
THE BEE LINE

The Newsletter of the Oregon State Beekeepers Association

Volume 26, Number 7

August 2001

August in the Beeyard

By Dr. Michael Burgett, OSU

August is another “most critical” month for bee management (March being the other). August possesses the rewards for the beekeeper’s year of work (the honey harvest) and it is also a very important month for management inputs to continue the health and productivity of good beekeeping. When I first came to the Willamette Valley in 1974 several beekeepers told me that ‘there is little honey to be made after the fourth of July’. After 27 years here I would not dispute that too vigorously. The point is that certainly by the first of August, for those of us living on the west side of the Cascades, 90% of a colony’s honey stores are in the comb. August is the ideal time for removal and extraction of the surplus honey from your colonies.

With the introduction of parasitic mites to the Pacific Northwest, it has become crucial to implement the mite treatment on or about the middle of August and that means the removal of honey before miticides are given to the hives. This provides a window of about two weeks in which to remove the surplus honey from your colonies (sometime between the first to the fifteenth of August). If you wait until after the middle of August the timing for mite control (especially *Varroa*) will be too late.

I would now wish to offer some thoughts on honey removal and extraction. As with nearly all aspects of good beekeeping there is the “goal” (in this case honey removal), and any number of ways to reach that goal, some ways being more effective

than others. My assumption for this discussion of honey removal is that none of the readers is a commercial beekeeper. A very important consideration for a commercial beekeeper is time, but such is not the case for most of us.

Step One: Removal of bees from the honey supers. An ideal time of day to do this is early morning (6 o’clock). During the cool of the night many of the bees in the upper supers will move down and that will reduce the number of bees that need to be removed, especially from the top super. There are several systems for getting bees out of the honey supers, but for the beekeeper with only a few colonies, the simplest method is to individually remove honeycombs, give them a sharp “rap” in front of the colony and then using a bee brush, brush off all the remaining bees. I call this “shake & brush.” It is the slowest method of getting bees out of a honey super, but it also is the best way in terms of the removal of 100% of the worker bees. It also requires the least investment in equipment (a bee brush). Alternatives for bee removal include repellents, which need the heat of the day to work best and specially adapted rimmed cover boards to absorb the fumigants that are placed on the top honey super. “Bee-Go” is a popular fumigant, but

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Oregon State Beekeepers Association

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President's Notes

by Ray Varner

As some of you have heard by now, our son Ric was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia in June and has been in St. Vincent's Hospital in Portland since June 21st. He was very close to death for awhile and spent five days in the ICU unit. Our days (and nights!) were consumed with being with him during the touch-and-go days. He has since been moved to the oncology ward and completed the first round of chemotherapy. Concerns during the weeks after therapy were for infections and bleeding, both of which he experienced. We were fortunate that doctors were able to locate the source of infection and eliminate it, and to control bleeding with red blood cells and platelets, but we are not out of the woods yet. A bone marrow biopsy is scheduled to see exactly what is going on, and meanwhile he continues in semi-isolation while we wait to see how his body responds. He will be in the hospital at least through July.

We would certainly appreciate your thoughts and prayers. Ric is 33 years old and has an optimistic outlook. We are building a "wall" of get-well wishes to keep him that way. If you'd like to add to it, send it to our home address and we'll get it to him. It has been humbling to see the response to people who know us but don't know Ric – thank you!

My plans for upgrading my honey house have had to go on the back burner. Ric is doing well enough now that Diane and I alternate days at the hospital for now. I get done what I need to get done and that's about it. Thanks to those who have offered to help. I may be calling you!

The Fall Conference plans are well under way. Dave Graber is producing another terrific program, with an added emphasis on marketing this year. The registration form and tentative agenda are included in this issue.

Stay well!

(cont. from page 1)

has probably caused more marital distress than any other aspect of beekeeping. A third system is the use of bee escape boards. These are essentially one-way passage devices that require two trips to the apiary: one to install them several days prior to actual honey removal, and then the second trip to actually take off the honey supers that will hopefully be empty of bees (rarely the case). If you choose to use bee escapes please be very sure that all the honey supers above the bee escape are "bee-tight". I've know more than a few times where robber bees will enter the upper honey supers (from ventilation holes and/or warped top covers) as fast as resident bees leave them through the bee escapes. The most costly method (in terms of equipment) is the use of a bee blower (a vacuum cleaner in reverse). These are effective and can be quite fast but their use represents an economic overkill for beekeepers at the non-commercial level.

The time of year when honey supers are being cleared of bees is a nectar dearth and you must be very careful that whatever system you are using to remove honeycombs from your colonies, does not lead to robbing behavior. So please be sure that your individual combs, or honey supers cleared of bees, are not exposed to foraging bees. Get them inside or covered as quickly as possible.

Step Two: Storage of honeycombs. Honey extracts more easily when it is warm. Honey in the comb inside a colony is often too "cool" to be efficiently and quickly extracted. It is a good idea to place your honey in a "hot room" for 24 to 48 hours before actual extraction. Ideally your honey is kept in a dark (or darkened) room at a temperature of 90° to 95° F. Honey is known as a Newtonian fluid and what that means is viscosity is reduced as the temperature increased. A low viscosity (warm) honey will "flow" more easily from the cells and more of the honey will come out of the cells.

Step Three: Extraction. We have but a few choices here. For much more than a century beekeeping has applied the concept of centrifugal force to remove liquid honey from inside the cells. All mechanical extractors utilize the same principle. Extractors are a necessary investment when one

decides to get serious about beekeeping. Extractors should be constructed of stainless steel for sanitation reasons. The cleaning of extractors before and after all your honey is removed is as simple as rinsing with hot water. Before honeycombs can be extracted they need to be uncapped. An investment in an electrically heated knife is a good one. Pay a little more and get a model where there is a temperature control screw in the blade. Knives can become too hot and honey can be burned (caramelized) on the blade making it much more difficult to clean.

Extracted honey needs to be strained. Nylon stockings work very well for this purpose. The mesh size is ideal for removing particulate matter that inevitably ends up in honey (bee wings, legs and associated body parts as well as the occasional larva and pupa). Once strained the honey should be put into a larger settling tank and allowed to sit for several days. This allows much of the air, incorporated into the honey by the extraction process, to rise to the top of the tank.

Let me go back and discuss your colonies that are now devoid of the excess honey. Firstly, please do not take too much! There is very little forage available to the bees after the 15th of August and the honey you leave them is essentially what they will have to get through the autumn and winter. A minimum of 60 pounds of honey is required.

Mid-August is an ideal time for miticidal treatment. Whether using Apistan™ (fluvalinate) or the Bayer Bee Strip™ (coumaphos) it is very important to get the strips into the colonies on or about the middle of August. This will allow several full cycles of brood to be reared under treatment conditions. The bees produced in August, September and to a lesser degree, October, are your "winter bees" and they need to be reared in an environment with as few mites as possible. Please do not leave the miticides strips inside the colonies during the winter. Long term exposure to either of the miticides will speed-up the development of resistance on the part of the mites.

Along with your mite treatment program, the middle of August is also a good time for a

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preventative treatment for American foulbrood.

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Recent research by colleagues at the University of California at Davis and the USDA Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland, has shown that the “tried and true” method of dusting is even more effective than previously believed. Regardless of your application method for Terramycin (oxytetracycline) it is wise to do this as soon as possible following the removal of surplus honey from your colonies. And to complete the medication program, a late summer treatment of Fumidil-B for Nosema is advised.

While not too frequently put into practice, late summer requeening can be very beneficial. A young queen put into a colony in late August or very early in September will produce more eggs than an older “resident” queen. All things being equal, successful over wintering benefits from large numbers of healthy young bees being produced in late summer and early autumn. Summer queens are usually less expensive to buy (the positive side), but a little more time consuming to install because of the larger population of bees in the colonies you are requeening. None-the-less it is a worthwhile effort.

August represents a highpoint in the beekeeping year. To see your honey flowing from the extractor is assurance that you have done well. August is also the starting point for next year’s success. Disease and parasite management are crucial for success and August is the appropriate time to do this.

Northwest Beekeeping

August- Crops in bloom producing nectar and/or pollen: alfalfa, various herbs, carrot, clover, corn, fireweed, mint, mustard, pumpkin, spearmint.

Others: hollyhock, snowberry, thistle.

- Provide water continuously.
 - Remove supers containing well ripened honey to extract before starting medication program.
 - Any extracting should be done as early in the month as possible.
 - Between Aug. 1 and Aug. 15 Apistan should go in along with Terramycin powder/powdered sugar mix on end bars.
 - Don’t tempt robber bees by exposing hives.
 - Don’t work the brood nest unless necessary; stop if robbing starts.
 - Reduce entrances to a bee space on weak colonies after hot days are over, to reduce robbing out.
 - Keep on the lookout for American Foulbrood.
 - Check stored comb for wax moth infestation.
 - Place any extracted honey frames to be stored in a dry, cool area, with moth crystals.
 - Depending on your apiary location and on the weather, a critical nectar dearth exists between July 10 and Sept. 1 in this area. Leave 40-50 lbs. of honey in each colony for fall buildup or feed equivalent amount of sugar syrup (2:1). Feed supplementary pollen patties if stored pollen is inadequate and pollen dearth exists.
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Fall Conference Update

By Dave Graber, OSBA Vice President

The agenda for the Northwest Corner Fall Conference is coming together. This should be a “must attend” event for regional hobbyist, sideliner and commercial beekeepers.

Confirmed speakers include Dr. Bill Wilson (retired) from the ARS Lab, Dr. Gary Reuter from the University of Minnesota, Dr. Robert Currie from the University of Manitoba, Dr. Steve Sheppard from Washington State University, Dr. Michael Burgett from Oregon State University, George Hansen of Foothills Honey, and Cappy Tosetti. Two other tentative speakers are Richard Adee, a commercial beekeeper (50,000 colonies!), hygienic queen breeder and President of the Honey Producers Association, as well as Dr. Jerry Bromenshank from the University of Montana.

The National Honey Board will be hosting a free buffet Thursday night in lieu of our regular wine and cheese social hour. They will also be providing door prizes.

Topics include “Honey Bee Stock, Traits and Breeding,” “Marketing on a Shoestring,” “Economic Effects of Varroa on Honey Production,” “American Foulbrood Resistance to Terramycin,” “Honey Across America,” “Marketing is Everything,” and “ARS Lab Research and your Tax Dollars.” A marketing specialist will be on hand Friday for individual consultations, so bring your ideas, problems and concerns that day.

A registration form is enclosed. Reserve your place now by completing the form and sending it to Phyllis Shoemake by October 1st. Also, make your room reservations as soon as possible (see following article).

Fall Conference Reservation Information Announced

By Dave Graber, OSBA Vice President

It's time to make your room reservations for the OSBA Fall Conference. The Best Western Hood River Inn is beautifully located right on the banks of the Columbia River in Hood River. The single or double rooms facing the village are \$52 per night plus tax. The rooms with spectacular river views are \$62 per night plus tax. These accommodations carry the “It is a great deal!” quote from our previous attendees. Call the Hood River Inn for your reservations at 1-800-828-7873 or 541-386-2200.

A registration form is provided on page 9 of this issue of *The Bee Line*. Please use a separate form for each person registering. The form is self-explanatory but please note **the date of early registration cutoff is Oct. 1st**. Registrations sent in after that date will be at the Late or Onsite Registration rates. We need early registrations to be able to plan for the number of people coming. It will be an exciting conference and lots of fun after a summer of chasing bees and extracting honey. Look forward to seeing you there!



Bits and Pieces, Odds and Ends

Web sites:

WAS Conference registration form:

www.honeybee.com/clubs/was2001registration.htm

A few of the sites listed in the June 2001 Nebraska Beekeepers Association newsletter, via the Southcentral Alaska Beekeepers Association newsletter:

BeeCam:

www.draperbee.com/webcam/beecam.htm

Apitherapy Reference Database:

www.saunalahti.fi/~apither/

Beekeepers Joke Archive:

www.ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Beekeeping/jokes.htm

ApiServices:

www.apiservices.com/index_us.htm

Beemaster.com Beekeeping Course

www.beemaster.com/honeybee/beehome.htm

Regional Notes

Southern Oregon: This active group is following the Suppression of Mite Reproduction (SMR – pronounced SMART) bee development program. Several queen breeders are already selling queens that have this trait. Members are considering getting a queen and breeding more to change the *Varroa* problem in their area (also found in all other areas of the country). They also note that beekeepers using pollination contracts should consider adding a clause noting where the hives are to be located and a statement that only the beekeeper can move the hives. There have been instances where the farmer moved the bees not only a small distance (with the obvious problems) but some farmers have moved them many miles away. In one case the farmer felt he had rented the bees for a specific time and after two weeks he felt the bees had done their job at that field and moved the bees to another field miles away for additional pollination of the second field. Take proper precautions to avoid misunderstandings.

Lane County: This busy group is looking into ways to raise funds to bee research. Last year they held a raffle and garage sale, which took a lot of time and effort. Proceeds went to support Dr. Royce's projects at OSU. This year they are looking into collecting honey from members, collectively bottling and labeling it as Lane County Beekeeper's Honey, and selling it at the home show and other local events. Proceeds are earmarked to the ARF for bee research.

presentations at various beekeeper meetings about research results, honey bee management and disease.

Dr. Reuter is currently President of the Wisconsin Honey Producers and a member of the Research Committee for the American Beekeeping Federation. He has been a beekeeper for 13 years, and owns and manages 100+ colonies (apart from the University colonies).

His Conference topic will be “Honey Bee Stock, Traits and Breeding,” and will cover hygienic behavior and its effect on American foulbrood, chalkbrood and varroa mites. He will also talk about breeding for the trait and the effects on natural mating.

Conference Speaker Profiles

Cappy Tosetti:

Cappy Tosetti has worked in marketing and as a writer for 33 years, doing her share of brainstorming for a resort hotel in Utah, KMPC Radio in Los Angeles, KKTU-11, the CBS affiliate in Colorado Springs, The San Diego Zoo, a homebuilders association, her own consulting firm and even a phobia and anxiety center. She's been a columnist for the *Capital Press Agriculture Weekly* since 1999, writing a marketing column “Fresh New Ideas,” targeted to small farms and specialty food companies.

Tosetti writes regularly for a variety of consumer and trade magazines, focusing on food, travel, lifestyle and agriculture. She's a national conference speaker, specializing in marketing, and holds true to her role as “imagination director” at Bumper Crop Marketing where she provides fresh new ideas that help small businesses bloom and thrive.

She will present two one-hour sessions at the Conference entitled “Marketing is Everything!” and “Marketing on a Shoestring – Who Says it has to Cost a Bundle?” She will also be available for one-on-one consulting, and provide five or six handouts.

Dr. Gary S. Reuter:

Dr. Reuter holds the position of Scientist in Apiculture at the University of Minnesota, where he has been since 1993. His responsibilities include field management of the 150 University honey bee colonies, repair and construction of beekeeping and research equipment, data collection and assistance with data analysis, lab work, computer input and programming, and teaching short-courses in Honey Bee Management and Queen Rearing. He does

New Educational Program for Kids from NHB

Most kids eat honey and see bees around them without knowing about the complex and cooperative effort that bees go through to make honey. With that in mind, the National Honey Board has created an educational program about honey production that includes an in-depth teacher's guide and creative video for fourth through sixth graders. The program is called "The Honey Files: A Bee's Life" and it makes learning about bees and honey fun and easy. The teacher's guide contains 96 pages full of worksheets, class activities, games, fun facts and more. The 20-minute video has a comical host who lightheartedly goes through the exploration of bees, pollination and of course, honey!

Typically children begin to learn about science, nature and insects during the fourth through sixth grades. Innovative programs like "The Honey Files: A Bee's Life" can assist educators in making these subjects interesting and fun. The social behavior of honey bees is a fascinating lesson for kids and is an excellent example of how cooperation in a society achieves sweet success.

The National Honey Board went to great lengths to make this program easy to use for teachers. "The Honey Files: A Bee's Life" includes extraordinary detail about the story of bees and the production of honey and an abundance of fun ideas to use in the classroom. Some of the topics include honey bee biology, the bee society, and pollination. Classroom activities include learning how bees communicate, reviewing the parts of the flower, looking at the many uses of honey, and much more.

Jami Yanoski, the National Honey Board's Marketing Manager, spearheaded the development of "The Honey Files: A Bee's Life." According to Yanoski, "Dr. James E. Tew, Ph.D., a well known entomologist at Ohio State University Bee Lab,

reviewed the teacher's guide and made recommendations on text and illustrations and we had educators and board members review the materials for usefulness and accuracy." Regarding getting the word out about this program, Yanoski says, "the National Honey Board will actively promote "The Honey Files: A Bee's Life" education program to teachers through Ag in the Classroom, 4H and press releases to news organizations.

There are several ways to order "The Honey Files: A Bee's Life" education program:

1. Call Annette Laber at the National Honey Board at 800-553-7162.
2. Look for an order form in the National Honey Board's August newsletter.
3. Go to the Honey.com web site and download an order form (www.honey.com/kids/video/)

The educational program, including guide and video, is \$15 (shipping and handling included) and takes about four weeks for delivery. With "The Honey Files: A Bee's Life," kids across America and beyond will learn about bees, honey and all the many sweet uses for honey.

Western Apicultural Society Meeting to be held in Corvallis

A reminder that the Western Apicultural Society will be holding their annual meeting on the campus of Oregon State University in Corvallis from August 15-18. This is a great chance to attend a conference close to home.

Conference speakers include Dr. Jim Tew, Ohio State University; Dr. Eric Mussen, UC Davis; Mr. Kim Flottum, editor of Bee Culture; George Hansen from Foothills Honey; Dr. Nicola Bradbear from Cardiff, United Kingdom; Mr. Jack Mattenius, New Jersey Department of Agriculture; Dr. Steve Sheppard, Washington State University; and Dr. Michael Burgett and Dr. Lynn Royce from Oregon State University.

For registration forms see the June issue of
 The Bee Line, or go online to
www.honeybee.com/clubs/was2001registration.htm.

Northwest Corner Fall Conference 2001

Best Western Inn, Hood River, Oregon

November 8, 9 and 10

Attendee's Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____ Registration Date: _____

Company Name (if applicable) _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Mailing or Street Address _____ Cell Phone _____

_____ Fax Phone _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip Code _____ E- Mail _____

Event	Registration For Individual Days	Full Conference Registration
Thursday Night NHB Presentation / Buffet	Complimentary	Complimentary
Friday Conference Only @ \$40 (see item 1 below)	\$ _____	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Sat. Conference Only @ \$40 (see item 1 below)	\$ _____	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Full Conference @ \$75(see item 1 below)	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	\$ _____
Friday Evening Banquet @ \$27.00	\$ _____	\$ _____
Saturday Noon Lunch @ \$15.00	\$ _____	\$ _____
OSBA Membership (includes Bee Line) \$20.00	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total Conference Registration Fee.	\$ _____	\$ _____
If exhibiting, num. of tables @ \$25.00 each _____	Total Conference Registration Fee + Exhibitor's table fee →	\$ _____

1. Attendees qualify for the Pre Registration Rate if the Application Form (with Registration Fee) is postmarked on or before Oct.1,2001 . **Late or On Site registration rates are: One day , \$45 ;Full Conference \$85**
2. Make checks payable to **OSBA.**

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3. Mail all completed Registration Forms and payment to: Phyllis Shoemake, 1702 Toucan St. NW. Salem OR. 97304.
4. Hotel reservations are not included in these rates. Make your reservations at the Best Western Inn, Hood River, Oregon. 1-800-828-7873 and ask for the OSBA/Northwest Corner Fall Conference.