



May 2007

Rhode Island Beekeepers Association

A Newsletter of the Rhode Island Beekeepers Association, PO Box 8880, Warwick, RI 02888

The Presidents' Report

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the chance to serve you as president for another year. Being president of the association has given me the opportunity to learn so much; both about beekeeping and about myself, and I have received much more than I could have ever anticipated as well. Knowledge, experience and new, enduring friendships, what else could a person ask for?

Thank you all,
Kit

CCD- Everyone is talking about it, and nobody knows the cause (let alone the true impact) of it. Here is a little about it gleaned from Wikipedia- "While the exact mechanisms of CCD are unknown, malnutrition, pesticides, pathogens, mites, immunodeficiency's, fungus, genetically modified (GM) crops, bee rentals and electromagnetic radiation have all been proposed as causative agents.

Whether any single factor is responsible, or a combination of factors (acting independently in different areas affected by CCD, or acting in tandem), is still unknown; it is likewise still uncertain whether this is a genuinely new phenomenon, as opposed to a known phenomenon that previously only had a minor impact".

What I would like everyone to keep in mind is to take care of, and be mindful of your bees. Many of us have had heavy losses in the past few years, and many of us have faired well also. And all you new beekeeper's, don't let yourself be overwhelmed with all the information coming at you.

Try to enjoy your bees, and the new and unique experiences that they provide for you with every inspection. Is something happening to the

beekeeping industry? You bet, but I believe that there will be good to come of this.

Next Meeting

Sunday, May 20th @ 2 PM
Note Date- 3rd Sunday!

Home of Vivian and Stan Peasley
64 Division Road
West Greenwich, RI
884-4210

Subject: Hive Inspection & Discussions of
Current Packages and Nucs

Bring Chairs, Veils, Desserts or Entrees
Directions on back

Better bee breeding for one, and better understanding of bee biology as well. Hang tight and try to enjoy your (new) craft, it is worth it after all!

Bee Well,
Kit Mayers,

President, R.I.B.A

PS- Please note that the next meeting is on the third Sunday, the 20th, so we can all honor our Mothers. Kit.

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The Secretary's Report

Our annual dinner was a great success. We had the highest attendance ever, many donated gifts, and several new members, not to mention the good dinner. Our slate of officers stays the same

Our speaker was Dr. Larry Connor, writer and owner of WicWas press. His talk and related articles are in this letter.

Larry Connor

Our speaker at the annual dinner in April was Larry Connor of WicWas press. He is the writer of many articles and excellent pictures in Bee Culture magazine, and a good beekeeper.

He started off mentioning Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) which has been written up in many newspapers and a cause for concern. (Please see separate article in this issue)

Queens, packages and nucs are made in the South, and with them, stress and possibly genetic problems. To overcome these threats it is best to increase by making nucs (see the article in this issue).

There are different ways to making a nuc. Dr. Connor mentioned making a split with three frames of honey and two frames of emerging brood in a five frame nuc box.. Move it in four to six weeks to a ten frame super. By July 1 you should have a population of 35,000 bees.

Nucs can be made until October.

Lou's Workshop

The workshop will be held Saturday May 12 at 2:00 PM. He will feature hiving nucs, splitting hives, and the issues of packages. Splits are important especially if you want to increase your hives, and reduce the threat of swarming.

To register and check if workshop canceled due to inclement weather call Lou Chasse at 295-0882.

Winners!

Karen Praski won the Pollinator Jacket door prize and Jeff McGuire won the hive with a package of bees at our annual raffle during the Election Dinner.

-Our appreciation and thanks to those supplying items for our many drawings and making the evening a great success.

Honey Flow

According to a survey of experienced members, honey flow can begin with the Maples, and fruit blooms around the 2nd week in May to around April 15, and then the blossoming of the Locust, Linden and Tulip Poplar trees in June.

Pollen can start at the end of February from skunk cabbage and also crocus which is near the microclimate of a basement wall. Bees also harvest pollen from Maples.

Vanishing Bees

Bee keepers now are facing a new threat. We have the Tracheal Mite, Varroa Destructor, and now an as of yet unknown-CCD (Colony, Collapse Disorder).

As of yet it has occurred in 27 states with a loss of approximately 2.4 million colonies. It has been found in Europe, Brazil, and Guatemala, and Varroa is not suspected to be responsible.

Researchers feel that feeding supplements produced from genetically modified crops (such as high fructose corn syrup) need to be studied. Scientific advances in DNA can speed up the search. There have been large losses in the past, but today researchers are dealing with something new with microorganisms unknown in the colonies. Is it stress from exposure to a toxin or pathogen? Empty hives were treated with gamma rays and repopulated with Australian bees which showed a return to health. This supports the idea that there is a pathogen there according to Diana Cox – Forster at Penn State. She states that it would be hard to explain the irradiation getting rid of a chemical.

There are new chemicals which pass through the plant to the bees. One such chemical is named Gaucho. It was banned in France in the late 1990s. While it did not kill the bees outright, it was causing them to be disoriented and stay away from hives. Gaucho is made by Bayer, and they claim that French beekeeping has not recovered since the ban as beekeepers expected. As a result Gaucho is not the only cause. However, French researchers have disagreed with Bayer.

The group of chemicals that Gaucho is part of is being tested as the number one suspect. Results of the toxicology screening will be ready within a month.

-The above article was quoted and condensed from the New York Times of April 24, 2007

Free Package

All you have to do is drive to Betterbee in Greenwich, NY. Beverly Baker ordered two packages but they do not ship. She offers one (they are paid for) to anyone willing to go there. It is an approximately 4 hour drive of 207 miles. With packages hard to find, this is your chance to get one and save \$70.00! Call Beverly at (508)-222-7109.

For Sale

Kelly - 3 frame hand extractor, electric uncapping knife, miscellaneous items and jars, and unused foundation. Call Dave Clayton at 294-2116

Queens

If you are interested in obtaining Buckfast Queens call Tommy Dalton at 401-658-1000. They will be available late June at a cost of \$21.00 plus proportionate shipping charges

Making Splits or Increases

(From Fundamentals of Beekeeping)

Dividing strong colonies in the spring is an excellent way to increase the size of your operation, make up for winter losses, and prevent swarming. Each new colony is made by taking four to six frames of sealed brood and two frames of honey and placing them

with adhering bees in the center of the new hive.. Introduce a new queen or queen cell and add sheets of foundation or drawn combs to fill up the hive body. The hive may be placed near the parent colony, but it is better to move it to another location at least 2 miles away to prevent bees from returning to the original colony.

Leaving the entrance to the new hive open only 1 inch wide will help prevent robbing. Feed the new colony from time to time with sugar syrup or combs of honey. If provided with plenty of bees and food, the new colony will be strong enough to store some surplus honey by fall. The parent colony from which the increase was made is less likely to swarm and should eventually produce as much honey as it would have without being split.

Another way to split colonies is to take brood bees, and combs from several colonies. Less fighting will occur, however, if all bees are from the same colony. Colonies also may be divided within the same hive with a double screen. Place the old queen with about half the combs of brood mostly unsealed if possible, in the bottom brood chamber. If more food is needed, add an extra hive body with empty combs or combs with honey. Put the double screen on top of the second hive body with the entrance facing to the rear of the hive. Above it put the second brood chamber containing five to six frames of brood, mostly sealed, and two combs of pollen and honey on each side. The upper portion of the split should contain about two-thirds of the bees.

This will require you to shake extra bees into the upper portion from the combs of the bottom hive body, because field bees will return to the lower portion when they go on a foraging trip. The new split will be composed of young bees only. An insufficient number of bees in the upper portion will not be able to keep the brood combs warm. As previously described, the upper unit should receive a new Queen or Queen Cell when it is made up.

-Drones do not feed themselves, like the queen; they are fed by worker bees.

FUELING EXERCISE WITH HONEY

It is well known that carbohydrate ingestion prior to, during and after exercise enhances athletic performance and speeds recovery. Honey is a natural source of readily available carbohydrates, providing 17 grams of carbohydrates per tablespoon. It may serve as an inexpensive alternative to sports gels. To make a natural honey hydrator, try the following recipe:

HONEY HYDRATOR

1/2 cup honey
1/2 teaspoon lite salt
2 cups orange juice
5 1/2 cups water

Combine ingredients. Using lukewarm water will aid in dissolving honey. Then cool.
Makes 8 servings

Nutrition information per serving (8 oz.):
Calories: 75, Carbohydrates: 21 g, Potassium: 85 mg, Sodium: 77 mg. Sugar: 19 g

Directions to the Peasley's

From the North - take route 95 south to exit #7, then turn left.

From the South - take route 95 north to exit #7, then turn right.

-Go to the stop sign, turn left, first house on right. There is a V.S. P. Plumbing sign at driveway.

- A shallow super will typically yield between 25 and 30 pounds of honey, or 2 to 2 1/2 gallons.

- A medium (6 5/8") depth super will typically yield between 35 and 40 pounds, or 3 to 4 gallons.

- A full-depth box will typically yield between 60 and 70 pounds, or 5 to 6 gallons.

- Actual yields vary due to the number of frames, how well they are extracted, age of comb and other variables. And remember, drain your capping, this can increase your yield up to 10%!

RI Beekeepers Association

OFFICERS

President

Kit Mayers
103 Prospect Street
Woonsocket, RI 02895
(401) 769-1675
kickingcrow@cox.net

Executive Vice President

Louis J. Chasse II
420 Congdon Hill Road
Saunderstown, RI 02874
(401) 295-0888

Librarian

Tom Dalton
3108 Mendon Road
Cumberland, RI 02864
(401) 658-1000

Secretary And Newsletter Editor

Bernard Bieder
140 Cold Brook Road
Warwick, RI 02888
(401) 463-8654
beeman704@cox.net

Treasurer

William Jones
61 Kennedy Road
Foster, RI 02825
(401) 397-3269
billjones61@yahoo.com

E.A.S. Representative, Board of Directors

David Clay
1 Luther Road
Foster, RI 02825
(401) 397-2692
dclay10985@aol.com

Bee School Director

Betty Mencucci
1777 Victory Highway
Glendale, RI 02826
(401) 568-8449
bmencucci@earthlink.net

Membership Chairman

Paul Whewell
9 Breakneck Hill Road
Lincoln, RI 02865
(401) 724-9679
pwhewell@cox.net

State of Rhode Island

Bee Inspector

Jim Lawson
235 Promenade St.
Providence, RI 02908
(401) 222-2781 x4519
james.lawson@dem.ri.gov