THE MONTHLY PEEK into hive life

NORTHEASTERN INDIANA BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATION – SEPTEMBER 2024

Our objective is to promote the art and skills of beekeeping in Indiana and throughout the world. By doing so, we preserve and improve the general environment in which we live, assist in providing better crop yield, provide high quality honey, and we do our part to preserve bees.

What's new in the May issue:

- President's Minutes
- New Members
- Calendar of Events
- A Peek into Your Hive Life (Pictures from members)
- Field Day Highlights
- Relative Crystallization Rates
- Aggressive Bees by Dana Stahlman
- A new look at Bee Stings
- Beekeeping Around the World – Hawaii
- Information on the Fall Conference
- List of Officers
- American Bee Journal Subscription
- Bee Culture Subscription
- Places to buy bees, nucs and queens from our members
- Advertisements

From the Desk of the President: *Dr. Chris Lasalle*

September Minute

I hope all of you had a wonderful summer. As I write this it is still 90 degrees. It does not feel like summer has left yet. I also hope that your bees have produced a good crop and harvesting went well. I had a very good year with an excellent amount of honey. I did lose a couple of hives but was able to replace them with nucs that I had left over from spring. I took the presentation on Nucs at field day to heart. It is very nice to have bees at the ready if there is a problem with hives. My hive losses were due to swarming and the new queens not making it back the hives. I have 2 left over nucs and am going to see if they can get them through the winter. It will be a nice experiment.

Just a reminder that the club does have an extractor that you are welcome to borrow. Melanie Crapster has the extractor and can be reached at 260-449-0726. Please remember to clean everything prior to returning. Harvesting can be a very sticky business!

I unfortunately will not be at the September meeting. I have a work meeting out of town that week. Mike Miller will be running the meeting so don't give him to hard a time. I will still be available by email or text. We will be checking with Terry as to the Harvest Banquet. Always a good time to end the year.

The state bee club is having their Fall Conference in Fort Wayne this year. It will be on October 25-26. It will be at the Grand Wayne Center. The state club has offered us a free booth at the meeting. If anyone would be interested in spear heading this, I think it would be a good thing for the club. This would be a great opportunity for members who want to network with the state club. Please let me know if you are interested. Dave Mullins will be making an announcement at the meeting. More information here.

https://thebeekeepersofindiana.com/fall-conference/

If you have not already done it, mite treatment is essential this time of year. The mites are at an all time high at the end of summer. I am again woefully behind in mite testing. As usual the summer has gotten away from me. We moved Samantha (my daughter) to Chicago this summer. Many of you may remember her as she was in charge of door prizes for many years. She will be dancing ballet full time. Her mom and I already miss her but are very proud of her and her new endeavor. Anyone who is interested in Chicago Nutcracker tickets, I can set you up!! I know, shameless promotion, but I'm still a Dad!

I am sorry to miss you at the meeting.

Chris

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Landon Oyer
Fort Wayne

Ken & Patsy Snyder
Fort Wayne

Keri Brindle
Claypool

Tim Longcare
Churubusco

Sharon Garrett
Fort Wayne

SWARM LIST:

IF YOU WANT TO BE ON THE SWARM LIST,

TEXT RICK STEPHENS AT 260-610-1040

PLEASE INCLUDE: NAME

PHONE NUMBER

ADDRESS (HE NEEDS YOUR LOCATION)

Upcoming & Current Events

September 19 – Thursday September NEIBA Club Meeting, 7pm @ Classic Café

Topics:

SHOW & TELL

A presentation of interesting beekeeping equipment and techniques.

(AZ hive demonstration with Dana Goodman and Casey Filler)

Winter Hive Prep with Dave McComb

October 17 – Thursday October NEIBA Club Meeting, 7pm @ Classic Café

Topics:

State Apiary Inspector with Jarod Spokowsky

October 25-26 – Saturday & Sunday, TBoI Fall Conference, Grand Wayne Center Ft. Wayne

Fall Conference & Workshops

November 21 – Thursday October NEIBA Club Meeting, 7pm @ Classic Café

Topics:

Purdue to discuss bee genetics and bee types (Russian vs Italian)

A Peek into Your Hive Life

PLEASE SEND PICTURES OF YOUR HIVES!!!
TO: meanqueenhoneyfarm@gmail.com or reidenbachjp@gmail.com

I WOULD LOVE SOME RECENT PICTURES OF YOUR HIVES. PLEASE SEND THEM.

REIDENBACHJP@GMAIL.COM

FIELD DAY HIGHLIGHTS
ANOTHER SUCESSFUL FIELD DAY!!!

Our Featured Guest Speaker, Dr. David Hocutt spoke on:

1) **Sustainable Beekeeping**
2) **Making Splits**
3) **Beekeeping Tips and Suggestions**

WHY NUCS?

REPLACE WINTER LOSSES

REQUEENING

MAKING INCREASES

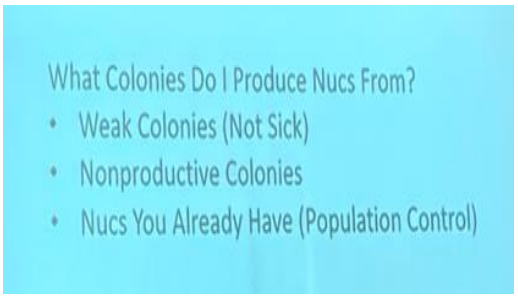
PRODUCING INCOME

BEE HIVES FAIL:

QUEEN BAD

SICK BEES

NOT ENOUGH FOOD



OVERWINTERING NUCS:

GOOD QUEEN

HEALTHY (PARASITE FREE) HIVE

TREAT IN AUGUST

POPULUOUS

WELL PROVISIONED

VENTILATED

WIND PROTECTED

PUTTING ON SUPERS IN SPRING:

3 WEEKS TOO LATE WHEN YOU SEE DANDALIONS

WATCH HEATING DEGREE DAYS

AROUND MARCH 18

FEEDING IN A DEARTH:

DO NOT OPEN COLONIES IN AUGUST

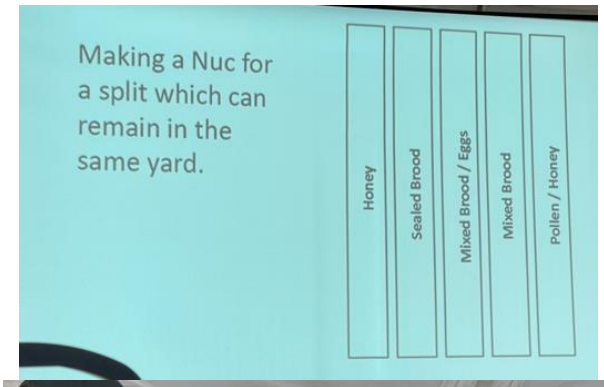
START FEEDING SUGAR WATER 1:1

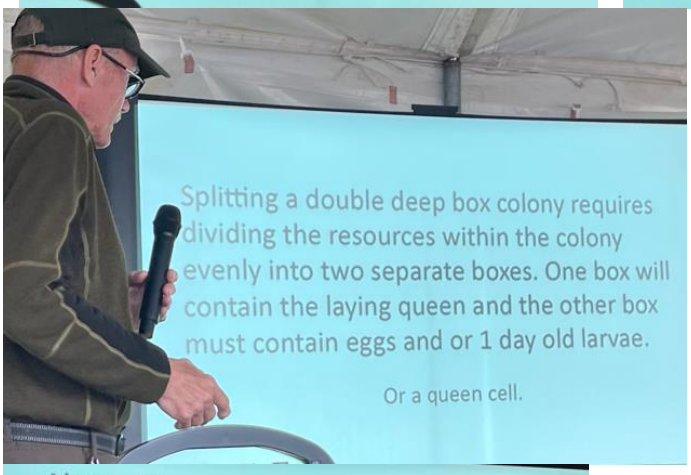
STOP FEEDING WHEN LAST FROST KILLS BLOOMS

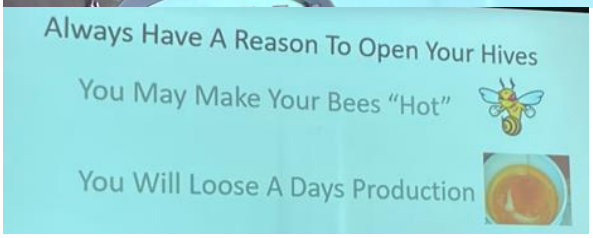
WINTER PREP:

AROUND THANKSGIVING PLACE CANDY BOARD AND WRAP HIVES

SPLITS & DIVIDES







A FEW THOUGHTS ABOUT WHEN TO MAKE SPLITS

THE BEST TIME TO SPLIT A BEEHIVE IS JUST BEFORE SWARMING SEASON, IN THE SPRING.

SPLITTING CAN BE DONE ANYTIME THE HIVE IS STRONG ENOUGH TO WITHSTAND THE STRESS OF BEING SPLIT.

IT IS IDEAL TO SPLIT THE HIVE DURING THE SPRING WHEN RESOURCES ARE ABUNDANT AND COLONY GROWTH IS AT ITS PEAK.

EARLY SUMMER CAN ALSO WORK, BUT CAREFUL ATTENTION MUST BE GIVEN TO THE RESOURCES AND STRENGTH OF BOTH COLONIES.

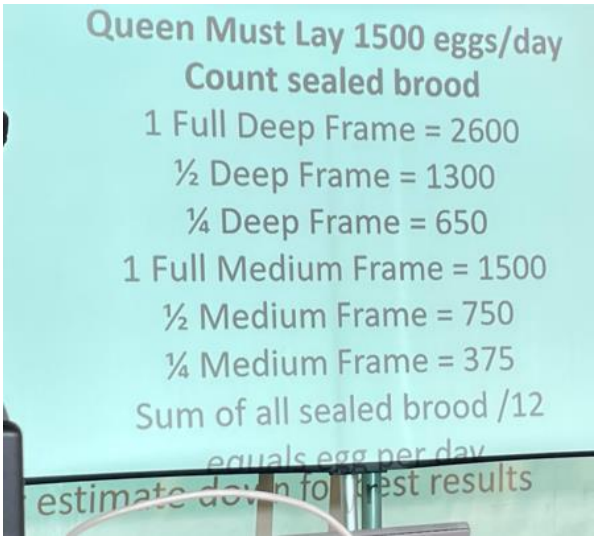
YOU CAN MAKE NUCS TO OVERWINTER IN MID TO LATE SUMMER, BUT EXTRA CARE VIA NUTRITION AND PEST/PATHOGEN LOADS MUST BE ADMINISTERED.

KEEP GOOD RECORDS

- LET'S YOU KNOW WHERE YOU HAVE BEEN
- SHOWS YOU THE DIRECTION YOU ARE HEADED
- KEEPS YOU FROM MAKING THE SAME MISTAKES
- HELPS YOU MAKE PLANS FOR OPENING HIVES
- DATE/LOCATION/HIVE#/FRAMES OF BEES/EGGS/LARVAE/CAPPED/HIVE BODIES/QUEEN FOUND/QUEEN YEAR/RACE/HONEY FRAMES/MITES

HAVE GOOD QUEENS

- ADAPTED TO YOUR LOCATION AND YOUR STYLE
- HEALTHY
- MATED WELL
- GOOD GENETICS
- RESISTANT TO COMMON PROBLEMS
- EFFICIENT PRODUCERS

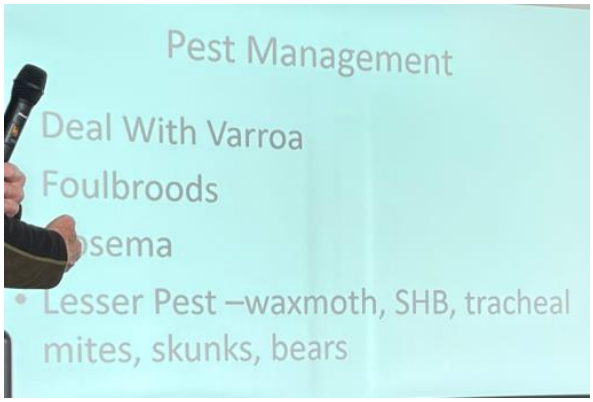


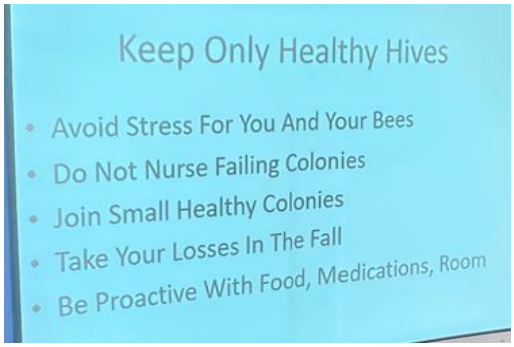
PROVIDE GOOD NUTRITION

- QUALITY
- QUANTITY
- TIMING
- ENOUGH FOOD FOR ALL OF THE BEES ALL OF THE TIME

CONTROL SWARMING

- CONTROL POPULATION GROWTH
- PROVIDE ROOM IN ADVANCE FOR THE BEES, THE BROOD, THE NECTAR, THE HONEY AND POLLEN
- PREDICT HOW MUCH ROOM YOU WILL NEED
- EXPERIMENT WITH TECHIQUES AND FIND ONE THAT WORKS FOR YOU





BEEKEEPER SUGGESTIONS:

- CONTINUE YOUR BEEKEEPING EDUCATION
- BE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR HEALTH
- KNOW THE SYMPTOMS OF HEAT EXHAUSTION
- MAKE SURE SOMEONE KNOWS WHERE YOU ARE!
- EPI-PEN AVAILABLE?
- PRACTICE CONTROLLING LIFE THREATENING SITUATIONS
- HOW QUICKLY CAN YOU KILL A COLONY TO SAVE LIVES? (SOAPY WATER WILL KILL A HIVE)
- THE BIGGEST KILLER OF BEES IS PROCRASTINATION!

State Apiary Inspector: Jarod Spokowsky

A TALK ABOUT BEE DISEASES

MATERIAL SHOWN BELOW TAKEN FROM HONEY BEE HEALTH COALITION WEBSITE.

1. CHALKBROOD

WHITE CELLS, MUMMY LOOKING LARVAE. SPOTTY BROOD PATTERN, MORE COMMON IN COOL WET WEATHER.

We typically observe chalkbrood during the spring but symptoms can be seen throughout the year. There are very few remedies to control chalkbrood. Thymol treatments, such as Apiguard claim to be effective against chalkbrood. Although we have no strong data to back up this claim, the treatment may have a 'cleaning effect' on bees. Often times the bees go into overdrive to clean out the thymol crystals from the treatment, and in turn clean the rest of the hive, including dead brood and mummies. The bee's cleaning behavior increases when the treatment is applied at higher temperatures. I have even seen the queen shut down during this treatment.
A lack of ventilation in the hive, accumulated water or adding old moldy equipment, all increase moisture levels in the hives and may encourage fungal growth. Also, the lack of population may be a contributing factor for a chalkbrood outbreak in the colonies. Disrupting the brood to bees ratio can cause chalkbrood. Proper hive ventilation may help to prevent chalkbrood. I have also heard of beekeepers using BeeOptimum, a syrup additive, they claim helps prevent the disease. And lastly, requeening and removing highly infected frames is another way beekeepers can combat the fungus. Another way to prevent the fungus is to buy hygienic stock, as hygienic bees will remove the mummies before the infection rate increases. I have included 2 images below that show a hygienic colony vs. a non-hygienic colony

2. SACBROOD

CAUSED BY VIRUS, LARVAE IS POINTED OUT, SMELLS BAD.

SBV or Sacbrood Virus (Morator aetatulas) often appears during spring or colony buildup and causes larval death. The pupa fails to pupate and has a “shrunken head” appearance. When you see perforations in the sealed brood with the infected larvae inside, the perforation is usually choppy or jagged indicating a problem. If the SBV pupa is totally open, the capping has been completely removed by bees and the pupa is most likely greyish-yellow to brown and starting to dry out. When removed the pupa looks similar to a slipper or canoe. Infected adult bees will have decreased life spans.

Symptoms:

• Perforated sealed brood, pupa present with undeveloped head.

• Color ranges from pearly white to pale yellow to brown and eventually to black, when it is in scale form it is brittle and easily removed.

Treatments:

The only known treatment is to re-queen.

3. EUROPEAN FOULBROOD

CAUSED BY VIRUS, LARVAE IS POINTED OUT, SMELLS BAD.

EFB is often found when nectar flows are sporadic or there is an insufficient number of nurse bees to attend brood. How does EFB spread? European Foulbrood (Melissococcus plutonius) is transmitted when the bacteria become mixed with the bee bread, nectar or diluted honey, and then fed to young larvae. The bacteria then replicate in the larvae mid-gut, killing the larvae within 4-5 days. This causes the larvae to die before sealed in most cases. When the larvae dies it is left in a “stomach-ache” position making it look contorted or twisted in the cell. If the larvae are fed a small amount of the bacteria it may die while sealed or have a decreased lifespan. At this point, EFB looks similar to AFB with scattered sunken cells with perforations. You may also see this if the larvae are fed copious amounts of food to prevent starvation. There are several secondary bacteria associated with EFB. This is often why the disease looks different in many cases depending on how severe the infection is. In hygienic colonies an EFB infection can be mistaken for a failing queen or spotty brood pattern because the bees are removing infected larvae and pupa at a fast rate. This bacterium, like AFB, is very contagious and all equipment should be cleaned once an infection has been found. This bacterium can stay contagious for years but does not produce spores like AFB.
Samples can be taken and sent to the USDA Honey Bee Lab for confirmation of this disease.

Brood frame B with Eurpoean foulbrood disease.

Symptoms:
• Spotty brood pattern, whitish-yellow to brown larvae, curled upward or twisted.
• Deflated larvae in the bottom of the cell with a defined tracheal system (usually greyish to brown in color with white trachea.)
• Sometimes ropes stretching up to 1.5 cm.
• Odors produced can be sour or fish-like, or no odor at all (different odors can come from secondary bacteria.) Scale is usually from brown to black sunken to the bottom of the cell.
• Outside frames of the brood nest are usually infected first.
Treatments:
The only product labeled for control of EFB is Terramycin (Oxytetracycline hydrochloride). If the colony is infected it is important to treat 3 times with Terramycin 5 to 7 days apart. Re-queening may help by breaking the brood cycle. The shook swarm method and a good nectar flow will also clear up EFB

4. AMERICAN FOULBROOD

SPOTTY BROOD PATTERN, SPORE FORMING STATE.

How does AFB spread? American Foulbrood (Paenibacillus larvae) is introduced to the hive by drifting bees from nearby colonies, infected equipment/tools, beekeepers and robbing. The infection begins when spores enter the hive, and then food contaminated by spores is fed to the larvae by nurse bees. Once spores are in the midgut the bacteria take over using the larvae as a source of nourishment. After the cells are sealed, death occurs. If death occurs while in the pupal stage, there may be a protruding tongue present. When there is a serious infection you can notice moisture on sealed brood as they start to sink. Sunken sealed cells are a result of decomposing larvae. AFB is very contagious and all equipment must be cleaned before using it in healthy hives.

The AFB scale is very hard for the bees to remove and can infect colonies for years to come. This is why some states have a “burn only” policy, but others allow the use of antibiotics to control the disease. It is important to have the AFB tested by a lab (USDA Honey Bee Lab) to identify if the AFB strain is resistant to Terramycin (oxytetracycline hydrochloride).

Symptoms:

• Spotty brood pattern, perforated sealed brood with coffee brown larvae inside, sunken sealed brood, coffee brown larvae sunken to the bottom of the cell.
• Moisture on sunken sealed brood, protruding pupal tongue (rare), and rotting smell (compared to rotting meat or sulfurous chicken house).
• Light to dark brown to black scale that is hard to remove.
• Often colonies next to infected colonies will show symptoms of the disease.
• Larvae rope at least 2 cm.

Treatment:

It is best to burn all colonies infected with AFB but you can treat infected colonies with antibiotics. There are two antibiotic treatments for AFB: Terramycin and Tylan. If AFB is not resistant to Terramycin (oxytetracycline hydrochloride) then this antibiotic is used. If the strain of AFB is resistant to Terramycin, than Tylosine is the antibiotic used to treat the colony. Treating colonies 8 weeks prior to the nectar flow is recommended to prevent honey from being contaminated.
Note: Tylan is supposed to be used once symptoms occur in the hive because it leaves behind residuals for far longer than Terramycin. Terramycin is the only antibiotic that can be legally used prophylactically.

5. PARASITIC MITE SYNDROME

SPOTTY BROOD, TRANSMITTING VIRUSES

PMS or Parasitic Mite Syndrome is a condition that causes a honey bee colony to deteriorate and eventually dwindle away and die. There has not yet been a pathogen detected which causes the brood symptoms that appear with this syndrome. However there are always varroa mites present with this syndrome. The brood symptoms look similar to other diseases but the larvae don't rope. Colonies with PMS will show symptoms of white larvae that are chewed or pecked down by workers. Larvae may appear sunken to the side of the cell and may show symptoms of white with some debris at the posterior end. Pupa will be chewed down/removed or the pupa face chewed part of the way down as seen in the photo. Most of the symptoms shown are from hygienic bees trying to remove varroa mite infested cells and or larvae/pupa from cells. There is sometimes color to the larvae and this is attributed to age, decomposition or secondary bacteria.

Symptoms:

• Spotty brood pattern, varroa mites present on adult bees.
• Mites can often be seen crawling across sealed brood.
• Mites can also be found in open brood cells (usually chewed down larvae, refer to images)
• Lack of adult population (time-dependent).
• Large colonies are aggravated by high varroa mite levels and often show increased aggressiveness, lack of eggs and developing larvae (due to unfit conditions for raising brood), supercedure cells are often present, crawling bees near hive entrance or bees with DWV (Deformed wing virus).
• No odor present until the chewed down larvae start to change color and decay.

Treatments:

Keep varroa mite levels low. Monitor varroa mite levels or treat at least twice a year for varroa mites.

Hands-On, LIVE HIVE DEMONSTRATIONS led by Duane and Tony Rekeweg and James Wheeler and TEAM.

A special thanks to James Ringswald NEIBA Field Day Coordinator for the awesome field day. The speakers were informative, and a good time was had by all. Thanks to all the people who volunteered their time to make this event possible. And a special thanks to Wheeler Bees for hosting this event and Classic Café for catering lunch. We look forward every year to field day!

BEE HAPPY!

Apparently NASA has a poster hanging with bees that reads:

"Aerodynamically a bee's body is not made to fly; the good thing is that the bee doesn't know".

The law of physics says that a bee cannot fly, the aerodynamic principle says that the breadth of its wings is too small to keep its huge body in flight, but a bee doesn't know, it doesn't know anything about physics or its logic and flies anyway.

This is what we can all do. Fly and prevail in every moment in the face of any difficulty and in any circumstance despite what they say.
Let us be bees, no matter the size of our wings, we take flight and enjoy the pollen of life.

Relative Crystallization Speed of Various Honeys

Honey Type	Crystallization
African acacia	Very slow
Black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)	Very slow
Cranberry	Very slow
Litchi	Very slow
Longan	Very slow
Milk vetch (*Astragalus*)	Very slow
Milkweed (*Ascelpia syriaca*)	Very slow
Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)	Very slow
Sidr/jujube	Very slow
Tulip poplar	Very slow
Tupelo	Very slow
Bell heather (*Calluna cinerea*)	Slow
Blackberry	Slow
Borage (*Borago officinails*)	Slow
Buckwheat	Slow
Chestnut (*Castania sativa*)	Slow
Citrus (Orange blossom honey)	Slow
Eucalyptus	Slow
Fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*)	Slow
Linden/lime/basswood (*Tilia*)	Slow
Maple (*Acre spp.*)	Slow
Hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*)	Slow
Nodding thistle (*Carduus nutans*)	Slow
Rosemary	Slow
Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*)	Slow
Spanish Lavender (*Lavendua Stoechas*)	Slow
Thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*)	Slow
Alfalfa	Rapid
Apple, pear, plum and cherry	Rapid
Clover (*Trifolium*)	Rapid
Cotton	Rapid
Dandelion	Rapid
Lavender (Common lavender) *	Rapid
Phacelia (lacy or tansy phacelia)	Rapid
Field bean (*Vicia faba*)	Rapid
Goldenrod (*Solidago*)	Rapid
Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)	Rapid
Ivy (*Hedera Helix*)	Rapid
Mesquite (*Prosopis spp.*)	Rapid
Mustard	Rapid
Oilseed rape	Rapid
Raspberry	Rapid
Star thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*)	Rapid
Sunflower	Rapid
Wild thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*)	Rapid

* It is temperature dependent. It tends to crystallize quickly when stored below 21-23° C (70-75° F). If it is stored at higher temperatures like 23-32°C (75-90° F) it usually does not crystallize very quickly.

DEALING WITH AGGRESSIVE HIVES

PARTS OF THIS ARTICLE ARE TAKEN FROM AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL SEPT 2024 ISSUE.

SEPTEMBER TASKS BY: DANA STAHLMAN

IN THIS ARTICLE HE TALKS ABOUT DEALING WITH AGGRESSIVE HIVES. HE STARTS OUT TALKING ABOUT HOW BEARS DRAG FRAMES SOME DISTANCE FROM THE HIVE BEFORE THEY EAT THE HONEY AND COMB. THE BEES RETURN TO THE HIVE LOCATION, REDUCING THE NUMBER OF BEES AROUND THE COMB. HE USES THE SAME PRINCIPLE WHEN WORKING A MEAN COLONY. HE TAKES ALL THE FRAMES OUT OF THE HIVE AND MOVES THEM TO A LOCATION SOME DISTANCE AWAY. (30 TO 50 FEET OR FURTHER IS REASONABLE) MOST OF THE ATTACKING BEES RETURN TO THE OLD HIVE LOCATION. GLOVES AND PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT ARE ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED, AND IT IS IMPORTANT THAT PEOPLE ARE NOT AROUND.

IF ONE IS USING HEAVY SMOKE TO PULL FRAMES FROM A MEAN HIVE, EXPECT THE QUEEN TO RUN FROM PLACE TO PLACE IN THE HIVE, MAKING HER HARDER TO FIND. LITTLE SMOKE IS REQUIRED WHEN THE FRAMES ARE MOVED AWAY FROM THE OLD HIVE LOCATION. BEFORE GOING ANY FURTHER, YOU MUST REALIZE THAT A QUEEN CAN BE ANYWHERE IN THE HIVE. CHECK THE BOTTOM BOARD, SIDEWALLS OF THE HIVE BODIES, AND THE INNER COVER IF YOU FAIL TO FIND HER ON THE INSPECTED FRAMES.

HE STATES THE KEY TO FINDING THE QUEEN IS TO PLACE FRAMES IN GROUPS OF TWO. SET THE FRAMES AGAINST A FENCE OR TREE BUT THERE IS ALWAYS THE DANGER OF CRUSHING BEES. AN EMPTY SUPER OR HIVE BODY WILL HOLD SEVERAL GROUPS OF 2 FRAMES EACH. LET THE BEES SETTLE DOWN FOR 10 MINUTES OR MORE. IF YOU OBSERVE BEES RUNNING, GIVE THEM A LITTLE MORE TIME TO SETTLE DOWN. USE LITTLE SMOKE AS POSSIBLE WHEN LOOKING FOR THE QUEEN.

THIS IS VERY DISTRUPTIVE AND WILL CAUSE THE QUEEN TO FIND A SAFE PLACE TO HIDE. QUEENS MOVE FROM OUTSIDE COMB EXPOSED TO LIGHT TO THE DARK AREA BETWEEN TWO FRAMES. IT CAN TAKE A FEW MINUTES FOR THIS TO HAPPEN BUT CHECK EACH SET OF FRAMES AS SOON AS THE BEES SETTLE DOWN. WORK SLOWLY AND CHECK EACH FRAME CAREFULLY. IF YOU FIND THE QUEEN PINCH OR SQUASH HER. FRAMES CAN THEN BE MOVED BACK INTO THE OLD HIVE OR SPLITS CAN BE MADE.

HE DOES NOT ENJOY KILLING THE QUEEN OR ANY BEES BUT IT IS SOMETIMES NECESSARY. ADULT BEES IN THE AGGRESSIVE COLONY WILL CONTINUE TO BE AGGRESSIVE UNTIL THE EGGS LAID BY A NEW QUEEN REPLACE THEM AND THE BROOD FROM THE OLD QUEEN DIE. HIS ONE WORD OF ADVICE – DON'T LET THE MEAN COLONY RAISE A QUEEN FROM OLD QUEEN STOCK. YOU WILL HAVE ACHIEVED NOTHING.

BEE STINGS

I KNOW WE HAVE ALL BEEN STUNG, AND I KNOW WE HAVE ALL BEEN TOLD THAT THE STINGER SHOULD BE SCRAPED OFF SO THE VENOM DOESN'T CONTINUE TO PUMP INTO YOU. WELL IN THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF THE AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL THIS QUESTION WAS ASKED AGAIN. YOU MIGHT BE SURPRISED BY THE ANSWER FROM LEE SINGLETARY CHARLTON.

MY TEAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORDIA PUBLISHES A WEEKLY PODCAST ENTITLED "TWO BEES IN A PODCAST". MY CO-HOST AMY VU, STATE SPECIALIZED EXTENTION AGENT AT UF AND I INTERVIEWED DR. MICHAEL BROWN A PRACTICING FAMILY PHYSICIAN AND HOBBYIST BEEKEEPER, ABOUT THE HUMAN BODY'S REACTION TO HONEYBEE STINGS.

I GREW UP BEING TOLD, AS I AM SURE MOST OF YOU HAVE AS WELL, THE BEST WAY TO REMOVE A STINGS IS TO SCRAPE THEM OUT OF YOUR SKIN USING A CREDIT CARD OR A KNIFE. I WAS TOLD TO NEVER PINCH THE STINGER AND PULL IT OUT OF MY SKIN. THIS RECOMMENDATION HAD TO DO WITH THE STRUCTURE OF THE HONEYBEE STING.

THE ONLY PROBLEM IS THAT THIS RECOMMENDATION HAS PROVEN FALSE. BASED ON THE AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, A RETAINED HONEYBEE STINGER SHOULD BE REMOVED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, AND THERE APPEARS TO BE NO DISADVANTAGE IN DOING IT BY PINCHING AND PULLING.

IT DOES NOT MATTER IF YOU SCRAPE IT OUT OR PULL IT OUT. IT ONLY MATTERS THAT YOU GET IT OUT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

(I HAVE SHORTENED THIS ARTICLE. IF YOU WISH TO READ THE WHOLE THING SUBSCRIBE TO THE AMERICAN BEE JOURNAL.)

BEEKEEPING AROUND THE WORLD

The Hawaiian History of Honey Bees, from a Beekeeper's Perspective

Beekeeper Kailin Kim, her Hawaiian ancestors, and our precious honeybees all have something in common: they are natural-born voyagers. Continue reading to learn the history of honeybees in Hawaii, through a cultural perspective and a beekeeper's experience.

The influence of voyaging -

As a local girl growing up in Hawai‘i, my first memory of honeybees is catching them as a kid off the flowers in our yard. It must have been the risk of getting stung that gave me an adrenaline rush, but I loved to carefully trap them in a jar and see how many I could get before setting them free. Maybe I should have viewed this young fascination as an indicator for my love of bees, but I had other passions pulling me elsewhere, and I never even realized beekeeping existed until taking an Intro to Beekeeping course in college.

Instead, my love for the ocean led me to Hōkūle‘a, our iconic deep sea Hawaiian voyaging canoe, and on to sailing with other canoes across Hawai‘i and New Zealand, two places deeply connected through voyaging traditions, stories, and shared ancestral lineage.

It would be an understatement to say that voyaging has shaped me into the person I am today. The canoe is where I met my other half (and beekeeping partner) Kai, and also where the fundamental values of our ‘ohana (family), business, and lifestyle were instilled within us.

A cultural perspective on honeybees -

With this unique native perspective, my family has a different mindset when it comes to beekeeping, and we strive to relate to honeybees from a culturally grounded standpoint.

We think of bees as voyagers, navigating by the sun just as our Polynesian ancestors did when they traversed oceans to settle islands like Hawai‘i and Aotearoa (New Zealand).

The main reasons bees swarm or leave their hive are the same reasons our ancestors adventured off from their island home in search of new land: an overcrowded population, limited resources, or some type of battle (with pests). The similarities go on, but I’ll leave it at that for now.

The honeybees journey to Hawaii -

Now with this newfound Hawaiian outlook on bees, let’s not mistake honeybees as native to Hawai‘i. There are native Hawaiian yellow faced bees, 7 of which are recognized as federally endangered species, but honeybees, *Apis mellifera*, is not one of them.

To understand the history of how honeybees ended up here in our islands, I put my Hawaiian language degree to use and scoured through old nūpepa Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language newspapers) on anything and everything relating to bees and honey. And what a journey it was to get them here!

“TEN DOLLARS TO THE PERSON WHO SHALL INTRODUCE THE FIRST HONEYBEE INTO THE ISLANDS”

-Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society, 1854

Called “nalo meli” in the Hawaiian language, which literally translates to “honey fly”, honeybees were first brought to the Hawaiian islands by way of ship in the 1850s.

In 1852, the first attempt to bring a hive to Honolulu from Boston, MA didn’t quite go as planned- all the honeycomb melted while crossing through the tropics, killing all the bees. Second try, in 1853, had the hives packed in ice, and you can guess that didn’t go so great either.

In 1857, four hives of German dark bees finally made it to Honolulu successfully, this time from California, and unlike many introduced species to Hawai‘i, which often damage our fragile island ecosystem and overrun native species, honeybees were welcomed in the islands due to their beneficial nature. There were even announcements in the newspapers of that time forbidding people to harm the bees, as they were a “great help to everyone without causing any trouble.”

On moving forward -

On that note, it is my family’s hope that we can help perpetuate this appreciation for bees from the past well into the future. We are really excited to partner with Comvita to represent Hawai‘i in their bee rescue project that will save 5 million bees, and also to have a little jar of Aotearoa here in our home with Comvita’s delicious Manuka Honey.

Kailin Kim graduated from the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo with degrees in Hawaiian Studies & Agriculture, where she took her first introduction to beekeeping course. In 2016, she co-founded the Ho‘ōla Honeybee Relocation project to rescue honeybees across Hawai‘i Island from unwanted places like homes and schools, then relocate them to North Kohala to provide necessary pollination for local farms and gardens. As a mother, farmer, and beekeeper, she is an advocate for protecting our pollinators and hopes to contribute to Hawai‘i and a world where our keiki (children) and nalo meli (honeybees) have a safe, clean, and healthy environment necessary to thrive.

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This year's conference will be held in Ft. Wayne. We've secured a beautiful venue in the heart of downtown. The space is bright, spacious, and perfect for learning and networking!

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Questions? Contact the Fall Co Committee:

Ethan Mitchell, Chair
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The Beekeepers of Indiana

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Fall Conference and Workshops

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** NOTE: Family LIFE membership consists of 2 adults in a relationship living in the same household. The membership is for the named adults and is not transferable.*

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Event questions? Email Ethan Mitchell (ethanmitchell010@gmail.com) or call/text him (574.364.5618). Registration questions? Contact Robert Duffy (tboi.treasurer@aol.com).

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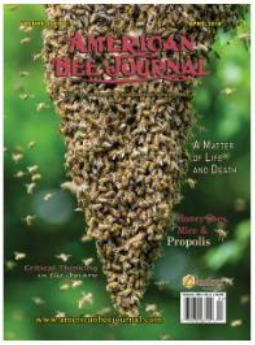

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