

Local Buzz



July 2008

President's Message

Hello beekeepers: Welcome to blackberry bloom part two--it's been a weird year. Bloom started, then paused, now at 1500 foot elevation it's about 60-70% over. Hope everyone is going to get a little blackberry honey. On that note, all you need is three one lb. jars for your fair entry, enter for free on-line at nevadacountyfair.com. At our July meeting we will help with fair entry and preparation questions.

I'll see everyone at the August picnic/bee booth clean up before the fair. Your vice president Steve will be handling the July meeting, as I can't make it. Have fun!
Your President, Rob Slay

July 7th Program

The Monday July 7, 2008 meeting will be all about the Nevada County Fair bee products exhibition. Are you getting ready for the Nevada County Fair Honey Judging in August? Can't tell your light honey from your dark? Wondering what the judges are looking for? We have a panel of experts and past winners sharing their "Tips and Secrets for Entering Your Honey Products in The County Fair."

Bee Bits

By Randy Oliver

Is my memory foggy, or did the weather and bloom used to be more uniform? As I mentioned before, this spring the almond bloom was ten days late. Manzanita followed suit, but not the fruit bloom. In April we got the surprise Arctic blast that killed the walnut bloom, and most of the developing stone fruits.

But the real surprise is blackberries. I've never noticed them being damaged by frost before. The tender growing tips of the vines were nipped by the frost, and didn't produce flower buds in May. As a result, patches of blackberry that normally are solid white with bloom in late May and June had only a few flowers.

We actually headed out one day with a load of honey supers to place, and when we saw the condition of the

colonies, turned around and headed home to bring back emergency syrup feed instead! This feeding greatly helped the smaller colonies to continue to grow until the nectar flow finally began.

Once the flow started, though, it wasn't very much, due to lack of flowers. Then a strange thing happened—the plants apparently decided to go for round two of bloom, and set a new crop of buds. In many areas, I saw plants with maturing fruit, and a brand new set of unopened flower buds sticking up on adjacent branch tips. Indeed, on Cement Hill, I left one yard that had vines with only unopened flower buds, and then drove ½ mile to see vines that had nothing but maturing pink fruit and no buds. How this will all turn out for the bees I don't know, but at least they are getting an extended blackberry pollen flow.

This weekend, I visited two yards in Sonoma County. At the first yard, the colonies were thriving—plenty of white comb dripping with nectar. Tasted like a blackberry/eucalyptus blend. The brood was solid and healthy. Then we went to a yard further inland, and drier. The colonies were devastated! There were dead bees in front of some hives. The brood was spotty or nonexistent, the newly-emerged bees were whitish, and often sported deformed wings. A number of newly-emerged bees were head down in the cells. Older bees were shiny and looked like they had paralysis virus. At first it looked as though the colonies were infected with several viruses at once. The colonies also emitted the strong odor of cat urine!

Then the possibility of buckeye poisoning was brought up. The area was full of buckeye in bloom, and due to the odd weather, it was blooming *after* the blackberry, rather than concurrently. The colonies were apparently gorging on undiluted buckeye pollen and nectar. From the USDA Diagnosis of Honey Bee Diseases we get the following:

California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*)

Stages most affected: Young brood

Effect on adult: Emerging young workers often deformed, pale, Some hairless and tremble.

Effect on brood: Queens lay eggs at reduced rate, cease, or become drone layers. Eggs normal at outset; later fail to hatch or all are drone eggs. Larvae die soon after

hatching and disappear. Little or no capped brood; if present, scattered. Effect on colony: Weakened or killed. May be many dead bees near entrance. Supersedure of queen may fail. Other sources indicate that buckeye poisoning appears similar to paralysis virus and deformed wing virus. So be aware in your own apiaries. The effect may linger, due to stored pollen. I'm not sure as to the toxicity of the nectar, as most references are based upon hearsay, rather than data. The poor affected beekeeper is going to try to remove the toxic pollen and nectar, and then feed syrup and pollen supplement to attempt to dilute the alkaloid toxin. One thing about beekeeping—you can keep bees all your life, yet still be surprised by something new every year!
Randy Oliver

 DW Transport
 MC# 486738
 We move BEES !
 Experienced
 Call us for a price quote !
 We can move anything on our flatbed or van !
 530-885-8220
 dwtransport@aol.com
 references available



For Sale

For Sale: Country Rubes Combo Screened Bottom Boards
 Special NCBA Club Price!
 Call Janet for details. 530-913-2724 or email at rubes@countryrubes.com.

June Minutes

Pres. Rob Slay opened with Q&A. A frame of brood affected by American Foulbrood displayed sunken cell caps, many with tiny holes off center, spotty irregular pattern and a distinctive odor. Nosema ceranae mayn't be involved in most disappearing hives, and Fumagillin may not be effective against Nosema. Finance Janet B: May Bal \$1519.71; Exp\$9.68; Inc\$262.50; May End Bal \$1772.53. Randy: Insects don't produce antibodies to foreign antigens so bees immune systems are limited. SIR- short interfering RNA, can produce an immediate immunity. Signup sheet for fair Bee Booth now circulating. PROGRAM: Video Green Propolis production in Brazil.
 Jack Meeks, sec

Cottage Cosmetics

A how-to guide for making fine olive oil soap and all natural personal care products using beeswax is available from local author and herbalist, Linnie McNaughton. The guide includes detailed instructions. To order send a check for \$15 to:
 Green Blessings
 21055 Dog Bar Road
 Grass Valley 95949
 Call (530) 906-0831
 Green Blessings - Class Schedule 2008
 July 13- Luxurious Lavender
 October - 4 Felted Pumpkins
 November 1 - Cheesemaking
 November 15 - Kitchen Cosmetics
 November 22 - Soapmaking
 December 6 - Kitchen Cosmetics for Holiday Gifts
 For more information & to register for classes go to secure website: greenblessings.com or call Linnie at: (530) 906-0831

Raffle Raffle Raffle

When you start to throw something out...remember our Bee Club. Bring your unwanted white elephants or just things that you just don't want anymore. All your contributions help support our Club.
 Karla Hanson, Raffle Chair

Powdered Sugar Treatment in July

One of the best times to treat your hives with powdered sugar is just as soon as you pull your berry honey around the end of June, beginning of July, right before the thistle flow. Using Randy's Amplified Sticky method, check your sticky boards for the number of mites in the powdered sugar without doing a 24 hour count first. If you see mites, treat again in 4 days and then again, right up to the thistle flow. Intensive multiple treatments will capture most of the mites emerging from the capped brood over a space of 2 weeks. July into August is when the mite population will really start to accelerate. By knocking them down in July, you can watch your bees put on thistle honey without watching your sticky boards for mite explosions. In years before powdered sugar, our mite population build up to such a point in August that we would remove our honey supers early, just to put on Apistan. For the past two years, that July treatment allowed us to wait until September to remove our honey supers. Yes, you can use powdered sugar during a honey flow, and if you have a sudden mite explosion, intensive multiple treatments is the way to save your hives. Even though we've seen bees carry out bits of sugar during a flow, we sell to a health food store and strive to keep the sugar out of the honey.

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. Submission by email is encouraged. Please submit to Leslie Gault at lesliegault@yahoo.com. The deadline for the August 2008 edition is July 24th. A limited amount of advertising space (business card size 3" by 2") is accepted and need not be bee-related. Rates are \$1 per issue or \$7 per year for NCBA members and \$16 per year for non-members. All revenue from advertising goes to the Association treasury and helps offset the cost of producing and distributing this newsletter. To receive the *Local Buzz* via email: please email your request to lesliegault@yahoo.com

Nevada County Beekeepers Association **2008 Officers**
President: Rob Slay.....263-5618
robslay@peoplepc.com
Vice President: Steve Reynolds ...272-8632
Secretary: Jack Meeks..... 432-4429
jackm@nccn.net
Treasurer: Janet Brisson..530-913-2724
rubes@countryrubes.com
Board Members
Larry Merritt
Leslie Gault 346-7092
Randy Oliver..... 277-4450
Karla Hanson..... 265-3756
Committee Chairs
Swarm Hotline: Karla Hanson..... 265-3756
Lynn Williams675-2924
Librarian: Tynowyn Slattery... 265-6318
Newsletter Mailing: Steve Reynolds.....272-8632
Newsletter: Leslie Gault..... 346-7092
lesliegault@yahoo.com
Honey Extractor: Karla Hanson.... 265-3756

Nevada County Beekeepers Association



c/o Steve Reynolds
PO Box 548
Chicago Park, CA 95712
First Class Mail
July 2008

July 7th Program

Our July 7th program will be a presentation on fair entry preparation, 7 PM at the Grass Valley Veteran's Hall.