees away from the end of the frames we wish to elevate and remove. And bees “looking at you” from between the frames are readily dispersed by smoke. A light targeted-site smoking, rather than clouds of smoke, is usually all that is needed to cause these bees to move elsewhere. Nervous smoking causes more and a longer-lasting colony disruption effect. Bee response to our opening their home, smoking the workers and moving things in, out and about, will persist for several hours, perhaps into the next day. We can over smoke. When I am in Bolivia, there are many instances when it is clear that smoke is no effective. Africanized soldier bees still pile out and still fly about my veil. After an initial response, the bees seem not to respond to continued use of the smoke. Smoke never will “subdue” the bees. Like all our tools, we need to learn to use our smoker more effectively.

We all know we can examine a colony without use of a smoker. We need to be careful not to bump or jar the hive, avoid movements over the opened colony and do our manipulations

rapidly (without hurrying). This is especially practiced with smaller colonies, such as nucs, and during times of heightened forager activity. We can enter, do our manipulations and exit in less time than it takes to get the smoker lite and properly functioning.

During the summer, a good substitute for a smoker is a water mister. The mister can be filled with water or light sugar syrup, with or without a scent addition, or with the liquid smoke product available at bee supply companies. Use this substitute as you would the smoker. During hot weather or in seasons such as this past one when there was high fire danger, the mister means less colony disturbance and more sense. When opened, boxes can be covered with a moist cloth (or purchase a manipulating cloth), which is especially helpful to the bees during hotter inspection weather. The covering will keep bees inside and calmer, meaning the need for less smoke (or water mist) during the actual inspection and less overall disturbance to the colony.

One word of caution in use of a mister – it may potentially lead to robbing if sugar or scented sugar water is used when few flowering plants are available for bees. For smoking or misting the hive entrance – these bees and this vital active flight/hive ventilation area is not where potential stings will come from, unless you step directly in front of it. Review your smoking behavior. Try using smoke in inspection, rather than at the entrance, and see if it helps inspection go faster and results in less disruption to the colony itself.

## **Heads Up!**

**The blackberry bloom has been very early this year which means that the summer dearth will also be very early so keep an eye on the honey supplies in your hives. The minimum amount of honey that a colony should have to get through the coming winter is 3-4 deep frames or 5 westerns frames (20-25 pounds). When the dearth comes, the colony will begin to consume their stored honey. It may become necessary for you to feed your hives to assure that they have adequate food supplies until the next bloom comes in. Check your hives by hafting the back to be sure that they are not getting lighter or on a warm day, during a hive inspection, count the honey frames.**

## North Coast Representative Report

It is an exciting time of year to be a beekeeper on the North Oregon Coast. The weather continues to improve, the blackberry nectar flow is on, and bees and beekeepers are both happy and busy. Both Bee Clubs have been active.

Central Coast Beekeepers had a booth at the Lincoln County Master Gardner Plant Sale in May. Staffing the booth were Anne Schatz, Becca Fain, Rick Olson, Dan Speers, and Stan Scotton. Dan's observation hive was the highlight of the booth. Thanks to Anne Schatz for setting it all up and doing the organization. The Central Coast Chapter continues to build a strong relationship with the Lincoln County Master Gardeners. The May meeting was on Swarms: Part Two presentation by Max Kuhn. Very informative and well timed. Lots of questions.

The Tillamook Beekeepers enjoyed a presentation by Claire Moody and Anne Schatz at their last meeting. Claire and Anne talked about the information they learned from the Michael Bush presentation they both attended in April. Swarms also continued to be a topic for those attending the meeting. The general consensus was that swarm calls are down from last year. Claire Moody got our local swarm collection information out to numerous sources which the club hoped would get the word out. One of our members was late to the meeting as he just finished picking up a large swarm under an out building. Rick Stelzig got a call to pickup up (save) some bumblebees.

Tillamook Beekeepers now have a Face Book Page. For what is happening at the Central Coast Chapter check on the web site which is [www.ccbaor.org](http://www.ccbaor.org) or the Face Book page.

If you are vacationing on the North Coast this summer and want to find out about "bees on the coast" come to either a Tillamook or Central Coast meeting or call one of our beekeepers in the area you happen to be visiting. My contact information is in the Bee Line and the OSBA directory. We always enjoy visitors.

Stan Scotton, OSBA North Coast Representative

June 15, 2016

## UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

June 22<sup>nd</sup>- Lane County Beekeepers – Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd., Eugene



Early talk 6:15 PM *in small conference room down the hall from main meeting room.* Topic: The Oregon Master Beekeeping Program -Speakers: Carolyn Breece and Rick Olson

Regular Meeting 7:30 PM. Topic: Honey Bee Pests and Diseases- Speaker: Morris Ostrofsky

July 12<sup>th</sup> – Tillamook County Beekeepers Association – Fresh Cafe , 9120 5th St, Bay City, Oregon

July 19<sup>th</sup> – Lane County Beekeepers – Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd, Eugene

July 20<sup>th</sup> – Linn/Benton Beekeepers – Corvallis Waldorf School

Kenny Williams – Honey Extraction

June 25<sup>th</sup>—Brushy Mountain Field Day

Location: Wilsonville, OR, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm, cost: \$40  
Beekeeping Seminars and hands-on workshops  
<http://www.brushymountainbeefarm.com/>

July 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> & Aug 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> - Spikenard Farm Honeybee Sanctuary, “One Week Intensive Program”

Location: Floyd, VA  
Learning Retreat: Sanctuary beekeeping principles and practices, biodynamic gardening methods, and to immerse yourself in the abundant growth and life of the Honeybee Sanctuary.  
<http://spikenardfarm.org/store/category/classes/>

August 17<sup>th</sup> – Linn/Benton Beekeepers – Corvallis Waldorf School

Dr. Sujaya Rao – Bumble Bees

August 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> – Lincoln County Fair – Fairgrounds in Newport

We will have a booth at the fair to promote beekeeping and hope several of you will be willing to assist us in manning the booth.

August 20<sup>th</sup> – Oregon Honey Festival – Ashland, Oregon

There will be all types of honey delights as well as a major honey judging –  
<http://www.oregonhoneyfestival.com/ourpresenters.html>

September 21<sup>st</sup> – Linn/Benton Beekeepers – Corvallis Waldorf School

Harry Vanderpool – Winter Prep

October 19<sup>th</sup> – Linn/Benton Beekeepers – Corvallis Waldorf School

Ramesh Sagili, Ph.D. – Nosema cernnae phenology

October 22<sup>nd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> -Linn County Extension Office – 33630 McFarland Rd, Tangent

Mason Bee Harvest and Clean Workshop – 10am-noon on the 22<sup>th</sup>, 9 to 11 and a second workshop from noon to 2 pm on the 26<sup>th</sup>

October 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> – Oregon State Beekeepers Association Fall Conference

## The Oregon Gardens, Silverton, Oregon

This is a wonderful event where there are exhibitors from around the state, great speakers and a chance to connect with some of the leading names in beekeeping. This year some of the speakers include: Ramesh Sagili from OSU; Tom Seeley from Cornell; Elina Nino from UC Davis; Judy Wu-Smart from the University of Minnesota and David Miska from Miska Honey Farms.

Rooms fill up fast at the Oregon Gardens for this event so if you want to stay at the conference rate watch for the announcement of the opening of registration for this conference in the newsletter this summer and sign up ASAP!

November 16<sup>th</sup> – Linn/Benton Beekeepers – Corvallis Waldorf School

Mike Rodia – Rose Hives – Beekeeping in one size box

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.

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