

The Nevada County Beekeepers Association ~ March 2014



President's Message

Leslie Gault, President

Ah, another lovely warm winter day. The rain in early February was extremely welcome after such an extended dry spell, but it was still only enough to bring us slightly above the record lowest rainfall to date.

So what's up in your apiary? On these warm days my foragers are out of the hive enjoying mustard, rosemary, and aster blossoms in our yard, plus willow and who-knows-what-else in the wild. They also visit those numerous 'weeds' that I haven't the heart to pull out because the bees need them for cool season forage. Arugula is the weed of abundance in our backyard, each year I leave it to flower and it produces prolific towers of thousands of blossoms...which in turn create the seeds that ignite the next generation of flowers for bee fodder. And we get nice salads.

A common question at our Q and A sessions at the meetings is 'should I be feeding my bees now'? The asker almost never gets a straight yes or no, because it's up to the beekeeper to know what's going on in the hive and there isn't one answer! There are many many variations in bees, weather, and locations, so you must be monitoring your hives for food to be sure there's enough. If it's too cool out to open them up and look directly, you can get a relative feel by monitoring the number of returning foragers (How many? Are they bringing back pollen?) and by carefully tilting up the rear of the hive box to assess how heavy it is. If it's too light, feeding is in order in the short term. If you're not sure, and cold or rainy weather is forecast, err on the side of feeding because they can easily starve during spring build up when confined to their boxes. You will then want to make plans to open them up soon on a warm sunny afternoon when there's no danger of brood chilling to look at the food situation inside. Do they have enough, or have you perhaps overfed them and they've filled all available space with sugar water? While you're observing the front of the hive, look for signs of disease at the entrance—are there excessive numbers of dead bees or bee poop? No bees flying when your other hives are? Bees with curly wings, walking erratically, or other unusual behavior in front? All these observations will ultimately come together to help you develop a feel for when you need to feed and whether your bees are healthy, so keep at it.

Our March speaker is Dr. Eric Mussen UC Extension State Apiculturist. This may be the last time we get to hear Dr. Mussen speak since he's retiring in June, so be sure not to miss it.

Finally, thanks to all of you who who've been emailing and talking to us to let us know what's on your minds, we need to hear from you.

March 3rd Meeting – 7:00 PM

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

Our speaker for the March meeting is Dr Eric Mussen. Dr Mussen is the extension apiarist for the UC system, and is one of the most respected and influential apiculturists in the nation. He blends practical beekeeping advice with the latest research from academia. If you have never heard Dr Mussen speak you are in for a treat. The program is wide open so bring any beekeeping related questions you may have.

No-host Dinner at Marias in Grass Valley

Any members are welcome to a no-host dinner at Marias in Grass Valley at 5:30 PM before the meeting. If you are interested in joining us, please RSVP at least 24 hours in advance to Brion Dunbar at brion@bourbonhillbees.com or (530) 559-1422.

Raffle Prizes

Karla Hanson, Coordinator

Thank you all for bringing some great items for our raffles, keep it coming. Raffle prizes are necessary for the financial survival of the club and it's just plain fun! Plants, cuttings, eggs, jewelry, soaps, bee items, jams, beautiful metal garden art, the list goes on and on... Thanks to everyone!

August Potluck

Karla Hanson, Coordinator

August is the Potluck BBQ for the fair. Which EVERYONE is welcome to come to. The more the merrier... Come help clean up the bee booth at 5:00PM and then dinner starts at 6:00PM. Enjoy an evening with fellow beekeepers. 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! All you need to do is let Karla Hanson at (queeneez@att.net) know if you are coming and what kind of meat you prefer. The reminder notice will come out in the June newsletter again. The date is still to be determined.

Bonus Recipe

From Dawn Wait – Yogurt Honey Dressing that's Great with Fish

1 cup yogurt
3 Tbsp fresh chopped dill
3 Tbsp Honey
2 tsp fresh squeezed lemon juice
1 tsp salt
1 tsp lemon zest
1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
Mix together well and refrigerate an hour before serving.
Will keep a couple of days in refrigerator. Really good on fish.



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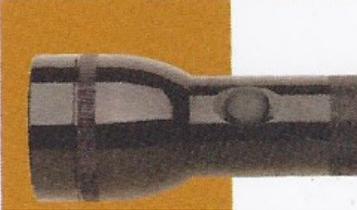
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Minutes from Last Meeting

Jack Meeks, Secretary

President Leslie Gault opened with Q&A comments.

Check hives monthly by weight, lifting one end. Prevent starvation by moving honey frames between hives, or feed granulated sugar. Bees won't use sugar syrup below 50F. Strong hives can be split, but not until drones are plentiful in spring, April or May.

Finance: Janet Brisson: JanStart \$4267.84; Inc\$1092.70; Exp\$646.23; EndBal\$4714.31.

PROGRAM:

Prof. George Bleekman demonstrated his solar wax melter, which extracts clear wax in one operation from old dark brood frames, cappings, junk scrapings, propolis etc. After letting bees remove any honey residue, the scraps are loosely loaded into nylon pantyhose legs and placed on a slanted drip pan inside a wooden box with a clear acrylic hinged cover. Placed under direct sun, the tubes melt the pure wax out at high temperature. Collected at the bottom, pure wax can be poured into molds. Prof Bleekman says no bleaching or water treatment is needed and it's ready to use. He recommends a hands-on manual, "Beekeeper's Handbook" by Diana Scammataro and Alphonse Avitabile, Cornell University Press, 1998, ISBN 13:978.0.8014-8503-9

Top Bar Hive Group

Karla Hanson, Contributor

I think there is a need to start a group of people that are doing Top Bar Hives. I will gladly head up the group to get it going. Steve Hill, a new member and others have requested that we also send information about acquiring totally untreated bees. Which is BeeKind in Sebastopol, they have untreated packages. You have to pick them up because they don't ship bees. So you also would like to order some let me know and I will get you in contact with Steve Hill.

I do not have a Top Bar Hive, but as soon as the group gets going, I will transfer that responsibility to anyone who wants to take it over. I think we just need someone to spear head it. So contact Karla Hanson at (queeneez@att.net) and let me know if you would like to be included in this group of Top Bar Hive enthusiast.

Goodies Sign-up

Karla Hanson, Coordinator

Please let me know if you can bring a treat for any of the coming meetings. We only need a couple of folks each month, so pick a month and let me know. Contact Karla Hanson, queenbeez@att.net

March: Debbie Cavallaro & Jessica Hankins

April: Debbie Cavallaro & Ellie Lightfoot

May, June, July ?

This Month's Recipe

From Karla Hanson – Honey Dijon Salad Dressing Recipe

This popular honey Dijon salad dressing recipe is great for all types of salads, but especially good with the more bitter greens, as the sweetness in the dressing works well with those more pronounced flavors. This honey Dijon salad dressing recipe is also a great basting sauce for grilled meats.

Makes about 2 cups Honey Dijon Dressing Recipe

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Total Time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup cider vinegar
- 2/3 cup olive oil
- salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
- one teaspoon onion granules or powder

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and whisk vigorously until emulsified. May be served immediately. May be stored for several weeks in the refrigerator. Stir well before serving. (I mix my in the Vita Mix and then it is really emulsified and doesn't need to be shook).

Submit your favorite HONEY recipe to the newsletter at garyg@newpress.com

From the Librarian

Tynowyn Slattery

A new book: Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping by Dewey M. Caron and Lawrence John Connor
368 pages, copyright 1999, Revision 2013
Wicwas Press, LLC

We have this excellent book in the library but there are many changes and additions that reflect it's upgrade for use as a textbook for university and master bee course students. This reissue is now a hard cover with 20 full chapters going from a general introduction straight into classification, specialization, anatomy, communication, queen specifics, forage and bee botany in the first 10 chapters.

Chapters 11 through 15 guide the student through the actual set up of the hive and working of the bees until harvest, with chapters 16 -20 cover bee & honey products, queen mating & rearing, pollination, and finally addressing diseases & pests with a chapter devoted solely to mites. Whew!

There are hundreds of color photos and illustrations, a 6 page glossary and (Oh, frabjous day!) a 4 page index, although with very small print, for which I would happily whip out my reading glasses.

Some of the chapters begin with poetry and all end with a "discussion questions and exercises," section that is a non-stop impetus for Apis investigation... and there are some very funny moments.

What's not to like with this book?

Well...it is text book weight; if you read in bed, as I do, it may slip out of your hands and whack you on your nose, but, it's well and away, worth the chance.

This is a book to check out a second time or even a third. (Thanks to Janet for getting it for us)

It would be extremely helpful to have a person, interested in books and who can make it to most of the meetings, help in the library. If you think you would like the opportunity, please talk to Tynowyn Slattery during the break.

Remember...If you can't make meetings to return books, you can always mail them 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!



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

March 3rd Meeting – 7PM

Program:

Dr Eric Mussen, apiarist for the UC system