



June 2008

Rhode Island Beekeepers Association

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

President's Report

Thanks to all who attended the May meeting! I hope you all enjoyed our guest speaker from Whole Foods. I would like to extend a special thanks to Bonnie Frechette, their marketing team leader and especially to member Mathias Kohring, who brought Bonnie to my attention as a guest and speaker. Are you hearing about swarms? Better still are you going out to get them? Spring build-up seems to be slow this year. My guess is that late May and June will really see some swarm activity as spring buildup and the honey flow will all max out at the same time. Take a look at the website when you get a chance. Mike has created a new section called, "Swarm Central." This new feature not only lists members by town who are willing to capture swarms, but it also provides general public information about swarms. I've put a letter into the mail to police departments throughout the state to let their dispatchers know about the list and Jim Lawson has also notified the dispatchers at DEM. Write to Mike if you would like to be added to the list of swarm catchers.

I hope to see you in June at Smith's Nursery. We chose this location because it is an example of an out-yard. The colonies are owned and tended by Ed Lafferty and our nursery hosts are keen on natural practices in gardening and are enthusiastic supporters of beekeepers. In keeping with tradition, we'll hold a regular meeting under the tent and our guest speaker, Jim Lawson from the DEM, will do a presentation on Integrated Pest Management. We will then go out to the hives to do an inspection where in addition to the inspection, Jim will pull out test strips to demonstrate how to count mites. Be sure to wear sneakers or some other rugged footwear as the ground around the hives is a little rough in nature.

Just a reminder, the beginning of each meeting will

Smith's Nursery
225 Douglas Pike
Smithfield RI 02917
(401) 345-3452
Bring Dessert, Veil, & Chairs
Directions on back

start with the question, "How are your bees?" Please be sure to ask questions, point out peculiarities, and bring frames, pictures and other examples of items for which you would like input. This portion of the program, for beginners and the experienced, is an ideal time to learn about beekeeping from the collective wisdom of our Association's members.

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Next Meeting
Sunday June 8th

Note

We have received word that Mabel Hopkins, Betty Mencucci's mother, has undergone surgery at Miriam Hospital. Mabel has attended more RIBA meetings and EAS conventions than most members. We wish her a speedy recovery. Check with Betty to send your special thoughts to Mabel.

RIBA Members Meeting, May 18, 2008

We met at Bill Jones' farm in Foster RI. What started out as a sunny day started to get overcast so instead of having the meeting followed by his hive inspection we flipped it around and did the hive inspection first. The main meeting then followed at about 3.30.

The Agenda was very informal. Everett introduced himself and the other elected members of the Association and we continued the business of the day. During the meeting special mention was made for Germaine Laferrier. She was also presented with a commemorative Mothers Day Award in recognition of her long involvement with the Association.

“How are your bees?”

Not much detail but a general discussion showed that there weren't any major disasters taking place. Some members had lost hives over the winter – mostly due to starvation. Jim Lawson encouraged people to be vigilant in their mite checks.

Mike (Southern) outlined a plan that he is starting, where he would like to collect data on increase/decrease of colony counts in the region from month to month. We'll distribute a web page form for anybody interested in supplying data for this small project.

Newsletter

Mike and Everett apologized for the lack of an April newsletter in the mail. It was produced as usual but a lack of communication meant that it didn't arrive at the printers on time and subsequently seems to have disappeared.

Bee Learn

We will continue discussions of Bee Learn at the next meeting. The bylaws have been drafted and are ready for review online at <http://www.ribeekeeper.com/beelearnbylaws.php>

Bee Schools

The Bee Schools were again acknowledged to be a success this year. Stipends were paid to the three lecturers Betty, Mark and Lou.

Hive raffle

Each year we raffle off a colony but this year with late arrival of packages and the loss of a couple of RIBAs own hives it is impractical to supply a colony that doesn't need a lot of immediate attention. We decided to have the raffle but to offer the winner the option to take a coupon for a colony to be supplied next year.

RIBA Bylaws

It was noted that the BeeLearn bylaws are framed better than RIBAs bylaws. We suggested the idea that we could discuss and vote on replacing RIBAs existing bylaws using the BeeLearn model. Discussion to be continued.

Swarm Central

One of the executive meeting items was the Swarm Central page. We have put online an initial list of RIBA members able to collect swarms throughout the State. The list follows the States own list and shows each town followed by the members who are able to reach the area. <http://www.ribeekeeper.com/swarmlist.php>

The page will benefit from pictures of swarms, bees and things that are NOT honey bees to help the public distinguish between the two.

Finance

Bill reported the cash on hand and the incomes and expenditures so far this year. He also reported a membership count of over 300.

New Appointments

Celeste is the new Librarian. (<http://www.ribeekeeper.com/officers.php>) and will start by cataloging all our publications and making the list available on the website

Guest Speaker

Our surprise guest speaker was Bonnie Frechette, who is Marketing Team Leader for Wholefoods. They have Wholefood shops in Providence and Cranston. It was a chance meeting; Bonnie had seen the Haagen Dazs, "Help The Honey Bees" website and became inspired by the cause. In her position in Wholefoods she has implemented publicity for the apiary business and has developed donation collection points in her stores so that customers can donate to CCD research. Much of that goes to MAAREC at Penn. St; Maryann Frazier from MAAREC was our guest speaker a few months ago.

<http://www.helpthehoneybees.com>

<http://maarec.psu.edu/>

<http://www.wholefoodsmarket.com/>

Lou's Workshop

This is scheduled for June 14 at 2:00 PM. He plans to collect light honey and check the nucs and splits that he made in May. There will be a check on the Varroa mite build up.

This workshop is unique in that you get hands on experience. As far as I know, there are no other associations doing this on a regular basis. Make an effort to attend. It is for your benefit.

Things To Do

Keep feeding 1:1 the sugar water until the bee's stop taking it. It is better they use this to build comb instead of using precious nectar for this purpose, according to Lou.

When the honey supers go on, put on two. If you do so, the bees will work harder than if you put only one. Don't forget to use a queen excluder to keep brood out of the honey supers.

Fun On The Farm

The RIBA is invited to attend this event at the Roger Williams Park Zoo. It will be to promote beekeeping and hand out promotional material. Sales are not allowed. Tables and chairs will be provided.

Dates are July 11 and 12, 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. A 20% off food coupon to all attending. We can attend one or two days if there are enough volunteers. Contact Bernie Bieder at beeman704@Verizon.net or call 463-8654 for work schedule.

Meeting Schedules

We meet the second Sunday of the month. Lou's workshop is the second Saturday. If you don't get mail, check with our officers listed on each newsletter (which we hope you will save).

July 13 TBD Faella Farm in Wakefield. Details to be provided online.

August 10 - Kathleen Malmborg, 1775 Snake Hill Rd, Chepachet RI 568-2766

Special Request

The following was sent to Betty Mencucci and we pass it on.

There is a request from a home schooling family to learn more about bees. There are four children 10, 7, 5 and 1. To make arrangements, contact Jennifer Pierini-Norton.

Homeschool_Fam6E@Verizon.net

New Pesticide

It is Hivastan, which will require a section 18, which is required for any pesticide that is not licensed by the EPA, and is granted on emergency basis for individual states.

Hivastan is a manufactured by Central Apiary Inc, and will be distributed by Brushy Mountain, Dadant, and Walter Kelley. The active ingredient is a mite killing pesticide, which has a long history of use in spider mite control. It is comparable to Fluvalinate (Apistan) with respect to overall toxicity to people. The product is mildly irritating to the skin, and moderately irritating to the eyes, so chemical resistant gloves (nitrite) and eye protection are recommended

If Hivastan were accidentally ingested it would not cause a problem in humans.

Hivastan used properly will kill 90% to 95% of the varroa mite population in a colony. It is a contact pesticide, so it works as the bees come in contact with it while they are removing it from the hive.

Does it kill bees? Adult mortality rates of up to 5% observed in the first 24 to 72 hours after application, but may not occur at all. It is not temperature sensitive as long as it is below 100° F. Treatment time is 42 days and must be removed after this period.

To minimize and delay resistance in your Varroa mite population use screen bottom boards, and resistant queens, and treat colonies with mite population above critical levels.

A word of caution: this chemical will contaminate wax rather than our honey. This doesn't mean it can't get into the honey too. It has not been registered by the EPA. Replacing two of the oldest frames in the brood box per year with fresh foundation is a good way to minimize potentially harmful chemicals in our wax.

New Jersey Beekeepers
Landi Simone

(notre: RIBA does not endorse this product)

Mentors

In order to help new beekeepers we would like to have a list of mentors. At present we only have Ed Lafferty and Bernie Bieder. Please call Mike Southern with necessary info, and the areas you wish to cover.

Directions

From the south - take #295 north to exit 8 A towards North Providence. Follow to 225 Douglas Pike

From the north – take #295 south to exit 8 A towards North Providence. Follow to 225 Douglas Pike

RI Beekeepers Association

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