

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association ~ October 2012



Local Buzz

President's Message

Rob Slay, President

Hope everyone harvested some honey this year. I will be checking out A-Z Hardware's honey house in a few weeks. Please join us at the October meeting with Steve Reynolds. Steve will be showing us how to make some yummy honey mustard.

September 1st Meeting - 7:00 PM

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

Our Program is "Making Honey Mustard" with Steve Reynolds.

Bee Bits

Randy Oliver, Contributor

This season is finally settling back to "normal". We had unusually strong late season nectar and honeydew flows in many yards. In addition, late pollen flows were generally good, leading to favorable broodrearing.

In August and September, local colonies typically reduce broodrearing, which results in the colony population diminishing. As a result, there are fewer bees for the varroa population to spread out over, leading to sharply higher per-bee infestation rates. When this happens, viruses can go epidemic in the hive—especially Deformed Wing Virus (DWV).

You can greatly help your colonies by making sure that they maintain broodrearing. You should see plenty of white larvae floating in ample jelly. What we are finding this season is that since there is so much pollen, that simply stimulating with 1:1 sugar syrup is often enough, if you see pollen stored around the brood. If you don't see stored pollen, then feeding pollen supplement helps greatly.

In our yards we find some colonies that keep mite levels down pretty well, whereas in others mites skyrocket—and this may be in colonies all from the same queen mother! It's the skyrocketing ones that can be a source of mite immigration into the other hives.

So how do you monitor mite levels? I've recently performed simultaneous stickyboard counts and alcohol washes on a number of hives. To my great surprise, there was almost no correlation! After seeing this, I must state that one should not trust any single stickyboard count—you must track over several days as they can go way up or down. Alcohol washes are much more consistent, but not always. I'm currently changing to only using 1/3 cup of bees in alcohol washes (about 200 bees)—it's much easier, and the results appear to be accurate enough for management decisions.

You can also use the powdered sugar shake, which doesn't kill the bees, but takes longer. Detailed instructions are at <http://scientificbeekeeping.com/sick-bees-part-11-mite-monitoring-methods/>.

From the Librarian

Tynowyn Slattery, Librarian

3 Books concerning beeswax that have been in the library for a while and deserve a look, or even a second look.

Beeswax: Production, Harvesting, Processing and Products

William L. Coggshall and Roger A. Morse, 1984

This little paperback does some heavy lifting in the beeswax information department and if I were to list just the table of contents, it would take up the whole book review.

The title really says it all; if you want encyclopedic information about beeswax, this is the book for you, although I have a couple small caveats; this is the oldest publication of the three books and it does not address wax contamination with pesticides and some of the frame foundation information is dated.

What it really has is the fascination of picking up a dictionary and being trapped into reading entry after entry.

Beeswax Crafts

Search Press 1996

This book is in 5 chapters, each written by a different single contributor, covering: Candle making, Modeling, Beauty creams, soaps and polishes, Encaustic art and Wax crayons.

Each section is a good introduction to the subject with a lot of glossy, explanatory pictures, clear instructions and engaging ideas which are a cut above the usual beginning projects: one example is the modeling section which deals with creating wax flowers which are breathtakingly beautiful and were a very popular accomplishment for a lady during the Victorian period; of course these little gems had to be kept under glass, to avoid becoming fuzzy, little dust magnets.

This is not a book for someone already familiar with these crafts or for going into any depth in the subjects, but it definitely is a very thorough sampling and beginning place.

Beeswax Crafting

Robert Berthold Jr.

Wicwas Press, 1993

This book is a combination of the first two in fewer pages...there is a first chapter of the technical aspects of wax creation, processing for art and everyday uses and safety issues followed by chapters on using wax for art and practical home uses.

There are enough pictures (black and white) to get a visual sense of the text, but I miss having color in the art chapters which include, by the way, encaustic painting and making a beautiful wax rose, while, in the back, one can find a list of sources of supplies that are probably current.

This is another good introduction book for the uses of beeswax and contains some information that the previous book doesn't have.

Now for my ultimate favorite use for the magical substance from the bees own head: waxing my sewing thread, yes, waxed thread does not tangle, therefore, saving me from uttering unladylike words and thinking negative thoughts, which quality of life considerations were not covered in any of the three books here reviewed.

...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

Raffle Prizes

Karla Hanson, Coordinator

Thank you all for bringing some great items for our raffles, keep it coming. Plants, eggs, jewelry, soaps, bee items, jams, beautiful metal garden art, the list goes on and on... Thanks to everyone!

Helping a Member

Janet Brisson, Treasurer

I have found that becoming a beekeeper can be a life changing situation. In our case, it first added income to our farm as we were able to add honey to our list of products that we were selling to the Briar Patch. Then we started to build equipment and became manufacturers which unexpectedly took off. We could not have achieved our success if it had not been for the support of our club.

We are lucky to have Randy Oliver looking over all of us. One thing that we realized about him, he wanted us to be successful in beekeeping and all of our beekeeping endeavors, in fact, he would go out of his way to make sure we are successful. And that is something that we took from him and try to pass it along to other beekeepers to help them become successful. And we get to do this now all over the world. It is an amazingly good feeling.

So when Tracey Stirling, one of our members, found that Bee Venom Therapy helped her chronic pain and health issues, and she realized she needed to spread the word about this amazing process, it only made sense to support her. Tracey started to investigate how well it worked with a lot of health issues such as MS, arthritis and Lyme's disease and realized that she could help a lot of people by becoming a certified Apitherapist.

Although short on funds, Tracey discovered the American Apitherapy Society will be hosting a 3 day intensive workshop on Apitherapy in October in Portland. This will certify her in this industry and bring this skill back to our area to help and inform people.

Tracey set up a page on GoFundMe <http://www.gofundme.com/11qkxs> for lots of information and to explain what she is doing. This page makes it easy to donate directly to Tracey and her trip.

I brought Tracey's plight up at our September meeting where we voted to donate the entire funds of the October Raffle to Tracey's trip. Our raffles usually bring in between \$70 and \$100 each month. Let's help Tracey by bringing in things to donate and help drive up the number raffle tickets sold.

Tracey will be our guest speaker at our November meeting talking about Bee Venom Therapy after she completes her course.

This Month's Recipe

Recipe from the National Honey Board, submitted by Leslie Gault

Honey Packed Peaches

Makes 6 pints

- 2-3/4 cups water, divided
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 5 lbs. peaches (or nectarines or apricots), peeled, pitted and cut into wedges
- 1-1/4 cups honey (lighter flavor is best)
- 2 Tablespoons vanilla extract
- 6 small strips lemon zest

In a large bowl, mix 1/4 cup water and lemon juice. Stir fruit in gently, coating all pieces. Set aside. In a small saucepan, bring honey and remaining water to a boil. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Cover pan to keep contents hot. Pack fruit gently into 6 hot sterilized pint jars, filling to 1/4 inch from top of jar, and place a piece of lemon zest in each jar. Fill jars with honey mixture up to 1/4 inch from tops. Wipe rims of jars; top with lids. Screw on bands. Place jars on rack in canning kettle of hot water, adding water if necessary to bring water level to 1 inch above tops of jars. Bring water to a rolling boil; boil for 25 minutes (or more if at altitude). Remove jars carefully and cool on a wire rack.

Country Rubes Combo Screened Bottom Boards

Special NCBA Club Price! Call Janet for details. 530-913-2724 or 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

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Goodies Sign-up

Karla Hanson, Coordinator

Please let me know if you can bring a treat for any of the coming meetings. We still need treats for our September, October, and November meetings. Contact Karla Hanson, queenbeez@att.net

April Minutes

Jack Meeks, Secretary

President Rob Slay opened with a Q&A. Dan & Alene Kelly were visitors. A Motion from Janet Brisson: Use \$1000 for Apitherapy trip by Tracey Sterling was passed. Nevada County 4H beekeepers will receive donations of supplies, and Rob Slay will conduct classes for 4H members. Dan Wheat's A to Z Supply on Ridge Road (530) 273-6608 has a heated extractor room with supplies and facilities for beekeepers.

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 or email Janet at rubes@countryrubes.com

Volunteer Your Time

Diane Benton, Contributor

Think about volunteering at the 4H County Wide Project for Beekeeping.

A generous donation of supplies was made recently to the 4-H Beekeeping Project by Mr. & Mrs. Madrid. They donated hats, veils, suits, tools, smokers, books and beehives. Literally everything a beginning beekeeper would need. The idea of the beekeeping project has been around for some time however whenever an introductory meeting is held, students eventually drop out because it can be cost prohibitive. The fact is that most young children living in this county are from lower income families. The goal of the project is to teach children how to start a hive, take care of their bees and eventually extract the honey and sell it; plowing the profits back into the program.

They have all the supplies but now need to get the word out to kids that this program exists. April Reese from A to Z Supply spoke at our August meeting about the program so I called for more details. April has been involved with 4-H for 4 years with her children in poultry, swine, archery and canning. She is going to create a flyer to get the word out about the beekeeping project. People are also needed to give presentations to these children at 4-H meetings or in the classroom. I'm sure that Rob Slay, who heads this project, can use your help at the hands-on bee yard meetings.

If you would like to volunteer you can pick up a volunteer form from Jill Simmons, the 4-H office manager, located upstairs in the Vet's Hall. She is there from 8:00 to 5:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The only other requirement to be a volunteer is get a DOJ fingerprinting at the Sheriff's office at the Rood Center in Nevada City. If you would like to donate money, make your check out to Nevada County 4-H with a notation that it is for the beekeeping project and mail it to the 4-H, Grass Valley Veteran's Memorial Bldg., 255 South Auburn St., Grass Valley, CA 95945.

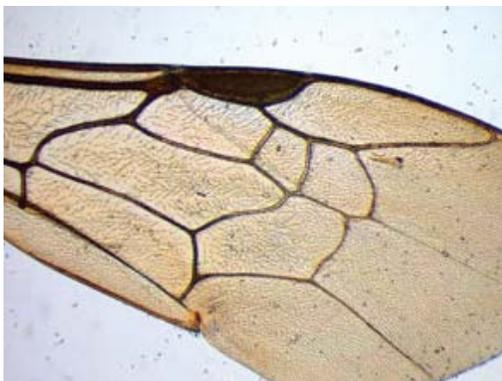
They are also looking for a centralized location for the bee yard. Grass Valley would be ideal. If anyone has a corner of their property they would like to loan or empty lot or land in town, please call April at 274-3871 or Rob at 263-5618. Since the Boy Scouts of America discontinued their beekeeping merit badge, 4-H is one of the few ways left to introduce young people to beekeeping!

April Reese, 4-H Council President, receives a check from an association member for the 4-H Beekeeping project. She is shown here with her dad Dan Wheat, a Nevada County Beekeepers Association member.



How to ID a bee

Lynn Williams, Contributor



What's happening to the honeybees? Every year, colony collapse disorder decimates the European honeybee population in the United States. The important question may not be where the missing bees are — but rather, which bees are still here. UW-Madison entomologist Claudio Gratton thought that there had to be a more efficient way to do things, so he contacted Electrical and Computer Engineering Professor Bill Sethares to ask if he could create a system for digital taxonomy, possibly even an iPhone application, that could quickly and accurately identify bee species from images of their intricately veined wings. Full story at:

<http://www.engr.wisc.edu/news/archive/2012/ECE2012-bees.html>

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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Secretary: Jack Meeks..... 432-4429
jackm@nccn.net
Treasurer: Janet Brisson..... 913-2724
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Committee Chairs

Swarm Hotline: Karla Hanson..... 265-3756
Lynn Williams 675-2924
Librarian: Tynowyn Slattery..... 265-6318
Newsletter Mailing: Steve Reynolds..... 401-4654
slreynolds86@yahoo.com
Newsletter: Gary Gustafson..... 478-1216
Honey Extractor: Karla Hanson..... 265-3756

Nevada County Beekeepers Association



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

October 1st Meeting - 7PM

Program: Making Honey Mustard

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