

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association ~ June 2012



President's Message

Ron Slay, President

Well by the end of May the blackberries start to bloom in south county. Anyone wanting blackberry honey should get supers on quickly, don't miss out. Start thinking about varroa and how your going to treat for it.

June 4th Meeting - 7:00 PM

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

Our program is "Living Lands" with Leo Chapman. Leo is founder of the local farming group Living Lands Agrarian Network which provides training and mentorship to a new generation of farmers. Their unique model of cooperative, sustainable agriculture integrates education, resource sharing, community partnerships and celebration around the food we grow. LLAN promotes small-scale agriculture as part of the larger movement to create localized and sustainable food systems that are healthy for people and the planet.

<http://livinglandsagrariannetwork.org/>

No Host Dinner - 5:30 PM

There will be a no host dinner at Lin-Q buffet just before the meeting.

Everyone is invited. Join us at 682 Freeman Ln. Grass Valley, in the Raley's shopping Center

Bee Bits

Randy Oliver, Contributor

Once every few years, everything comes together and we have a great year for the bees, and a great year for the beekeepers! It looks (knock on wood) like this is shaping up to be one of those years!

We had a mild winter, followed by a perfect, prolonged spring. Plenty of April showers, which brought May flowers, as the rhyme goes. This season was the longest nonstop spring nectar flow that I can remember. The only dearth at all was our normal one following apple bloom, and even that was brief.

Splits have built up like never before, even without supplemental feeding. It has been a joy to be a beekeeper! Our bees have already drawn a great deal of comb, even before the official start of our main honey flow.

And then to top it off, as blackberry is coming into bloom, the weather is cooperating by not being too hot or too cold, and perhaps giving us a bit of moisture prior to bloom. We are madly supering in anticipation of a good crop.

Mite levels are definitely up, so be aware!

I'm freshly returned from an engagement in the Corn Belt, where I was greatly surprised to find that beekeepers there are doing well, despite more than half the land being planted to either corn or soy! Even though the media are rife with reports of the demise of the bees, and the problems with pesticides in corn, the beekeepers in the Corn Belt aren't seeing it--they are doing great!

I met one beekeeper who has been making 300-400 lb crops of honey per hive, and hasn't used any mite treatments in three years! Some of these guys are an inspiration, and are practicing beekeeping in a way that I aspire to!

May Minutes

Jack Meeks, Secretary

Pres Rob Slay opened with Q&A: After a swarm, the old hive will be queenless until the virgin queen starts laying. Bees will clean centers of brood frames and store pollen and honey outside, indicating that the new queen will begin laying there.

To hive bees from an old tree or the walls of a house, all the old bees must be removed with a one-way cone, the returning foragers provided with a super and a good queen until the old nest and queen dies out. This may take weeks. Then the cone removed to allow the old honey to be robbed out.

Blackberries will flower in June. Adding a honey super depends on 1) the hive is heavy, 2) all the frames are covered, 3) new white wax is building on top of the frames.

Varroa population lags behind bees until midsummer, which is when varroa must be controlled, or the hive will decline and die out in autumn, when winter brood starts. Fall feeding before winter weather also helps survival. Our program was "Colony Health" presented by Randy Oliver.

Library

Anyone interested in setting NCBA library policy please email Randy randy@randyoliver.com

Swarms Wanted

Now buying swarms at \$10 per pound, delivered to my place. A large swarm can weigh over 10 pounds. Contact Randy Oliver, randy@randyoliver.com

Healthy Bees & Environmentally Friendly Varroa Control

**Thursday, June 14th at 7:pm at THE CEDAR RIDGE Y, NEXT DOOR TO ZUMBA
13479 Colfax Highway, Grass Valley.**

A to Z Supplies will be hosting Janet Brisson. Janet's program "Healthy Bees & Environmentally Friendly Varroa Control" will discuss how to monitor and manage your hives, bees and varroa mites using screened bottom boards, powdered sugar, drone brood manipulations and natural (small) cell beekeeping. If you haven't seen it before at our club meetings, this is a must see program at the most important time to dust your bees with powdered sugar after pulling off your honey from your blackberry flow.

Janet Brisson and her husband Mike have been a self-sufficient family and organic farmers for over 30 years. In 1995 they were forced to become hobbyist beekeepers due to lack of pollination as bees were losing their fight against the insidious Varroa mites. Horrified to discover that even the most organic-minded beekeepers were driven to use some type of chemical to save their bees, the Brisson' researched and started building and using screened bottom boards along with intensive drone brood management to reduce their chemical use. After 8 years and various adaptations of SBB's, they re-discovered using powdered sugar as an effective way of detaching Varroa mites and have been chemical free since the beginning of 2005. One final modification of their screened bottom board to make using powdered sugar easy, the Brisson' developed their product, the Country Rubes Combo Screened Bottom Board which A to Z Supplies carry in their store in Rough & Ready. This is a free program.

Please call Janet at 530-913-2724 or email at mailto:rubes@countryrubes.com with any questions.

Country Rubes Combo Screened Bottom Boards

Special NCBA Club Price! Call Janet for details. 530-913-2724 or rubes@countryrubes.com

Club Membership

Janet Brisson, Treasurer

If you are a new member and want to sign up but can't make it to the meeting, you can sign up on line at NCBEES.net.

You can always mail your dues.
\$20.00 (includes newsletter through mail)
or \$15.00 (include newsletter through email)
NCBA
c/o Janet Brisson
2093 Dog Bar Road
Grass Valley, CA 95949

Help us reduce paper and mailing costs, get your newsletters electronically and your family membership fee is reduce from \$20 to \$15.

Email Janet at rubes@countryrubes.com

Honey Extraction House

A to Z Supply has a honey extraction house available for rent. Equipment is provided and the room is heated and there's lots of hot water for clean up. For more information: 530.273.6608

Bee World

Diane Benton, Contributor

Ever go on Craigslist and type the word "bee" in the search field? I like to do this in the fall time to see what other people are selling their honey for. You never know when someone is retiring from the bee business and has listed all their hives for sale. I've even seen antique honey extractors for sale. That's how I found Bee World, located in North Highlands at 6715 - 22nd St.

Ten frame bee hives can be too heavy for me to lift so I was excited they had 8 frame hives for sale. Bee world also has 10 frame hives, top covers, bottom boards and frames at prices that can't be beat. Call Val at 916-769-4044 or Stephan at 916 717-8699. I usually call ahead to see what they have in stock then call them again when I arrive. Because they live near their shop, they've been able to meet me at 7:30 on a Sunday night as I was passing through Sacramento. Speak slowly and clearly when you call. English is their second language. They are originally from Moldova, a country located between Romania and Ukraine. Bee World rocks!

A to Z Supply

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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.

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.

The newsletter is published monthly as a service to the membership. Articles, recipes, commentary, and news items are welcomed and encouraged. The deadline for submissions to the May issue is May 24th. Submit to garyg@newpress.com

Advertising space (3" by 2") 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



c/o Steve Reynolds
10838 Ridge Road
Nevada City, CA 95959
First Class Mail

June 4th Meeting - 7PM

Leo Chapman will be presenting, "Living Lands", a unique model of cooperative, sustainable agriculture. No host dinner at Lin-Q - 5:30PM

Nevada County Beekeepers Association

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