

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association ~ April 2013



President's Message

Jeremiah Farrell, President

This is a very busy time but I hope all members can join me and the others for a no-host dinner before our meeting. Come at 5:30 PM to Lin-Q in the Raley's shopping center in Grass Valley. Please join us!

April 1st Meeting - 7:00 PM

Grass Valley Veteran's Memorial Building
255 South Auburn Street in Grass Valley

April's program will be about 'Increasing Your Colonies'. Come learn about ways to boost the number of hives in your apiary. Topics will include making splits, catching swarms, and installing packages and nucleus colonies ("nucs"). The program will be given by a team of the Association's sideline and commercial beekeepers - past and present presidents: our very own Randy Oliver, Jeremiah Farrell, and Rob Slay! Come join us on April 1 at 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Hall for this essential and informative program.

Bee Bits

Randy Oliver, Contributor

This has been an excellent spring for bees—colonies are building very well and there is abundant pollen coming in (I counted 12 in a row returning foragers with pollen loads yesterday). Colonies are preparing to swarm early, so check now for swarm cells!

Now is the time to make splits, using either swarm cells, or purchased queen cells. If you have your apiaries on or near either Hwy 174, McCourtney Road, in Cedar Ridge, or on Cement Hill Rd I will supply you with free queen cells if you give me some notice (I have mating yards in those areas and would like to control the genetics of the local bee populations).

There has been a strong Manzanita flow, so check your hives to make sure that they have enough space to store it.

Unfortunately, we also haven't had enough rain—this has been one of the driest winters on record. This portends a poor honey crop for the upcoming season.

You have likely heard of the parasitic phorid fly and the "zombie bees." Dr. John Hafernik of San Francisco State University is studying them. You can help by taking bee samples locally to see if the parasites are present in this area.

I asked him how to take samples. His reply:

"When we sample day-active foragers, we usually collect a minimum of 50 bees per sample. When we sample night-active bees with a light trap, the sample size is the number of bees we attract to the light in an evening [infested bees fly toward light at night]. In the Bay Area, the best time to sample is mid summer through mid January although we find low frequencies of phorid-infected bees from February through May as well. We're

interested in samples from throughout the year from other areas since we don't know how much geographic variability there might be in the timing of parasitism. We'd appreciate any information you can provide. "The number of pupae and flies that emerge from a pooled sample in a jar of is adequate to show presence of the phorid in a hive. To deter mold, it is best to cover the top of the container with cheese cloth or fine netting. When we are gathering more precise information, we isolate individual bees in either glass or plastic vials pugged with cotton or glassine envelopes. If the sample includes bees collected dead, besides *A. borealis*, we occasionally find emerging scavenger phorids such as *Megascelia scalaris* and relatives. If you have the opportunity to sample them, it would also be interesting to know if bumble bees and yellow jackets are infected with *A. borealis* in your area."

Here is a chance for you to join in citizen science, especially if you have lights near your hives! The most useful data would be to take monthly samples over the course of a year. And also to sample bumblebees and yellowjackets. The data to record would be date of sample, location, whether bees from hive or light, number of bees in the sample, and number of emerged flies. I will get more details from him as to how long it takes for the parasites to emerge from the sample—write me if interested (randy@randyoliver.com).

If you go on the internet, the blogosphere is full of anti-neonic nonsense. Even a bird group has joined in—I've checked out their claims, and found them to be speculative and poorly supported. The bee industry is now divided between a few beekeepers who have filed suit against the EPA, and the rest, who say that the neonic seed treatments are the best thing that ever happened for bees. Go figure! What we are seeing is attempts at mob rule using emotion to override careful evaluation and regulation of pesticide issues. This scares me.

I recently spoke at the Dadant 150th anniversary celebration in Hamilton, Illinois (population 300—with 850 beekeepers attending). The 5th generation of Dadants are ready to continue the family tradition. I didn't appreciate how blessed we are to live in an area where there is green coloration during the winter—the only colors that you see in natural areas of Illinois at this time of year are black, white, and shades of gray and brown.

Although most of you eschew synthetic miticides, there is a new product out that should be highly effective, and that leaves little residue in combs—Apivar strips, with the active ingredient amitraz. I personally don't find it necessary to resort to synthetic miticides—just letting you know that this is available.

We again have a new crop of beginning beekeepers that could sure use mentoring. If you are willing to help them, please stand up at the next meeting.

There is an excellent new study out called "Varroa-Virus Interaction in Collapsing Honey Bee Colonies" that details how two different groups of viruses go epidemic as mite infestation levels rise. It is a free download at: <http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0057540>

From the Librarian

Tynowyn Slattery, Librarian

A new book - The Herbal Medicine-Maker's Handbook: A Home Manual (Paperback)
by James Green, illustrations by Ajana Green

As I was browsing through a friends library, I came across this book, and thought that there is enough interest in honey and hive products in healing among the association members that a book that deals with the practicality of making them in the home kitchen would be a great reference.

If you are interested in making your own home remedies, this book will guide you through the process. Growing and harvesting, drying, and storing are covered and it takes you through the various extraction processes such as infusion, decoction, and distillation of hydrosols, tincture by maceration and percolation. There are chapters covering wine infusion, vinegar infusion, glycerin infusion and oil infusion.

The most relevant to hive products was the section on ointments, salves, balms, syrups, honeys, oxymels, and electuaries, although the section on baths for water therapy made me long for a good long soak in a tub steaming with herbal fragrance. (I have only a shower)

Poultices and fomentations; along with lotions, creams, suppositories and boluses are covered, making this a really complete books for the layperson, in a step by step, down home and sometimes witty style.

This is not a book that gives a list of ailments with the appropriate herb to address it, but it does give you the tools to create, with the control and technique deserving of the undertaking, that you will need to use your own hive products to achieve and maintain your own health. (And the lucky others who you choose to share them with.) The book will be available at the May meeting.

A note of gratitude here for Stephanie's generous help in the library while I have been writing music for and performing in CATS productions of "The Journey to the West." Thank you, Stephanie!

....and a note about late books:

The library books are checked out for a month, which can be extended by another month by calling, or preferably, e-mailing me. If problems arise with returning material it can be mailed to:

Tynowyn Slattery, 20493 Rome Road, Nevada City, CA 95959, 530-265-6318 - swoolman@saber.net

NC Beekeepers Association - Club Dues

Janet Brisson, Treasurer

Starting with the March issue of The Local Buzz Newsletter, if your label or email says "Dues", you are not current and we need you to pay these soon. The last newsletter sent out without dues being paid will be April.

Current Dues:

\$15.00 for email copy of newsletter

\$20.00 for your newsletter through the mail

- You can pay at the next meeting
- You can go online at <http://countryrubes.com/nevadacobeekeepersassociation/membershipsignup.html>
The cost to pay online has a one dollar surcharge
- Send your check in the amount of \$15.00 or \$20.00 to (Make check payable to NCBA)

NCBA

c/of Janet Brisson

20693 Dog Bar Road Grass Valley, CA 95949

Bee venom may halt the spread of HIV

Excerpt from article by Tuan C. Nguyen posted at smartplanet.com

A study by scientists at the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis revealed that bee venom, a cocktail of acids, dopamine and other toxins, can safely destroy HIV. The researchers had known that a protein called Melittin — the culprit behind the inflammation and pain associated with bee stings — possessed antimicrobial and anti-fungal properties.

To test its affect on viruses, they attached the toxin to tiny nanoparticles designed to prevent normal cells from being harmed. While the Melittin tore holes in the protective membrane surrounding the virus, the protective bumpers on the nanoparticle surface kept it from coming in contact with and damaging normal cells. Details of the study can be found in the current issue of Antiviral Therapy.

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January Minutes

Jack Meeks, Secretary

President Farrell opened with Q&A. Randy Oliver announced classes Mondays March 18- April 18 at Fairgrounds cottage outside Gate 5; also 1-day all-day Saturday April 6. Finance-Janet Brisson December start \$3091.89; Inc \$60; EndBal \$3151.89 Jan start \$3151.89; Inc\$405; Exp\$218.76; JanEndBal \$3338.13.

Swarming will start early this year--split strong hives first chance. On warm sunny days Queen cells hanging from bottom of frame are swarm cells; single cell center of frame is supercedure cell to replace aging queen. Drone cells concentrate Varroa mites, which can be seen just after exposure. Excess drones can be discarded to reduce mite load. Split hive when swarm cells appear. A bred queen will be ready to lay in three weeks, and the old queen will take the swarm to a new home. A member suggested laying a 2X4 or a limb as a bridge from the top of a hive about to swarm to a prepared empty hive beside it, so the swarm may walk across (if the scout bees approve.)

PROGRAM Lyn Muth spoke on 'Alternatives to Pesticides.' She described the UC Davis Integrated Pest Management site [www,UC DavisIPM.edu.](http://www.UCDavisIPM.edu), source of her Master Gardner certification, and source of non-chemical pest control methods. Bayer Imidacloprid, a neo-nicotineamid, is banned in many EU countries, may disorient bees preventing them from returning home. Lists of dozens of compounds with their relative toxicity are listed.

Watching a Queen on her Maiden Flight

From Diane Benton

After we finished our tri-tip lunch and listened to the speakers at Olivarez Honey Bees a group of us were led out to the fields where they were raising Queens. It was a sunny warm day, ideal conditions for a new Queen to go on her Maiden flight. This is when the Queen mates in the air with a variety of drones (mating does not occur within the hive). In about 13 minutes, she mates with 7 or more of them, storing their sperm (up to six million) for the rest of her life of 2 plus years.

Eric Mussen, our local UC Extension bee expert, was walking along with us when he excitedly yelled out “look up, a Queen is mating.” It wasn’t easy to see because they were moving so quickly but we did see the Queen darting through the congregation of Drones and mating, a once in a lifetime experience for many of us.

This all happened last April when Jerry and I went to Olivarez Honey Bees to pick up the packaged bees we had ordered. We stayed for the incredible complimentary lunch, met fellow beekeepers from all over the state, toured the grounds and got to see a maiden queen mating!

The next Small Scale Beekeeping & Hobbyist Day at Olivarez Honey Bees is April 13th in Orland, CA (near Chico) Go to www.Ohbees.com for more information. See you there!



Only women are used to pick the mated Queens out of the hives because they have a more delicate touch.

This Month's Recipe

From Leslie Gault

Spicy Honey Glazed Pork Chops - (adapted from a recipe in American Profile magazine)

tsp to 1 Tbsp cayenne, depending upon your taste
1Tbsp paprika
½ tsp celery salt
½ tsp black pepper
1 ½ Tbsp oil
1/4 cup honey
Pork chops

Mix spices and oil (without honey) in bowl. Rinse and pat dry pork chops. Coat pork chops, one at a time with spices. Broil pork chops for 2 to 3 minutes each side, then brush with honey and broil for 1 to 2 minute more each side until caramelized.

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association is dedicated to apiculture education and promotion of the art and science of beekeeping among beekeepers, agriculturists, and the general public. This is a "not for profit" organization. Donations are welcomed.

Meetings are held the first Monday of each month at 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Memorial Building at 255 South Auburn Street in Grass Valley. All visitors are welcome. Use the back entrance.

The newsletter is published monthly as a service to the membership. Articles, recipes, commentary, and news items are welcomed and encouraged. Contributions should be received by the 20th of the Month to be included into the next issue. Submit to garyg@newpress.com

Advertising space (3" by 2") in this newsletter is usually available and need not be bee-related. Advertising rates are \$7 per year for NCBA members and \$16 per year for non-members.

Nevada County Beekeepers Association

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Nevada County Beekeepers Association



c/o Steve Reynolds
10838 Ridge Road
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First Class Mail

April 1st Meeting - 7PM

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No host dinner at Lin-Q - 5:30PM