



# CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

## MAY 2016

ISSUE NUMBER 3

NEXT MEETING MAY 25, 2016

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Co-Presidents Nancy McDowell and Anne Schatz

There's a buzz in the air. It's Swarm Time! And that's the topic of the May meeting. Max Kuhn will lend us his years of knowledge and experience so we'll understand swarming bees and can better our chances of attracting and catching new colonies.

Our own Stan Scotton, who is also the North Coast Representative for the Oregon State Beekeeper's Association (OSBA), has compiled a report to share from the last quarterly OSBA meeting. You'll find it, and each successive report, on the website. These are a great way to keep up with the latest in Oregon beekeeping. The current big topic is a recent change in the law that requires beekeepers with five or more hives to register with the state. The number is determined by the largest number of hives you had the previous year. If this applies to you, check out Stan's report. There is also a nice outline of the requirements at the Master Beekeeper blog at [extension.oregonstate.edu/mb/blog](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mb/blog).

Are you thinking about entering the Oregon Master Beekeeper Program? Now is the time to act! There are often more applicants than the program can accommodate and a waiting list forms so time is of the essence. To get on the waiting list go to [www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org](http://www.oregonmasterbeekeeper.org) and add your name under "Apprentice Application." When they start processing applications in August, they will go by the order that people have signed up. So sign up soon!

It all starts with the Apprentice level, which is a year-long learning opportunity during which you are paired with a Mentor. You will attend classes, either locally or online, and do hands-on learning with

your mentor throughout the seasons. The cost of the Apprentice level is \$150 and, where this might seem expensive, if you consider that the knowledge you gain will greatly enhance your chances of keeping your colonies alive, the course quickly pays for itself. If you'd like to talk to people who have completed the program, Anne and Mary-Ellen Townsend completed the Apprentice level last year. We've now moved on to the Journey level of the program, where we've joined other club members such as Nancy, Stan Scotton, Dan Speers, and Rick Olson. Max Kuhn completed the Journey level and will enroll at the Master level when it becomes available. The current local mentors are Stan, Max, Rick and Dan. If you're interested and would like to ensure you work with one of them, contact them right away. I said 'current' local mentors because Nancy has considered joining their ranks, if she can get around the conflicts with the days she works.

**NEXT MEETING – MAY 25, 2016**

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

**PROGRAM**

**Max Kuhn will present information on swarms – why we have them, how can you tell if your hive is about to swarm and how to catch your or other swarms from**

**6:45pm – 8 pm**

## **OBSERVATIONS FROM THE APIARY .....**

### **KATHY COPE writes:**

When I got my first package of bees I thought I was pretty well prepared to be a beekeeper...turns out I was totally clueless. Among other things my hive swarmed twice, possibly three times that summer. One of those times the bees decided to come back and set up house underneath the hive, attaching itself to the screened bottom board. By the time it was discovered, it was large enough that I was afraid I'd damage the hive and likely lose the queen if I tried to break the comb apart and try to set it up in frames. So I ended up picking the bottom board up with its attached comb and setting it into an empty brood box, putting the box on a new bottom board, covering it with a super and inner and outer covers and then just let the bees do their thing.

The hive didn't make it through the winter and once I discovered that the hive was empty, I turned the brood box up and took a picture of their comb. Really beautiful.



### **NEW BEEKEEPER BRIAN GREENE observed ...**

Looks like everything is coming along so far. Rick and Becca came over and helped Kristi and I do some in depth hive checks. We pulled some frames identified some things, drone comb, capped and uncapped brood, the queens, scraped some excess wax off the edges and got to taste some actual honey. A beautiful day, learned how to properly use a smoker. The bees seemed fairly calm about the whole thing and let us go about our business unmolested. Also,

1. Added another super to the Langstroth hive. This was our package and they are closing in on 10 frames full of brood, pollen, honey and everything they seem to need. Found the queen who is looking healthy. Allis well for now.
2. Everything is looking good in the Flow Hive as well. This was started with a nuc and is going gangbusters. Again, found the queen, a big dark shiny and unmistakable queen. Tons of bees - all the frames are drawn and



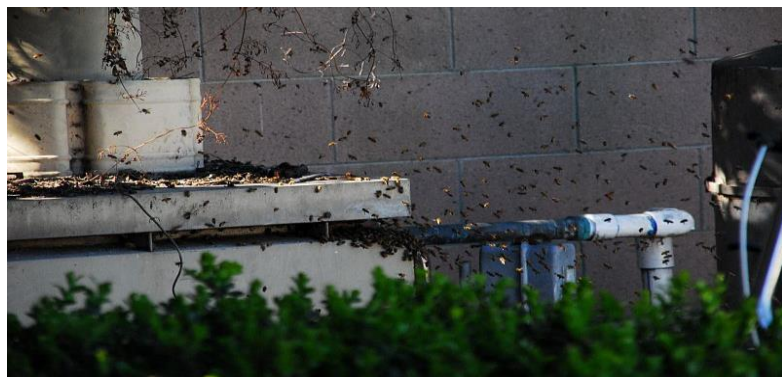
filled, even some that we tried as an experiment with just the wood hanger at the top to get started with. These were filled in with drawn comb clear to the bottom. Two 8 frame supers already filled so we decided to go ahead and top it off with the actual flow frames. They are in an 8 frame sized box but you can only fit 6 Flow frames into it.

Things are coming alive quickly here in Logsdan with elderberry, clover, raspberries, meadow flowers and even the blackberries are showing some signs of blooming. Kristi did a couple of sticky board checks and though there were a few mites, all looks good for now. Going to give them 5-6 weeks while I'm out of town and we'll see what happens next. FUN TIMES !



## **CLUB BOARD MEMBER NEILL CRAWFORD SHARED ...**

My first experience with bees was in Southern California where we lived for many years before falling in love with the Oregon Coast. We had stopped using our swimming pool and we spotted bees going in and out of the old pool heater. We thought it was great and just let them do their own thing for a couple of years.



Until that day when my wife came running into my office and said the sky was black with bees...!!! We went out



to the back yard to watch as the heater swarmed for the first time; it was quite a sight to behold. I went to my local bee keeping supply store the next day and bought myself a hive and all the clothing, hive tools, smoker etc. and returned home eager to get my bees in that hive...

I really had no idea what to do and so spent the next week or two researching about bees and bee keeping, I was also lucky enough to meet up with another bee keeper who knew about swarms and was willing to come over and take a look with me. They swarmed again before Al came over to help me and I tried to capture them myself...I thought I could smoke them to make them calmer but found out the hard way that smoking them just irritates the hell out of them....they chased me all the way home...

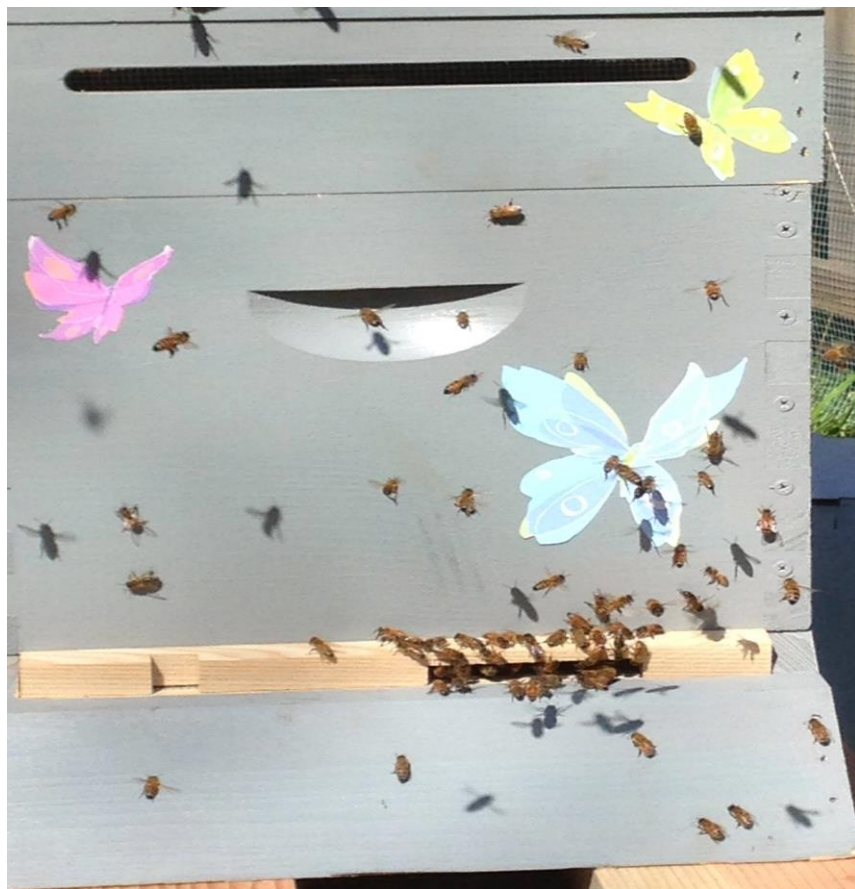


The heater swarmed twice more that spring and we were successful in capturing those swarms and transferring them to hives, we then opened up the pool heater and looked at what they had done inside it..



I kept my one hive for a year or so but ended up giving it to Al because of neighbor pressure...my bees kept bumping his roofer and he was going to report me to the city....





**New Central Coast Beekeepers, Gaelyn and Shane Matthews'** hives are up and running for the spring. There is lots of action with nectar and pollen coming in and tons of drawn comb. Looks like the ladies are taking a break and getting out to enjoy the beautiful spring weather before knuckling down for the major flow as the blackberries begin to bloom!

## May Pollinator Plant Profile – Ceanothus By Anne Schatz



Ceanothus – a pollinator favorite!

Ceanothus is a genus of about 60 species of plants native to North America, primarily in California and the West, preferring a Mediterranean climate with mild rainy winters and dry summers and most hardy to USDA zone 8b. Alternate names are California Lilac and Blue Blossom, alluding to the glorious flowers in shades of blue, although there are also white and pink varieties. When in bloom, the plants are literally covered in pollinators and beneficial insects, particularly bumble bees.

Ceanothus prefer well-drained soil of moderate to low fertility, in full sun, without summer water and are quite drought tolerant, once established. They fix their own nitrogen, allowing them to thrive in poor conditions. Increasing water and soil fertility, common factors in garden settings, will cause pathogen problems and contribute to this plant's reputation as being short lived. Another factor that can contribute to disease are pruning into woody tissue, particularly during wet weather. If you must prune, do so directly after flowering and only take off the present year's growth. In conditions that mimic its native environment, some species can live longer than 25 years.

Bloom periods for Ceanothus varieties extend from March into August in the Pacific Northwest. Because pollinators so favor this plant, be conscious of drawing pollinators away from fruiting trees and shrubs in your landscape. In my neighborhood, I witnessed a huge apple tree in full bloom devoid of pollinators because of the blooming Ceanothus planted beneath it. I had always wondered at the sparse fruit production and now I know why. Mid to late summer is often a dearth period for pollinators, so later blooming varieties would be most welcome then.

The forms of Ceanothus vary from low groundcovers, to low mounding shrubs, to upright shrubs, and finally to small trees. Most varieties follow the growth pattern of rapid growth with moderate flowering the first few years, followed by slower growth with profuse bloom. From 7-12 years, flower profusion lessens and the plant structure opens, with plants often taking on a more woody character. Here is a small selection of varieties by form.

-Tree Forms: *C. arboreus*, *C. thrysiflorus* 'Snow Flurry', *C.* 'Ray Hartman'.

-Shrub Forms: *C.* 'Concha', *C.* 'Dark Star', *C.* 'Julia Phelps', *C.* 'Wheeler Canyon', *C. impressus*, *C.* 'Joyce Coulter', *C. americanus*.

-Groundcover Forms: *C.* 'Anchor Bay', *C.* 'Heart's Desire', *C.* 'Centennial', *C.* 'Yankee Point', *C.* 'Point Reyes', *C. maritimus*.

Ceanothus propagate readily, but not invasively, by seed and some varieties by cuttings. Check around your yard to see if you've been gifted with a volunteer, or find one in your neighborhood that you like and ask to take a cutting.

The seeds following bloom attract birds, extending the wildlife interest, and some varieties are host to butterflies such as the Pale Swallowtail, California Tortoiseshell, Ceanothus Silk Moth and Echo Blue. Deer are a major wildlife pest and can kill young plants, if not protected. More mature plants can usually survive browsing.

In its native environment, Ceanothus are often found on steep, exposed slopes in mountain or coastal environments. It is unusual to find such a dazzling plant that tolerates such difficult conditions. Be a friend to pollinators and try it in difficult areas of your yard!

## Value of Bees to Oregon Beekeepers

By Dr. Dewey M. Caron

Some individuals start keeping bees as a means to “do something” about the bee loss epidemic. One of the benefits such individuals receive is the “free” pollination service for fruit trees, vegetable gardens and flowering plants in surrounding yards. Pollination is “big business”, however, for the larger-scale beekeepers in Oregon. Ramesh Sagili and I annually conduct a survey of this bee business to document the value of honey bee pollination.

Larger scale Oregon beekeepers rely on pollination for over two-thirds of their annual business income. The value of honey for the 71,000 estimated colonies in Oregon is \$6.2 million, a value of \$88/colony. Our most recent (2015) annual pollination economics survey, found that 32% of Oregon beekeeper colonies generated \$4.3 million in rental fee income, an annual per colony average of \$110.45. Extrapolating the 32% to the total (estimated) bee colonies for Oregon, we can value total gross pollination income to be close to \$14 million, making larger-scale beekeeping a \$20+ million dollar industry. NOTE: Different surveys, in part to different populations being sampled, do not always come out at the same amounts.

The majority of this fee income however comes when Oregon bees are transported to California for almond pollination. Eleven of the twelve Oregon large-scale beekeepers rented 17,250 colonies (76% of total colonies maintained) for almonds (range 110 to 6000+ colonies). Rental fee received by Oregon beekeepers ranged from \$130 to \$190 with a weighted rental fee average of \$173.25, \$0.15 cents below the previous year. For Oregon beekeepers, almonds represent 44% of total crop rentals, generating \$3,107,120 in gross rental fees, 72%, nearly three-fourths, of total gross income.

Closer to home, Oregon beekeeper rental of colonies to pears, sweet cherries and apples remains the top “local” income opportunity. In 2015, 3562 total pollination rentals of survey respondents were in fruit orchards with income of \$289,692, 6.7% of total gross income. If we exclude almonds and look only at the rentals in the Pacific Northwest states, tree fruit represents 25.5% of “local” rental colony number and 24% of “local” income.

Berry rentals (blackberries, raspberries, marionberry, blueberry and cranberry) accounted for 22% of “local” (within region) rentals and 26.5% of income. Vegetable seed rentals (4488 colonies) were 20.5% of local rentals and 20% of income. Meadowfoam (oil crop), rentals were 3084 colonies, 14% of both rentals and gross income. Cucurbit (watermelon, squash & pumpkin and cucumber), almost 2400 colonies, was 11% of local rentals and 9% of gross income and legume seed pollination (1600 colonies) was 7.5% of gross income.

The results and more complete discussion of our 30th annual pollination economics survey will appear in June Oregon State Beekeepers newsletter, BEELINE, and the July American Bee Journal. NOTE: I am working on the overwinter loss/survivorship survey results. Thanks to all LCBA members who participated in the survey. Results will be published in [www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com](http://www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com) as available.

## DO YOU HAVE TO REGISTER YOUR HIVES?

Any beekeeper; whether backyard, hobbyist or commercial; who had five or more hives (not including nucs) during the previous (last) year is now required to register with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). This is the



result of House Bill 3362 which modified Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 602 and the subsequent adoption of Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) 603-055 by the ODA. The registration fee is \$10 (\$20 after July 1) and 50 cents per hive. The registration is for one year and must be made *each year* if the beekeeper had five or more hives during the previous year. The registration runs from July 1 to June 31.

Previously only those beekeepers engaged in commercial pollination were required to register and the monies collected by the ODA went into the agency's general operating budget. The new law and rules make it clear that the monies from the new registration fees “shall be spent on pollinator research that is predominantly focused on honeybees”. The ODA agreed with the OSBA that most (all) of the collected monies will go to the Oregon State University (OSU) Bee Laboratory and the ODA will not use any of the monies for their administrative costs. Members of the OSBA met with the ODA and requested that specific language for our agreement be included in the OAR. The DOA proposed the addition, but the Department of Justice (DOJ) attorney assigned to the ODA said the agency did not have the authority to include it in the OAR. Nonetheless, the ODA said it will honor the agreement and look to adding the language to the ORS in the future.

It should be noted that the ODA not only will not receive any monies for administrative costs but also there will be no monies for enforcement (at least at the present time). This does not mean you should ignore the law as it is a legal requirement and there are benefits to registering. Registering might serve to strengthen your position as a responsible beekeeper should a legal issue arise. In addition, you will receive notifications from the ODA on matters relating to beekeeping, such as the registration of a new Varroa mite control *and* the monies will go to OSU for research on honeybees.

You may register on-line or by mail by going to <https://apps.oregon.gov/sos/licensedirectory/licensedetail/606> and filling out on line or downloading the application form. You may also request a hard copy by calling the ODA, Insect Pest Prevention and Management Program at 503-986-4636.

## North Coast Representative Report

### May report from the North Coast to the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

The weather is definitely improving on the North and Central Coast. As I write this the Salmonberry is in full bloom and Blackberry, our major nectar flow, is about to start. The North Coast is usually about three to four weeks behind the valley. Reports from both the Tillamook and Central Coast clubs are that the colonies that survived winter are coming into May strong. That is definitely the case in my apiary. Beekeepers with new nucs or packages are reporting lots of brood and in some cases swarm cells. Most everyone seems to be instituting swarm control measures. Several Tillamook beekeepers reported having swarms, and unfortunately losing them. Several members have already collected swarms.

Both clubs, after minor club business, devoted their last meeting to open discussion and question and answer activities. At the Tillamook meeting last night Wes Preston started things off with a presentation on some innovative things he has done with his wooden ware and bee manipulations and management. Towards the end of the meeting Claire Moody did a presentation on bee friendly plants. This will hopefully become a standard thing at each of our meetings. Last night Claire had borage and buckwheat seeds for anyone who wanted some. And she followed that up with Cleome starts for everyone. Thank you Claire and Wes.

For news on the Central Coast Beekeepers I want to refer everyone to the chapter web site, courtesy of Vice President Rick Olson, [www.ccbaor.org](http://www.ccbaor.org). Neill Crawford handles the club Face Book page. There is a link to the Face Book page on the web site.

If you find yourself on vacation this summer and want to check out what is happening with “bees on the coast” come to either a Tillamook or Central Coast meeting. Central Coast meets in Newport on the fourth Wednesday of each month and Tillamook meets in Bay City, just north of Tillamook, on the second Tuesday of the month. For more specifics about the meetings check the Bee Line, the Central Coast web site, or call me for more information. My contact information is in the Bee Line and the OSBA directory. We always enjoy visitors.

**Stan Scotton, OSBA North Coast Representative**

**May 11, 2016**

## **DID YOU KNOW ....The Bees of War?**

**By Rick Olson**

I was looking into "honey madness" and ran across some interesting stories--bees as weapons. From the Roman Empire through the middle ages to our own time bees have been credited with being the decisive stroke in more than one battle.

Concerning honey madness, Xenophon, Aristotle, Strabo, Pliny the Elder and Columella all wrote about the effects of "madding honey". The toxin comes from the pollen and nectar of *Rhododendron luteum* and *Rhododendron ponticum*, which are found around the Black Sea.

Pliny and Strabo, document the use of contaminated honey against the armies of Xenophon in 401 BCE and Pompey in 69 BCE.

In the first century BCE the Turks of Heptakometes deliberately left honeycombs out for the invading Roman troops to find. They were easily defeated after becoming sick on the toxic honey.

In the eleventh century Duke Geiselbert of Lorraine's attack of Emperor Henry I's troops was repulsed by a barrage of beehives.

In the twelfth century King Richard used catapulted beehives on the Saracens during the Third Crusade.

In 1289, Austrian Duke Albert was repulsed with a fusillade of bees thrown from the battlements of the Hungarian city of Gussing.

In 1513, the Moors were known to have thrown hives down from the citadels of Tauris in Xantiane onto the invading Portuguese troops, saving the city.

In the 18th century, during the battle of Alba Graexa, the inhabitants set up barricades of beehives preventing the Turks from entering the city.



And bees are being recruited to fight our modern wars as well. The Stealthy Insect Sensor Project has been able to train bees to detect explosives like dynamite, C-4 and liquid bombs. Bees can detect chemicals in concentrations as low as a few parts per trillion. Researchers are also training bees to detect methamphetamine and cocaine.

## UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 17<sup>th</sup> – Lane County Beekeepers – Trinity United Methodist Church, 440 Maxwell Rd., Eugene

Reading Frames/Preparing for Honey Flow – Speaker – Ken Ograin

May 18<sup>th</sup> – Ohio State University Bee Lab Webinar – Reed Johnson will discuss Pesticides and Poisons

In the Hive: An Overview of Bee Toxicology

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

May 20<sup>th</sup> – Friday in the Apiary – OSU Oak Creek Apiary

May 21<sup>st</sup> – Lincoln County Master Gardener Plant Sale – Fairgrounds in Newport

This will be a great place to get some plant starts for your bees and we will have a booth here so you can sign up to promote the club and beekeeping while working in the booth and get some great plants at the same time!

June 14<sup>th</sup> – Tillamook County Beekeepers Association – Bay City, Oregon

June 15<sup>th</sup> – Linn/Benton Beekeepers – Corvallis Waldorf School

Dewey Caron will discuss “ Do you have a plan – June and July management”

June 15<sup>th</sup> – Ohio State University Bee Lab Webinar – Kim Flottum, author and Editor, Bee Culture

Magazine will discuss Common Sense Natural Beekeeping

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

June 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> – National Pollinator Week

Keep a look out for local events!

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

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!

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 the above e-mail address as well:

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Co- President – Anne Schatz

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