



Wake County Beekeepers Association

October 2007

Editor's Notes

It is time to volunteer to work the fair booth. Don Hopkins will be at our October meeting. Come a little early and see him about a time you can work the fair. If you have kept bees, you will be able to answer 99.5% of the questions asked by the general public. This also counts for service hours needed for the master beekeeper program and is really a lot of fun.

I've been asked to put information about what you should be doing in the beeyard this month in the newsletter. Usually we have an experienced beekeeper talk about this at the meeting for about 15 minutes. By the time I get what they said in the newsletter it is a month late. I don't feel qualified to write for the coming month since I do not have enough experience, but would welcome articles by anyone who feels the urge to write. A hint for the coming month: Are your bees going to starve this winter? The drought is affecting the fall honey flow.

Send articles, information, and classified ads to barrycary@aol.com by the 25th of the month.

Michelle Barry, secretary WCBA

WCBA Fall Pig Pickin'

Our Pig pickin' will be at the Raleigh Police Club on October 27th. You can arrive anytime after 4pm. Eating will occur from 5-5:30. This event will be held rain or shine. WCBA will provide the pig and paper products. Members should bring a covered dish (side dish and/or dessert) and drink.

Directions from Carya Dr. where we have our monthly meetings: As you leave Carya Dr. turn left (away from the beltline, toward Wendell). You will travel approx. 4mi. and cross the Neuse River. Go to the next stoplight. This is the intersection of Poole Rd. and Hodge Rd. (Pauls Cash Groc. will be on your left.) Turn right onto Hodge Rd. Go to the dead end and turn right again, you are now on Leonard Rd. Go approx .03 mi. and the drive is on the left (in the sharp curve.) Any problems call Ricky @ 337-6270 or 269-0108

October 9 Meeting Topic

For October's meeting we are going to set up a panel of three of our experienced beekeepers to discuss preparation for the winter season. The speakers will be: James Howard, James Knox, Jack Tapp

They will cover the following:

- Detecting common pests (such as Varroa, Hive Beetle) with demos on performing sugar rolls
- Common treatment methods for each of the major pests and how to do
- Feeding your bees in preparation for the winter
- Preparing the hive for the winter (how many hive bodies are recommended)

Following/during the presentations the audience will have the chance to ask questions and it is planned to be a very interactive session. They will actually be showing a sugar roll with live bees and shake out to find Varroa. They also plan to do some mock treatments showing the audience how the treatment methods would actually be performed.

Time is the usual: 7:30pm. Location: Wake County Commons Building, Cary Drive.

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Yahoo group:

wakecountybeekeepers
to subscribe send mail to
wakecountybeekeepers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
Back copies of newsletters and
the bylaws are available on this
yahoo group.

Club Extractors:

The club owns extractors that are
available for members to borrow.
Electric extractor: Ricky Barbour
(in Zebulon 269-0108) , Whit
Joyner (in New Hill 387-0164)
Hand extractor: Raleigh Myers (in
Raleigh 787-0058)

Announcements from August and September Meetings

- Pig pickin' will be at the Raleigh Police Club on October 27th. (Note change in date from previous date).
- The NCSBA summer meeting will not be held in the Raleigh Area. The cheapest meeting location that was found was \$2000-\$2500 and the cheapest hotel was \$80 a night. Using a building at the fairgrounds (with the agricultural discount) was \$9000 plus additional for each table and chair. Gastonia has found a free location to hold the meeting, so NCSBA has decided that would be a better choice. We are hoping to hold a future meeting in this area.
- Sign up to help on weekends at the bee booth at the zoo. NCSBA has gotten \$110,000 donated for the permanent bee exhibit. An anonymous donor is willing to match \$25,000 (excluding the John Deere raffle).
- New caps with our logo are being worked on.
- Thank you Jack Tapp (Busy Bee Apiary) for donating an electric knife to go with the new extractor the club purchased.

Getting Ready for the Fair

Danny Jaynes gave a talk on getting honey ready for the fair. He says that filtering is the key to good, clean honey and suggests that the best filter is a nylon curtain. Be sure your jars are clean with no fingerprints. Fill with honey to the first ring at the top. Cover it with cellophane for transport and put on the clean lid before turning it in at the fair. Be sure to let it sit a couple of weeks before the fair to give time for the air bubbles to rise. Take a spoon and skim off any bubbles or foam at the top right.

Danny will bring his refractometer and J.D.'s polariscope to the October meeting so we can check our honey for clarity and moisture content before entering it in the fair. Bring any honey you want to test to the meeting.

Door Prizes

Thank you to Steve Brown for fresh eggs.

Raffle for Wax Melter

Lawrence Wallace was the lucky winner of the wax melter.

Refreshments

Thanks to Karma Lee, Cindy Robinson, and Jim Howard for bringing refreshments to the September meeting. Mark Reep 468-0723 and Eleanor Silver 772-0649 are signed up for bringing refreshments to the October meeting. Bring munchies. Ricky will bring soda from Bugfest for the drinks. For the November meeting Bob Kellam, Vivian Joyner, and Danny and Mary Jaynes are signed up to bring refreshments.

New Club in Franklin County

Larry Green is working to start a new beekeeping chapter in Franklin County which may be closer for some Northern Wake county beekeepers. You also can be members of more than one club so you don't have to drop your WCBA membership. They will meet on the last Wednesday of the month (with possible changes during the winter holiday season) Their next meeting will be October 24th at 7:30 at the Ag building 103 S. Bickett Blvd in Louisburg. For more information contact Larry Green at 556-1212.

Colony Collapse Disorder

Dr. David Tarpy addressed our club about the current research on CCD.

The factors that are in common are:

- Mostly migratory beekeepers
- Cumulative dead-out rate > 30%
- Continuous split to increase numbers
- Experienced stress 2 months before die-off

The factors that are not in common are:

- Antibiotic use
- Miticide use
- Source of queens
- Supplemental feed

Examination of samples:

- Varroa levels high, but may be artificial, Varroa in brood was relatively low
- No tracheal mites found
- Sign of virus in thoracic cuts were found
- There was evidence of "kidney" disease (darkened malpighian tubules and evidence of fungi in the digestive track)

Unlikely causes:

- Parasitic mite syndrome
- Poisoned or contaminated food
- New strain of nosema (Nosema ceranae)
- Not isolated to migratory beekeepers

Areas that are being investigated:

- Nutritional stress
- Pathology

- Environmental contamination

The same week that Dr. Tarpy spoke to our group the news broke that a new virus, the Israeli acute paralysis virus, may be implicated in CCD. It was originally found in Israel. Now it is newly found in the USA (possibly imported from Australian bees for almond pollination). Over 95% of the CCD colonies have this virus and 0% of the healthy colonies nearby had it. They don't know if the virus is the cause or the result of CCD. The next set of studies is inoculating healthy colonies with the virus.

Current recommendations:

- Feed Fumadil-B
- Do not reuse dead-out equipment right away. Let it "air out" for several weeks before placing it on another colony.
- Feed Syrup and pollen in times of dearth.
- Complete the survey at www.beesurvey.com

There are resistant queens that have been developed in Israel. 1/3 of the queens there are naturally resistant.

For more information:

<<http://maarec.cas.psu.edu/CCDPpt/CCDbeekeepersStatementIAPV.pdf>>

Pests and Diseases of the Hive

Will Hicks spoke to our club in August. Thanks to Dawn Childers for taking notes.

Varroa Mites

They came to the U.S. about 20 years ago. It is the worst thing that has happened to beekeepers. The mite spreads disease to bees and will kill off a hive. You can see a red dot on the bee which is the Varroa. They go first to drone brood for reproduction. Look at 10-15 drone brood (use a toothpick to pull them out of the cell). If you see more than 1 or 2 on drone brood or hiding back in the cell, you may have a problem.

Other ways to check for mites are with a sugar shake method or a sticky board. More of this will be discussed at the October meeting.

American Foul Brood

In cells a goopie thick coffee/cream color substance that smells bad. It will rope out ¼ inch when mixed with a small stick. If you see these things in your hive, call a state inspector ASAP. Only about 1-3% of the hives in our state are infested but it only takes 36 spores to infect a hive.

Tracheal Mites

They came from Asia and disrupt the breathing passages of the bee. Bees are becoming resistant to this pest.

Wax Moths

They only come if a hive is weak by disease. They are secondary predators.

Chalk Brood

This a fungus. Check for this at the hive entrance.

Chilled Brood

Seen in March/April when we have a sudden cold spell. The brood exposed to weather chill dies off. The bees clean out the dead brood and move on with their business.

Laying Workers

Spotty brood pattern, multiple eggs in one cell.

If you have problems or questions contact Will Hicks @ cell 919-691-0022 or office 336-599-6345. There is no charge as he is a state employee.

Rebroadcast of ENT 203

ENT 203 "Introduction to the Honey Bee and Beekeeping" course is being re-broadcast Fridays at 5-8 AM and PM, two lectures at at time on Time-Warner channel 18 in Raleigh. Schedule:
<<http://distance.ncsu.edu/students/cableschedule.html>>

Forsyth Beekeepers in the News

Congratulations to Dr. Buddy Marterre and his fellow Forsyth Chapter beekeepers on a good story in Sunday's Winston-Salem Journal.
<http://www.journalnow.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WSJ/MGArticle/WSJ_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1173352602188>

Ronnie Bouchon's Blog

(If you are a member and have a blog or a website you want to share, send it to me)

Ronnie has 3 hives, took the course a few year ago, and was lucky enough to get 2 hives from NC state when they gave them away. He bought his 3rd hive this year from Jack Tapp.

He's a very low maintenance beekeeper; and has had two years of wonderful harvests. His only problem has been lightning that killed one hive when it struck a tree nearby. He put this blog together for his 2006 harvest, because so many people were asking about it (his first year).

<<http://tradescantapiaries.blogspot.com/>>

He hasn't updated it for 2007, but he had another great year with 11 gallons from 2 hives. He only harvested once this year, as he knew he would be replacing his dead hive and wanted some extra honey for the winter.

Ronnie is out in Wake county off of Hwy 50, and has borrowed the clubs extrator from Ricky for the two years he's harvested.

Ronnie says, "Hope you enjoy the stories and pics of my honey harvest; it's been so great for my daughter to learn the joy of beekeeping too."

Bee Movie" Promotional Materials

Available – Order Now!

Don't miss out on an incredible opportunity to tie in with "Bee Movie," a major animated movie from DreamWorks Animation featuring Jerry Seinfeld. The movie will be in theaters this November. NHB has created "Bee Movie" promotional materials for producers and packers to use at retail and farmers markets. The materials feature graphics from the movie and a 100 percent pure honey message. Promotional materials include:

- Hang tags
- Jar/Container Neck Hangers
- Stickers
- Table Signs

The materials must be used between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31. For pricing and ordering information, call NHB at 1-800-553-7162

Bee-lieve It of Not

During the heat of the summer, Jerry Brantley noticed his bees flying above the water and dipping their back legs in the water to fill their pollen pockets with water. He swears this is true and has a witness.

When he added crushed ice to the water, they were carrying little ice cubes back to the hive. ;-)

Bees follow Jerry's wife when she goes out to the mailbox. It is not a problem, because they are guard bees.

Bee Alert. One of our members has lost seven hives to thieves.

The November meeting will be fruitful, Jerry says. Don't miss it.

Study: Honey May Be Valuable Sugar Substitute Those With Mild Diabetes

Subjects with Impaired Glucose Tolerance Exhibit a High Degree of Tolerance to Honey

Journal of Medicinal Food, September 2007, 10(3): 473-478

<http://apitherapy.blogspot.com/2007/09/study-honey-may-be-valuable-sugar.html>

The present study compared the relative tolerance to honey and glucose of subjects with impaired glucose tolerance or mild diabetes...

Hives for Lives Raises Money for Cancer

Two ambitious teen-age girls from Devon, Pa., are raising money to fight cancer through their bee product business. Molly Houlahan, 15, and Carolyn Houlahan, 13, launched "Hives for Lives" three years ago after their grandfather died of cancer.

Since the girls and other family members shared an interest in bee-keeping as a hobby, the sisters suggested selling their honey to raise money to fight cancer. The teen-agers have since raised more than \$22,000 for the American Cancer Society.

In addition to harvesting their honey, Molly runs a "Hives for Lives" Young Business Leaders Club at her school. "Hives for Lives will go on as long as there is cancer," said Molly. "I hope every year it will grow," added Carolyn.

The teen-agers were recently honored with the President's Call to Service Award, given out by the President to outstanding volunteers. More information is available on their web site at <http://www.hivesforlives.org/>

Backyard Beekeepers as Warriors Against a Plague

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/27/garden/27bees.html?ref=garden>

Caleb Kenna for The New York Times KEEPING BEES GOING Charles Mraz runs the Champlain Valley Apiaries in Vermont. By LESLIE LAND

Published: September 27, 2007

THE delicate fragrance of newly made honey and the murmur of bees have greeted visitors to our Hudson Valley home all summer. My husband, Bill Bakaitis, who tends our two hives, has put them in the front yard right beside the driveway. The bee-phobic sometimes get nervous, but for us the suspense is pleasant: between the music and the perfume you can't leave the house without wondering what this year's crop will be like.

The flowery 2002, for instance, thickened to velvet within weeks of harvest. The spicy 2003 is still liquid (what's left of it). Each is a summary of its season's flower parade, from locust, clover and dandelion to rose, raspberry and garlic chives. (The bees adore them. They smell like lilies.)

Bees usually visit just one nectar source at a time, and it is possible to capture the flavor of a particular source by harvesting each in turn. But our honeys are always the house blend, because for Bill, the family beekeeper, one crop a year is enough.

That means our October harvest is also a weather

report; drought and deluge both discourage flowers. In 2005 we got more than eight gallons of honey. Last year there was almost none. Usually, there is enough to keep us well supplied without depriving the bees. Taking too much would kill them by starving them over the winter.

Sometimes they die anyway. Losses to cold or pests or disease are a normal part of beekeeping, no matter how well the bees are cared for. Ours have been replaced a number of times, but I never paid attention to where the new bees came from or what kind they were until early this year, when colony collapse disorder, the mysterious killer that was wiping out huge numbers of commercial honeybee hives, started making the news.

It made me wonder about the genetics of our bees and whether we should raise heirloom bees, the way we save heirloom seeds.

I figured if we kept our own Carniolans or Buckfasts or another old-fashioned variety, we could be preserving important genes (to say nothing of having niftier bees). The resident beekeeper said he was willing to try the heirloom plan, but finding the right bees to raise was my department.

I called Kim Flottum, editor of *Bee Culture* magazine (beeculture.com), a publication based in Medina, Ohio, and directed at backyard beekeepers nationwide. He would know where to find heirloom strains and which ones were best suited to the northeast. Mr. Flottum said my effort was about 30 years too late.

In the United States, most of the heirloom strains were wiped out, along with most of the feral honeybees, by the tracheal mites and *Varroa* mites that arrived in the 1980s. Many beekeepers simply quit, roughly halving the number of hives in this country, to about 2.5 million. Twenty-two years ago there were 9,000 beekeepers in Ohio. Now there are 3,100, and that trend is mirrored everywhere, he said.

As honey prices dropped and demand for pollination services rose, the market for bees became a market for good pollinators, Mr. Flottum explained. The gene pool narrowed as breeders concentrated on that one trait. Any weakness in the bees was masked by

an efficient arsenal of pesticides and antibiotics.

But that isn't working anymore, he said. Resistance develops more and more quickly each time a new pesticide is introduced. "The cost of treatments is rising," he said. "We've got to get off the chemical wagon and broaden the genetic base."

Some expert beekeepers have been keeping chemical use low and paying attention to genetics all along. One of them is Charles Mraz, who owns Champlain Valley Apiaries in Vermont, founded by his grandfather Charles Mraz in 1931.

Mr. Mraz breeds most of Champlain Valley's bees, selecting the stock from hives that have successfully fought pests, diseases and hard winters.

"We breed from our survivors and we have quite a bit of genetic diversity," Mr. Mraz said, adding that those survivor bees had more than once proved their value. You could breed from your survivors too, he said. In other words, the best way to have healthy bees is to breed your own, but starting with your own healthy bees rather than named heirlooms. With roughly 1,200 hives, Champlain Valley is small as commercial operations go; the big pollinators have 10,000 hives and more. But it's gigantic compared to us. I wondered if people with just a few hives could really make any difference.

Even novice beekeepers, he said, are of tremendous importance. The more local bees there are, the stronger the gene pool will be. Start with bees from a local beekeeper, because having bees adapted to the climate is important. Spread your hives out, if you can, and stick to natural treatments.

Just raising local bees will help, he said, but if you want to breed from survivors it's best to have at least 4 or 5 hives to allow for normal losses.

Given that two hives are enough to pollinate the whole garden while also making us self-sufficient in both honey and holiday presents, that's probably where we'll stop. But the next time we have to buy new bees you can bet they'll be survivors bred by somebody local.