



# CENTRAL COAST BEEKEEPERS NEWSLETTER

September 2016

ISSUE NUMBER 7

NEXT MEETING SEPTEMBER 28, 2016

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Co-Presidents Nancy McDowell and Anne Schatz

Fall is here! How are your bees? Have you checked mite levels? Have you left adequate stores? This is the time for hive activities to start to wind down in preparation for winter...unless you have English ivy. Ivy comes into bloom mid to late September and persists into November, providing a late season boost to those of us in areas with a supply. Without ivy, most forage is greatly diminished.

Meeting attendance has been a bit sparse for the last couple months and I'm sure everyone's been busy with summer activities. But this is the month to attend because we have a wonderful speaker for September! We're very lucky to have Morris Ostofsky, one of the biggest movers and shakers in the Oregon bee world, here to talk about diagnosing problems with our hives. Bring your questions and inquisitive minds to this high caliber presentation. You won't be disappointed!

Don't forget to bring money (\$15 cash or check) to pay your dues for next year to be entered into the drawing at the September meeting for a **FREE OSBA CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE!** Yes, **free!** The drawing will be open to everyone who's paid dues for 2017. It doesn't matter if you've already registered to attend, the amount will be credited. The speaker's this year are not to be missed (see the schedule at [orsba.org](http://orsba.org)). Don't pass up this opportunity.

Want to have a hand in shaping the club's future? We need volunteers to be on the nominations committee to entice people with energy and ideas to run for next year's Board of Directors. At the September meeting, we'll go over the role of Directors and answer questions.

In October, we'll take nominations and then in November, while we're in a sugar-fueled high from the honey tasting, we'll vote in next year's board. Also in October, Dr. Dewey Caron will be joining us to share his work on fall bee die out and other new and interesting information on bees from an accademic perspective.

Speaking of November's honey tasting, would anyone like to organize that? And don't forget to set aside samples. We'll see everyone on 28 September!

*Nancy and Anne*

**NEXT MEETING – September 28, 2016**

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

**PROGRAM**

**Morris Ostrofsky, one of the very few Master Beekeepers in Oregon, will be speaking. His presentation will follow the television series CSI model to discuss how to diagnose and treat bee pathogens.**

**6:30pm – 8 pm**

**VARROA CONCERNS ARE TOP OF MIND AS WE APPROACH WINTER. PLEASE PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING TWO ARTICLES FROM THE OSU BEE LAB/ RAMESH SAGILI AND DR. DEWEY CARON**

**Varroa Mite Alert from the Honey Bee Lab**

(Reprint from the Oregon Master Beekeeping website, by Ramesh Sagili)

Hope all of you had a relatively successful bee year with strong hives and significant honey production, and have prepared your hives for successful overwintering. I just wanted to take this opportunity to alert / caution you about possibility of high mite populations in the colonies this year due to an unusually long bee season. As you all are aware we had a long bee season this year (at least in the Willamette Valley) as a result of warm weather that prevailed for almost more than 7 months. Longer brood cycle (abundance of larvae) usually results in higher mite populations, as the mites get a greater opportunity to breed and increase their populations relative to bees. Most of you might agree that this year was a year with longest brood cycle seen in the recent past (I have been in Oregon only for the past 6.5 years, so can't go beyond that number). It has been reported that mite populations could increase exponentially (up to about 50 fold increase) in years when the brood is present in colonies almost round the year (Martin 1998).

The economic threshold to treat Varroa mites in general for temperate areas is considered to be about 3% or higher in fall, but as economic threshold depends on several factors it is not ideal to always rely on this magic number. In Oregon during the past six years we have documented mite intensities ranging between 3% and 5% in Fall (August sampling). We observed significantly higher mite intensities this year (2015). The average mite intensity observed in backyard beekeeper colonies was 7%, whereas average mite intensity documented in commercial beekeeper colonies was about 3%. In few backyard beekeeper colonies we observed mite intensities as high as 32%, which is alarming.

If you treated your colonies for Varroa on time during July or August then probably you may have your mite populations under control, but still I urge you to monitor mites one more time before overwintering to make sure that the treatments that you used were effective and your current mite populations are not at damaging levels. If your mite levels are still high then please consider using an oxalic acid treatment if feasible when there is no brood (possibly during November). If you did not use any Varroa mite treatments yet, then please assess the mite populations using alcohol wash or powdered sugar method as soon as possible and consider treating your hives with oxalic acid when there is no brood in the colonies. Oxalic acid was recently approved by EPA and is available from the bee supplier Brushy Mountain Bee Farm (<http://www.brushymountainbeefarm.com/?gclid=CLzrqIrb98cCFUiEfgods-gJ6w>).

Following are some consequences of inadequate or no Varroa mite control this fall:

- Bee population may decline significantly or the colonies might totally collapse.
- Colonies that survive the winter will start upcoming year / season with higher mite loads and hence could reach damaging levels soon by late spring or summer.
- High mite infested colonies may contribute to higher mite drifting via robbing bees to other beekeeper colonies and your existing healthy colonies, as your mite

infested dead colonies may be robbed by other strong colonies and aid in greater mite dispersal.

Also, please continue feeding protein to your colonies if pollen stores are not adequate in the colonies. Protein feeding not only helps with brood rearing, but also helps boost the immune system of bees. We have observed colonies to consume protein until October 25 in the Willamette Valley and few other locations in Oregon when the weather is still OK (temperatures around 55 to 60° F).

Following is a question relevant to Varroa mite biology that an Oregon beekeeper asked me few months ago.

**Question:**

How many days is the female Varroa mite outside of the capped brood before it re-enters another cell for reproduction? Do the young female mites that emerge along with the new bees also take the same amount of time to re-enter another larval cell for reproduction?

**Answer:** The time a female Varroa takes to re-enter (re-infest) a new cell depends on the availability of older larva (ready to be capped) to enter, and also on the number of bees in the hive at that point of time. One study showed that on average female mites take about 4 to 6 days to re-infest new larval cells. In a lab study, female mites that were artificially reintroduced into new cells with appropriate aged larvae (ready to be capped) immediately after emergence from a cell were able to reproduce successfully without any problems. Young female mites that emerge along with the foundress mite (parent mite) need time to achieve full maturity and hence may take a little more time to enter a cell for reproduction than the parent mite. Research pertaining to these new young mites is scarce, hence providing an average time for infestation is difficult.

**Regards, Ramesh Sagili**  
**OSU Honey Bee Lab**

## **Absconding or Death by Mites**

**By Dr. Dewey M. Caron**

It seems in the last couple of years, beekeepers are increasingly asking about depopulation of fall colonies. In many instances, they reported the colony was strong, perhaps even providing a harvestable surplus and that the colony "looked OK" in July /August. By October November the same hive is empty, or nearly so, with no dead bodies, nor any sign of a bee cluster (bees in a circle, head-first in cells). There may be indications of robbing of what became unprotected honey store. Could absconding have occurred?

I will travel south to Bolivia to spend winter with my wife's family following the OSBA Annual Conference at Oregon Gardens in late October. With my Africanized bees in Bolivia, I witness absconding with some frequency. At end of the flowering season (March), there is a lengthy dry season. During this season colonies cast numerous small "swarms" and one, then another, of the hives are abandoned. Absconding may occur following treatment with thymol, especially if weather is hot following addition of the treatment. Yellow jackets too may cause the bees and queen to abandon their hive. However, rather than absconding, I think we are observing signs of fall collapse due to *Varroa* mites. In our dead hive forensics, we could conclude a deserted hive might be due to CCD or absconding, both uncommon, but probably we are seeing the symptoms of BEE PMS. Mites and virus is the most probable cause. When I get a question about absconding and I ask when and how colonies were treated for mites, I usually get a response (with lots of variations) along the lines of 'I didn't see any mites so I didn't treat' or "I don't think so because it was my strongest colony" or "The colony was new this year, so it couldn't have mites." In virtually all instances, mites were not sampled and, if colonies were treated, the treatment was one or the weaker options such as 'I used Screen bottom boards' or 'treated by powdered sugar dusting.'

The number of mites in a colony increases as the bee population increases. But when the bee population begins to decrease in the fall, the colony is faced with more mites per bee. Likewise, when drone production stops, the mites move into the worker brood. Viruses such as deformed wing virus (DWV) and Chronic bee paralysis also skyrocket. Large colonies— even those that appear healthy—are often the first to fail. We see the empty colony and, although absconding cannot be ruled out, the major reason for colony deaths in September, October, and November is more likely due to mites and viruses, I believe. Colonies that collapse from mites often leave behind some scattered capped brood. This occurs because the hive was proceeding normally until mites and virus took them down. Such collapses happen fast, easily occurring within the 21-day brood cycle. The result is a patch of scattered, dead capped brood cells in an otherwise empty hive. Many of the capped brood cells have been pierced, presumably by robbing bees looking for honey. Look in such cells for dead mites and especially for the distinctive pearly-white mite feces.

With CCD we came to realize sick bees often fly out and die outside the colony – thus lack of dead bodies. Mite infested sick individuals also fly from the colony and take up residence in a nearby hive, spreading mites to other colonies. But lacking a mite sample, it is not possible to positively conclude it was mites. If you have had colonies collapse, or suspect they may be at risk (lacking a strong adult population, spotty, unhealthy brood pattern, not storing adequate honey to overwinter, even with feeding), check any remaining living colonies NOW. Consider treatment with a mite control chemical or continue mite monitoring to see if mite numbers continue to rise. Some treated colonies will not survive, especially colonies with heavy mite numbers. Knowing what might have most likely occurred with dead colonies and knowing numbers of mites in our

colonies can be empowering, supplying us with critical information that can help improve our fall/overwintering bee losses and colony stewardship.

## CATCH THE BUZZ – EpiPen Price Skyrockets, Lack of Competition

By Meg LaTorre-Snyder



For people who suffer from allergies and anaphylaxis, it appears the price of EpiPens are on the rise—with many people attributing the increased cost to lack of competition.

For more than 25 years, the EpiPen auto-injector has been the most prescribed epinephrine auto-injector in the U.S. EpiPens used to be cheap—just \$35.59 wholesale in 1986. Now prices hover around \$35- – \$500 for a two-pack—the only option (which, given an 18-month-from-manufacture shelf life, risks waste and reliance on an expired device).

“EpiPen is like Kleenex. Doctors write [prescribe] EpiPen,” said Don Bukstein, an Allergist at Allergy, Asthma and Sinus Center. “There was some competition in the field and then one of the devices went off the market.”

Sanofi voluntarily recalled all Auvi-Q (epinephrine injection) on the market in October 2015, including both the 0.15 mg and 0.3 mg strengths for hospitals, retailers, and consumers. The recall was due to an inaccurate dosage delivery, which could include failure to deliver the drug. According to one source, Sanofi may be inclined to terminate Auvi-Q—leaving EpiPen with even less competition than before.

Local pharmacists have reported the injectable form of EpiPen has increased by approximately \$170, totaling \$550 for a single order. Previously, the EpiPen costed \$100-\$150, but, due to this sudden monopoly on the market, the cost continues to rise. One doctor said that his patients are paying \$400 to \$500 per device since Auvi-Q was pulled from the market.

“There is no other supply so they are able to charge that money,” said Dr. Douglas McMahon. “It’s actually a very cheap medicine it only costs a couple cents for the amount to stop a severe reaction.”

Mylan, the manufacturer of EpiPen, has been increasing the prices on all of their medicines, including a 15 percent price increase for EpiPen as well as a 400-500 percent increase on some of their other medications, such as ursodiol (a gallstone medication) which increased 542 percent.

Wells Fargo’s David Maris called the price increases “beacons for scrutiny.”

Mylan issued a statement in response to the higher costs:

Mylan has worked tirelessly over the past years advocating for increased anaphylaxis awareness, preparedness, and access to treatment. As the leaders in this space, our efforts are aimed at benefiting those living with potentially life-threatening (severe) allergies, and we take this leadership position seriously. Mylan does not set the final retail cost of its products charged to patients. One would have to look across the many parties that constitute the distribution channel as they all play a role in the ultimate access and retail price of prescription drugs in the marketplace.

## Fall Beekeeping

by Rick Olson

It sure felt like winter Friday--it rained all day and the wind gave hints of what's to come. Vine maples are turning red and there are alder leaves carpeting the driveway. The bees weren't interested and stayed in working on the syrup and protein patties.

It's fall once the honey supers are off the hives. Now the work begins to get your hives through the winter. To give your hives the best chance to make it thru the winter they need to be healthy with a large population, a strong queen and enough food stores to make it through the winter.

A hive needs six to eight frames of bees to make it through the winter and 50-60 pounds of honey stores--two frames of honey on each side of the cluster and for extra measure a full super on top. To bulk up the winter stores feed with a 2:1 sugar syrup. Add a tbsp. of lemon juice or apple vinegar per gallon for mold control. The flower dearth came early this year so you may have started feeding earlier. You can heft the back of the hive to get an idea of the food stores. Once the day time temperatures drop below 50 degrees you will need to switch to fondant.

Protein patties will not make for a larger population or improve survival--bees do not store this artificial diet material--but they will help nurse bees raise "fat" winter bees. Store-bought patties are the easiest to use but my bees sometimes turn their nose up at them. I had better luck by making my own patties this year. Mix two-and-a-half cups sugar water (2:1 mixture) with three-and-a-half cups of a protein substitute like BeePro or UltraBee. You can add 1/2 teaspoon ProHealth or HBH if desired. Feed syrup and protein patties until they stop taking it. I've heard reports that bees will sometimes eat the sugar out of patties and expel the protein from the hive so keep an eye the little devils.

You've probably already treated your hives for mites but you need to continue to monitor. Longer summers seem to promote larger mite populations. A couple of my hives have exploded with mites in the last couple of weeks and my two mentees are having the same problem. I'm retreating my mite bombs. I don't have a choice as they won't make it thru the winter without intervention. With a sticky board a typical threshold in Lane County is 24 mites/day or 12 mites/300 bees. Remember to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) when treating so mites don't build up a resistance or tolerance--be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions. Grease patties should be on the hive at all times to control tracheal mites.

To protect from rain make sure you have water proof hive covers and be sure to weight them down. If your bottom boards are solid tilt your hives forward a bit so moisture will drain out. Once the winter rains start you need to put a moisture box on the hive. Remember it's not the cold that kills bees but the moisture.



Make sure queen excluders are removed. Add mouse guards if necessary and install entrance reducers. Also, use robbing screens on weak hives as they may become vulnerable.

## October Pollinator Plant Profile By Anne Schatz

### *Hedera helix*, English Ivy (boo...hiss...)

Yes, I know. English ivy is one of the biggest villains of all the coastal invasive plant species. We all know how it contributes to tree wind damage and death and we hear the laments of habitat destruction by those concerned with native ecosystems. So we curse this plant. But I'm suggesting that, for six weeks each year (late September into November), we instead embrace what we seem to be stuck with. Because when ivy blooms, the pollinators

Ivy blooms? If you haven't seen this, fret not. To spot ivy in bloom, you have to know what to look for and then seek it out. And only English ivy that has reached a maturity of about ten years will bloom. So, seek out plants that have been in place for some time. The key is to look for clustered leaves that have lost their lobes and have become sort of wavy. Then in September, start looking for the blossoms riding above the wavy leaves.



Ivy leaves showing the immature, lobed leaves on top and the mature, wavy leaves below.

Ivy blossom just starting to open, with buds and wavy leaves in background.



Find a nice sunny patch of ivy blossoms. When the blooms open and the pollinators find them, ah, that's when the fun begins! This is the best time to see every pollinator out there, happily frolicking in one place. Most solitary bee species spend a few short weeks in their adult form, so as spring progresses through summer into fall, the observant eye will see a parade of species. Each species has preferences, but the lack of other forage and the quality of the ivy as a nectar source mean that everyone shows up to this party. Set up a chair, grab your binoculars, and settle in for the show. And if you're a beekeeper, you and your honeybees will be just as happy with this late season nectar flow.

One of the best places to get a good view is when ivy is used as a ground cover, particularly in a sunny spot. And if you have one of these yourself, you can ease your conscience by trimming off the immature berries before the birds can get to them and spread the seed.

Because English ivy is so well adapted to our area, seed can sprout wherever it finds itself. Once that seed sprouts, the plant has few predators (although I hear goats find this a nice nosh) and can out-compete most other plants. Alternately, it is shallowly rooted and has strong stems so pulls out without too much difficulty. The key is persistence. Once it's gone up a tree or structure, it must be cut away all the way around creating a bare band at least a foot wide to kill it and then must be monitored because it will grow back.

So, yes, it is a problem. But right now, let's enjoy the silver lining.

## North Coast Representative Report

Central Coast Beekeepers would like to publically thank Kenny Williams for his presentation on Harvesting and Extraction at their August meeting. Kenny was also willing to answer questions on many other beekeeping topics. Thank you.

I was unable to attend Tillamook Beekeepers September meeting so will be reporting on Tillamook Beekeepers in my next report.

As I write this report we are still having good weather on the North and Central Oregon Coast but the days are getting shorter and the temperature is slowly creeping down. Time to make sure the hives are ready if they are going to survive winter.

**Stan Scotton, OSBA North Coast Representative**  
**September 9, 2016**

## UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

October 18<sup>th</sup> – Lane County Beekeepers - Trinity United Methodist Church  
440 Maxwell Road

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

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.

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 at this address

Co-President – Nancy McDowell

Co- President – Anne Schatz

Vice President – Rick Olson

Past President – Dan Speers

Treasurer – Mary Ellen Townsend

Secretary – Rebecca Fain

At Large – Max Kuhn

At Large – Stan Scotton

At Large – Neill Crawford