



Local Buzz

President's Message

Leslie Gault, President



Happy August everyone. It's been a busy summer so we'll have to keep this note short. I hope all of you are enjoying the warm season as much as we are!

Speaking of warmth, a common question at our meetings is 'why are my bees clustered on the outside of my hive'? On a warm day—and especially at night when all the bees are home—some of the bees will hang around the outside of the entrance rather than go inside. This helps keep the heat load down inside the hive box by reducing the number of bees and allowing more space for the others to fan and cool the interior. You can assist your bees in

staying cool by making sure they have adequate ventilation, such as using screened bottom boards and chocking open the outer cover slightly (I use a small piece of gravel in the corner between the inner and outer covers), and making sure there is water nearby, etc. Watch for robbing if you open up additional entrances to the boxes.

August Meeting – booth clean up and potluck, Sunday 8/3

Note that we will not hold an August meeting on our regular Monday evening, but instead have planned a bee booth clean up and potluck at the fairgrounds for the Sunday before the meeting. The cleanup always goes quickly, and it's fun to enjoy a calm potluck at the beautiful fairgrounds before all the fair activity has begun. It's always an evening of learning something new, having fun, lots of laughter and plenty of good food. The club furnishes the gourmet hot dogs, hamburgers or vegetarian meat substitute when asked. With all the fixings too! Contact Karla Hanson at (queenez@att.net) know if you are coming and what kind of meat you prefer.

Clean up starts at 5:00PM and the Bar B Que starts at 6:00. Hope to see you there.

Club Reminders

Fair Booth Shifts - The Nevada County Fair starts August 6th thru 10th and the booth schedule is complete. If you are on the schedule you can pick up your fair entry pass at the BBQ on August 3rd. If you can not make the BBQ please contact Karla Hanson at QueenBeez@att.net for your entry pass.

Bee Bits

Randy Oliver, Contributor

This season appears to be a repeat of last season—a poor blackberry honey crop, then followed (at above 2000 ft) by a strong flow of honey/honeydew, from I'm not sure what. In the second half of July, we have many yards shaking nectar and drawing comb. Our colonies are looking great, but mite levels are up.

To my surprise, star thistle in some areas is looking decent, and the bees are working it heavily.

We've been hitting those hives with honey yet to pull with single strips of MAQS (formic acid), and those without surplus honey with 25g of Apiguard (thymol gel, cheaper than MAQS) in the middle of the broodnest. I just received some bulk formic acid, and plan to start testing hot weather "flash treatments."

Pollen flows dropped off, and I'm seeing little beebread around the brood, although colonies are actively rearing brood. We'll keep a close eye on the amount of jelly around the larvae.

It is again very dry during this drought, and we are again getting complaints about bees going to neighbors' water sources. You may be able to avoid problems by supplying your bees with a water source on your property. I've had best luck with water sources placed at least a hundred feet from the hives, but have yet to figure out a source that is more attractive than swimming pool water.

As I type these words, Stephanie and I are freshly returned from an impromptu backpacking trip to the High Country. Even in the middle of the Five Lakes Basin, we saw a few honey bees. How they survive in that extreme and unforgiving habitat is beyond me! I'd like to spend some time beelining up there to locate the colonies (we saw honey bees of two different colors).

A recent issue of the Journal of Apicultural Research is all about recent studies in Europe that tested the performance of locally-adapted bee stocks to stocks imported from elsewhere. The local stocks almost always outperformed the imported stocks. To a biologist, this makes perfect sense, despite the fact that beekeepers seem to always think that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. This special issue is open access at <http://www.ibra.org.uk/articles/JAR-53-2-2014>.

That said, I am a huge proponent of breeding locally-adapted bee stocks. I'm always interested in exceptional colonies in this area that have survived for at least two years in a managed hive in good health, especially those with little or no mite treatments. If you have such a hive, please mark it, and let me know so that I can use it for breeding stock the next spring.

Minutes from Last Meeting

"Bees are famous for being busy. But they always take time to smell the flowers."

President Leslie Gault opened with Q&A.
Should we charge for removing swarms?

As NCBA members we cannot charge for picking up swarms but we may choose to request help with gas money. Anyone who charges a fee should make it clear that they are not a representative of the NCBA.

Varroa mites are building up all summer, as bee numbers decline. Powdered sugar treatment knocks mites off comb, but does not kill mites in larva cells. Summer and fall treatment with oxalic acid, hopguard, formic acid, Apistan etc. protects next winter hive. If pesticide treatment is omitted, mites may destroy colony before next spring.

Norm Wallace encourages cultivation of pollinator-attractive native plants, and uses no-till methods and mechanical spreading of seeds, or mixing tiny seeds in sand to get good broadcasting if spread by hand or small spreader.

FINANCE

Janet Brisson JuneStart \$5082.89; Inc \$184; Exp \$164.29; EnsBal \$5102.60.

PROGRAM

Jeremiah Farrell explained how Fair honey judges invert entries to check how fast bubble rises, how gift baskets more elaborate and larger win, extracting frames should be topped off by feeding sugar water to produce white capping, and block wax with a dip or crack should be finished off with a topping of melted wax. Our Fair is one of few which have honey judging. We should all enter to ensure honey remains a recognized exhibition.

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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From the Librarian

Tynowyn Slattery

If you bring back books or media, and I am not available... please just lay your material flat on a shelf and I will know that I haven't checked it in yet, and you won't have to remember it for another month. Win-win.

Randy has brought some good books in from Burt's bequest, stop by the library for a look.

Happy Reading.

You can always mail returned books to:

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

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association library is located in the foyer of the building. Our Librarian, Tynowyn Slattery (left), is usually available before and after meetings to help club members find both children and adult books, DVD s and videos on beekeeping. Stop by and browse the library!

Weed Killer Safe for Bees

Last month's story on the bee safe weed killer has returned some doubts that it may actually work because of the low ratio of acetic acid. For more information on this please visit:

<http://www.garden-counselor-lawn-care.com/vinegar-weed-killer.html>

Meet the Members

Diane Benton talks with Bert Pate

How did you get interested in beekeeping Bert? Well, I've been a Master Gardener since 2000 so have always been interested in bees. I took Randy's class then decided I was ready to become a beekeeper.

How many hives do you have and where do you keep them?

They have actually been kept for several years at the location I bought them from. I'm picking the two hives up next week so I'll have them on my property for the first time. I'm in Big Oak Valley which is just down the hill from Penn Valley.

What is your favorite part of beekeeping? And worst? The

best part is knowing how the bees can benefit my property and my community. I have a 26 tree orchard on my property and

plan to put the hives next to the orchard. Then about an acre away I have a drip septic system so I'm looking forward to filling the whole acre between the orchard and the septic with

flowers the bees can use. The worst is not being able to do anything about people using pesticides that harm bees. I also found out we have a bear problem here so might have to put up an electric wire.

What was the biggest surprise you have had as a beekeeper? How gentle bees are! But my wife still doesn't believe me.

Can you tell us something interesting about yourself before you became a beekeeper? "I got to fly on the edge of space." I was a High School Science Teacher and retired 18 years ago. On holidays and weekends I worked as a scientist for NASA and at Lawrence Livermore lab. For one of the projects I worked on I went up in a 747 to 41,000 feet. That's the highest you can go without wearing a space suit. The 747 had a big glass door built in the side of it with a telescope looking out. Our mission was to study Orion's Belt.

Top Bar Hive Group

Karla Hanson, Contributor

There is interest in having a group for people that are doing Top Bar Hives and using untreated bees.

Contact Karla Hanson at (queeneez@att.net) and indicate if you would like to be included in this group.

Wired Up Bees

High Tech Beekeeping

A do-it-yourself apiary kit, you can reportedly build a hive that encourages healthy bees. The hive comes with a sensor system that collects data so that you can keep an eye on the bees in real time.

<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22229644.700-wire-up-hives-to-keep-bees-happy-and-healthy.html#.U9V0f7G4NQK>





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TO HELP SAVE BEES

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

August Meeting

**Moved to the Fairgrounds August 3rd
Evening Booth Cleanup and BBQ**