



## LANE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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# April 2017 NEWSLETTER



## President's Message

Max Kuhn, LCBA President

As I look out at the rain coming down this morning it is hard to believe that Spring is upon us. But indeed it is. Having witnessed flying bumble bees and yellow jacket queens already, it is evident that spring is here even if the weather does not reflect it. So with that in mind I head off to Bi-Mart to purchase new yellow jacket queen lures. These should have been placed already, but as usual I am a little behind. I have placed some, but not all, of my swarm traps however, and on that topic I may be more timely. At least here on the coast, the colonies seem to be building up population and not displaying any swarm indications yet. However... given that you won't be reading this for another week...it is definitely time to "Get-er-Done"! Yellow jacket traps and swarm traps should be in use by now.

Speaking of getting things done, it is also time to complete your colony loss surveys. You will be hearing more on this at the club meeting this month. Dr. Dewey Caron will speak briefly at the meeting regarding the importance of these surveys. He will also present results from the surveys of last year. We will have paper surveys available at the meeting for those of you not having internet access.

Wishing you all a great spring season!

### Reminder to please complete the surveys!

**\*Pacific NW Honey Bee Survey** - available online from March 27th to April 27th <http://pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/survey/>

**Bee Informed Partnership Survey** - available online from April 1st to April 30th [www.beeinformed.org](http://www.beeinformed.org)

\*If you are unable to attend the April meeting and need a paper copy contact Nancy Ograin at 541-935-7065.

## NEXT MEETING:

April 18, 2017

**Come early to socialize and share your questions with experienced beekeepers.**

**Early Educational Class!**  
**"Varroa Mite Biology"**  
**Speaker: Morris Ostrofsky**

Door opens at 6:00 pm  
 Presentation starts at 6:15 PM  
 "Fireside Room"

### General Meeting

Hall opens at 7:00 pm  
 Program 7:30 pm

**Topic: Varroa Medication**  
**Speaker: Pam Leavitt**

Trinity United  
 Methodist Church  
 440 Maxwell Road  
 Turn West off River Road  
 in Eugene (South of Beltline)

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## Upcoming Events & Announcements

**April 15th - Southern Oregon Beekeepers Assoc. Spring Bee School, "The Art and Science of Keeping Bees in the Rogue Valley"**

**Location:** Southern Oregon Research & Extension Center, 569 Hanley Road, Central Point, OR

<http://www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org/news-and-events/soba-beginning-beekeeper-class>

**April 19th - Linn Benton Beekeeping Assoc. Meeting**  
**Topic:** "Swarms are Coming –Are your bait boxes ready?",  
**Morris Ostrofsky**

**Location:** Corvallis Waldorf School, 6:30-8:30 pm

Visit their website for more information. <http://www.lbba.us>

**April 21st - Friday in the Apiary**

**Topic:** Spring Colony Management

**Location:** OSU Apiary, Corvallis, 3:00 pm-5:00 pm

Please RSVP to [carolyn.breece@oregonstate.edu](mailto:carolyn.breece@oregonstate.edu).

Sign up to received notifications and to RSVP.

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/mb/blog>

**April 21st-22nd - Glory Bee Weekend (NEW DATE)**

Two day event with beekeeping education, distribution of pre-ordered packages of live bees, live demonstrations, honey sampling, onsite food vendors and other activities.

<https://wholesale.glorybee.com/content/bee-weekend-2017>

**April 26th - Central Coast Beekeepers Assoc. Meeting**

**Topic:** "Nutrition & Health in Hive", Dr. Ramesh Sagili

**Location:** Newport Library, 6:30 pm

<http://www.ccbaor.org/>

**April 29th - Save the Bee 5K Run/Walk (NEW DATE)**

**Location:** Richardson Park, Junction City 9:30am/10:00 am

**Cost:** \$25 - Individuals Ages 18-59; \$20 - Individuals Ages 17 & Under and 60 & Over. All proceeds go to Save the Bee Foundation to provide research on honey bees and colony collapse disorder.

**May 14th - Benefit for Bees**

**Location:** Whirled Pies, 199 West 8th St, Eugene 2:00-5:00pm

Family event benefits Village school bee education program & Healthy Bees= Healthy Gardens. Includes a silent auction, bee education, music, prayer flag making, honey, propolis, wax, pollinator plants, seeds, jewelry for sale and more.

Please contact Jen to help or if you have a donation. Donations are tax deductible.

Jen Hornaday at [healthybeeshealthygardens@gmail.com](mailto:healthybeeshealthygardens@gmail.com) or call/ text cell at 541-914-2225.

**May 21st - Beekeeper's Workshop, Ruhl dBee Supply**

**Location:** OSU Honey Bee Lab, Corvallis, OR, 9:30am-4:00pm

**Guest Speakers:** Randy Oliver and Carolyn Breece of the OSU Honey Lab.

**Cost:** \$60, includes lunch. Click [here](#) for more details

**June 3rd - LBBA/LCBA Field Day**

**Location:** OSU Oak Apiary, Corvallis - info on page 9.

**Kelly's Beekeeping Website: "Lane County Hiveways"**

Follow Kelly as she does her inspections, observations, and other beekeeping activities.

<http://lanecountyhiveways.com/>

**Florence Garden Club**—visit their face book page at

[www.facebook.com/FGCOR](http://www.facebook.com/FGCOR).

## 2017 Ohio State University Bee Lab Webinars

The Ohio State bee webinars have begun. Sessions are the third Wednesday of the month, beginning at 9AM EASTERN. All webinars are free, and registration is not required.

**April 19:** Reduce Your Hive Losses through "Monitoring" (introducing Ohio State Beekeepers Assoc. Apiary Diagnostic Kit)

**May 17:** Setting up Your Extracting Line - What's Needed

You can view all webinars at a later date or on the day of the event. Click on link below for information and to sign up for notifications.

<https://u.osu.edu/beelab/courses/>

**LCBA Needs:** Indoor storage space to store our LCBA stage we use for bee school. There are 6 pieces, 4X4X1, made out of wood.

Contact Nancy Ograin if you are able to help out.

541-935-7065 or [nancy.ograin@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.ograin@gmail.com)

## Volunteers Needed

**Event: 2nd Annual Local Celebration of International Herb Day**

**Date:** Saturday, May 6th 10:00am-4:00pm

**Location:** Central Grange, 87200 Central Rd, Veneta

We have been asked to have a booth at this upcoming event. We will be indoors. Looking for 2 volunteers for each time slot -10:00am to 1:00pm and 1:00pm to 4:00pm.

**Event: Benefit for Bees**

**Date:** Sunday, May 14th, 2:00pm - 5:00 pm

**Location:** Whirled Pies, 199 W. 18th St., Eugene

Healthy Bees=Healthy Gardens has asked LCBA to have a booth. See "Upcoming Events" above for more information.

Contact Nancy Ograin if you are able to help out.

541-935-7065 or [nancy.ograin@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.ograin@gmail.com)

## KNOW THE ENEMY: AMERICAN FOULBROOD

by Pam Leavitt and Judy Scher

American Foulbrood, AFB, is the most destructive honey bee brood disease. It is caused by the spore-forming bacterium, *Paenibacillus larvae*. It is highly contagious to bees and it affects only the bee larva, not adult bees.

Larvae become infected by ingesting spores that are present in their food fed by the nurse bees. The spores germinate in the gut of the larvae, where the vegetative form of the bacteria begin to grow and take nourishment from the larvae. The larvae, once infected, will normally die after their cell is sealed. The vegetative form will die but prior to death, it produces millions of spores. Each dead larva may contain 100 million spores.

The cell cap will be drawn down into the mouth of the cell. The normal convex cap will darken in color and become concave as the larva dies. The larva will change from its pearly white color to creamy tan and then continue to darken to brown. It will then turn to a dark brown scale and adhere to the lower side of the cell. If death occurs at the pupal stage of development, the tongue of the pupa may protrude out of the scale.

The disease is spread rapidly when the house bees are cleaning the infected cells, distributing the spores throughout the entire colony. The brood pattern often is spotty and the cells may be perforated by the worker bees in their attempt to rid the colony of the dead larva.

In the cleaning process, the spores are distributed throughout the colony and the honey in the hive can become contaminated. When the hive weakens it is unable to defend itself from robber bees from stronger hives nearby. Thus, the disease is carried to another hive and the cycle of infection continues.

Lab testing is necessary for a definitive diagnosis; however, a beekeeper can do what is called a field test by inserting a toothpick, matchstick or small twig into a perforated or sunken cell cap, stir the contents of the cell with the stick and then slowly withdraw it. Observe the material drawn out the cell by the stick and if it is stringy, adhering to the end of the stick, the hive may be infected with AFB. There is a foul odor, especially if the disease has infected a large portion of the colony. If there is any unpleasant odor noticed upon opening the hive, AFB may be suspected. A healthy hive has a very pleasant fragrance which is a mix of honey, propolis, wax and pollen.

The spores of AFB may remain viable for more than 40 years, in honey and in beekeeping equipment. Do not feed your bees honey from any source other than their own hive and it is highly recommended not to purchase used equipment. There is no method to clean equipment of the spores.

If AFB is confirmed, the approved method to handle it is by burning the entire colony of bees and the hive parts.



### FDA News Release FDA alerts consumers of nationwide voluntary recall of EpiPen and EipPen Jr

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is alerting consumers to Meridian Medical Technologies' [voluntary recall](#) of 13 lots of Mylan's EpiPen and EpiPen Jr (epinephrine injection) Auto-Injector products used for emergency treatment of severe allergic reactions. This recall is due to the potential that these devices may contain a defective part that may result in the devices' failure to activate.

If you have purchased an EpiPen after Dec. 16, 2015 click on link below for more information. <https://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/Newsroom/PressAnnouncements/ucm550170.htm>



## March Meeting Highlights by Tamara Andreas, LCBA Secretary

### Announcements:

- For any member with bees or queens ordered from GloryBee, the delivery date has been postponed to the weekend of April 21st-22nd due to the bad weather in California.

- To be on the swarm list, you must be a current member and have 1 year's experience keeping bees.
- Yellow jacket queens are out, get your queen traps out now.
- The drawing for a \$25 gift certificate for members donating a quart or more of honey was won by Dave Creasey.

### Presentation: Swarms & Hive Management, Karessa Torgenson

Karessa Torgenson. Master Beekeeper, member of Linn Benton Beekeepers Association and board member of the Oregon Master Beekeepers Program gave a presentation on "Swarms and Hive Management".



Swarming is the bees' method of populating new areas and to diversify genetically. Swarms begin in this area in April, through June. Watch out for drone cells! Drone populations increase four to six weeks before swarm season. Bees will also start to store nectar in the brood area.

Also, check if queen cup cells are populated or not. A populated queen cell means the colony is committed to swarming and it's time for serious intervention at that point.

As swarm day approaches, the queen must drop 25% of body weight in order to fly and foragers become lethargic. Foragers take about a week's worth of nectar supply with them when they swarm. 66% on average of the bees will leave, and the old queen will go too, leaving the new queen.

The queen can't fly long or far, so initially the swarm will find a spot to rest while they send out scouts for a new good hive location. Check out Honey Bee Democracy by Tom Seeley for more detailed information.

**Potential benefits of a swarm:** pollinators can increase the flowering plants in an area and create habitat for future swarms. The benefits of catching a swarm include getting free bees, getting a young, vigorous population, and a potentially high quality queen that is more genetically diverse.

If possible, set up a new captured swarm colony away from your established apiaries, until you can determine if the hive has any diseases such as American Foulbrood, or how bad their Varroa mite count is.

**Potential drawbacks of a swarm for bees:** about 80% of swarms die, and 20% survive, while the remaining hive's population will remain pretty static, and it takes 21 days for the new queen's workers to emerge. There is also a limited time period for the bees to harvest the main nectar flows and boost up their honey supplies for winter.

**Additional risks for the post-swarmed hive include:** repeated swarming of the old hive (until it's completely depleted), new queen failure, undesirable genetics if the new queen mates with drones that are less genetically diverse, workers laying eggs (inefficiently and ineffectively), and robbing. The number of varroa mites in the colony will also exponentially increase, as the remaining bees are mainly from the brood chamber, where varroa would be concentrated (5/6th of the mite numbers will be in the brood). Use oxalic acid to treat for varroa.

Colonies will also compete for foraging, even if they are doomed, since 80% of swarms die.

### Prevention Tips:

Inspect your hives every ten days in spring and early summer, and watch out for drones developing and nectar in the brood chamber. Provide adequate ventilation and prevent moisture.

March is the most likely time for bees to starve, but it is also close to the time when bees will swarm. Also, be careful about feeding your bees and then suddenly stopping, as bees will expand their brood population according to food supplies, and a sudden decrease in the supply will create strain on the colony. If it's rainy, be sure to feed the bees, as they can go through their food supply in a short amount of time and begin to starve.

Older queens are more inclined to swarm. Use local and alternative queens if possible when re-queening, as these queens are suited to local conditions. A young queen also increases the queen pheromone in the colony, making it less likely to swarm.



### *March highlights continued* **Preventing swarming by moving frames:**

In the early spring, reverse hive bodies by moving the brood nest down to keep the food supply area more open. But, don't split the brood nest or it will be difficult for the hive to keep both areas warm. Checkerboard the hive by first moving the brood to the bottom box, and then place frames of honey alternating with empty frames in order to keep the colony thinking that they need to expand and continue building.

Demaree: cull any queen cells as long as they aren't capped. Place the queen and two brood frames in the bottom box, with a queen extruder above. Place honey frames with mostly empty frames above that, and then place the remaining brood at the very top. This may fool the bees into thinking that the colony still needs to expand.

Another method is to break up the brood nest by borrowing brood frames from a stronger hive and adding them to the weaker hive (make sure you aren't moving the queen by accident). When you do this, make sure the varroa mite population in the strong population is under control, so you are not adding more varroa to the weak hive.

You can also buy a frame that is pre-set for drone cells, so that you can select for drones, which also attract more varroa mites. This frame can then be removed and destroyed or frozen once the cells are capped, thus reducing the varroa population in the colony.

If the colony swarmed, look for a laying queen about three weeks afterwards. Add a frame of open brood once per week for three to four weeks to bolster the colony strength. Watch for after swarms. Reduce the entrance five to six weeks post-swarm to prevent robbing. Be prepared to feed the colony if necessary, and treat for mites. Remember the colony will be at its weakest about six weeks after swarming.

### **Pre-Meeting: Bait Boxes, Morris Ostrofsky**

At the April meeting we also had an early educational class on bait boxes, given by Morris Ostrofsky. Bait boxes are a good way to increase your bee numbers and genetic diversity, as well as an opportunity to catch feral swarms.

Two weeks prior to swarming, bees will produce whole frames of drone brood. White wax on the top of the frames indicates honey flow. You may also see scout bees in strange locations, looking for new homes. A beard or tongue of bees which forms in the front of the hive, especially in the morning, can indicate swarming.

Swarming starts around April 1, peaks in May, and ends in July. The swarms in the early season are more valuable - they are bigger and have the nectar flow to prepare for winter. Set up bait boxes three weeks before swarms start in your area.

The location for a bait box should be away from managed hives and in a shady, secure, and level spot. Make sure to cover the bait box to prevent any moisture & light inside; scout bees like dryness and darkness. A standard Deep-box is preferred (or about 4 cubic feet as a cardboard box), with a 5" opening, and a solid bottom board.

If you use a cardboard box, it should measure 20" x 16.25" x 10". The entrance should be 1.25" square, in the middle of the long side of the box. Have handles on both sides to make it easy to carry. (You can staple the handles in to interior supports for the frames).

Only put in foundation strips in your bait box. Use frames with support wires, because the bees' wax will be soft and need support. A drawn frame (previous combed frame with propolis) is very attractive to the bees, so put at least one in the box, on the opposite side from the entrance. XenTari can be used to control wax moths when leaving a drawn frame in a remote location.

Check the bait box every three days. Lemongrass essential oil helps to attract the bees. There is also a product available that is formulated to attract swarms: Swarm Commander, available online and at GloryBee. Put one spray on the drawn frame and one spray right next to the entrance, or push in a cotton ball sprayed with it.



*bait boxes continued*

Treat the box three days after catching a swarm, with oxalic acid - the easiest method is to dribble it. Treat in the field, so you don't take any mites home. Screen the opening, and take the bees home in the early morning. Wait a few hours for bees to calm down after being moved, then open the box and transfer to your standard box.

The greater the distance from managed hives, the greater the likelihood that the captured swarm has been self-managing mites. Leave a newly occupied feral bait box in place, in its remote location, for two weeks, to allow the virgin queen to mate with drones in the area that are from hives that were self-managing their mites & disease. You benefit from the improved genetics from that area.

Pin prick test for hygienic behavior: 21 cells pricked, three groups of seven cell each. Bees smell dead pupae and remove them; if they remove and clean at least 90% of the cells, the bees are hygienic.

### Welcome New Members

Stacy Anderson	Junction City
Abigail Basaraba	Springfield
Norman Chase	Eugene
Danielle Daniels	Lowell
Kim Kelly	Eugene
Jeff & Penny Lankston	Veneta
Victoria Laughlin	Walterville
Edward Love & Family	Eugene
Diana Mangan	Pleasant Hill
Darci Moody	Roseburg
Valerie & Max Rosenberg	Eugene
Paula Sablosky	Eugene
Steve Zittel	Cheshire



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\*Date may change due to availability of bees.

**3RD ANNUAL**

GLORYBEE  
**SAVE the BEE**

# 5K Run/Walk

Saturday, April 29, 2017 • 10 AM START  
Richardson Park, Fern Ridge Reservoir  
5K (3.1 miles) & Kids' Dash at 9:30 AM

presenting sponsor:

**GloryBee**

**REGISTER ONLINE NOW!**  
[eclecticedge racing.com](http://eclecticedge racing.com)

Net proceeds from this race will go to fund honey bee research!  
[GloryBee/SaveTheBee.com](http://GloryBee/SaveTheBee.com)

Timing and announcing provided by  
Eclectic Edge Racing

## Varroa Control for the Month of April & May by Judy Scher

Varroa mites may start to show an appearance or increase in April and May as our bees increase their population.

Remember, before treatment, you must monitor for mites (described in the February newsletter). Treat for Varroa if your hive is over the threshold. With the sugar shake it is 3% or over. If you use a collection board, you must be sure the screen above it is free of debris. The threshold for the collection board is 10 mites/day.

*For the following methods there is a video found on the first page of the LCBA website under "Important Varroa Information" and on p. 11 of Honey Bee Health Coalition: **Tools for Varroa Management**.*

### ESTABLISHED HIVES

#### 1. Mite Away Quick Strips (formic acid)

Use when daytime temps are 50 – 92 degrees F. for 7 – 10 continuous days.

Must have at least 6 frames of brood

Install 2 strips for 7-10 days OR 1 strip for 7-10 days, and then repeat.

This is the only method that kills mites under the capped cells as well as phoretic mites.

This method will kill eggs and larvae, but the queen will rapidly resume egg laying after treatment.

The Honeybee Health Coalition states that this method may be used concurrently with honey supers; however, some people suggest waiting for 2 weeks to install supers.

#### 2. Apiguard Thymol (essential oil) (Note: It is still too cold to use Api Life Var, another thymol product.)

Daytime temps must be at least 59 degrees F during entire treatment

Will taint the taste of honey. Wait at least 1 month after treatment to install honey supers for your own honey consumption.

Place tub above brood chamber for one week, then repeat.

#### 3. ApiVar (Amitraz)

This is a synthetic treatment

Place one strip per 5 frames of brood

Use for 42 – 56 days then remove strips

You must wait 2 weeks AFTER treatment before installing honey supers for your own honey consumption.

### NEW SWARMS AND PACKAGE BEES

1. Hopguard II Use one folded strip/5 frames of bees. Leave on for 4 weeks.

2. Powdered sugar shake Apply ½ - 1 cup powdered sugar on top of frames, then gently brush the sugar so that it falls through frames.

3. Oxalic Acid: (*Not recommended for new beekeepers!*) 5 ml of oxalic acid sugar syrup are dribbled between each frame of bees on the top box. Obtain an oxalic acid kit from Brushy Mountain Bee Supply. This is the only legal source of oxalic acid for bees as of now. <http://www.brushymountainbeefarm.com/> Be SURE you watch the video from the LCBA website or on p. 11 of *Tools for Varroa Management*.

Note: As of now we are only recommending the drip method, not the fumigation method, which can be dangerous.





## April Beekeeping Tips by Chuck Hunt

1. April is the month for heavy build-up of bees. Look out for swarms and avoid them by giving the bees plenty of room: an extra super may be in order. Other swarm control measures, including splitting hives, may be important at this time. Keep a look out for swarm cells that are positioned at the edges or bottoms of the frames. Make sure that entrance reducers are removed so that bees can fly freely and not have congestion at the entrance to the hive.
2. Monitor mites in your hives using screen bottom boards and sticky boards to see if mite treatment is necessary. Those who put on their strips early this year may be able to take them off early. This means that some of the early honey flow may be extracted if there is sufficient time between removal and the spring flow.
3. It has been an especially rainy and bad weather winter. Keep an eye on the honey stores of your hive. Bees can starve in bad weather in April and May. Make sure that your bees always have at least 15 pounds of honey (three western or two deep frames of honey). Feed your hives if they are light either using sugar syrup, fondant candy or honey.
4. Check your queens at least once every ten days or two weeks to make sure your hive is queen right. Make sure your hives have eggs in some cells. Also, pollen coming in the front door is a good indication that your hive is queen right. The heavy demands of spring buildup can cause the queen to fail. Re-queen if necessary.
5. A practice that is helpful to every beekeeper is to keep a diary or notebook. Record the condition of the hive, any special observations that you made as well as any manipulations you used. You might want to include in the diary the weather, including temperature, and the development of the bloom and honey flows. It is sometimes interesting also to note the color of incoming pollen. Keep such a notebook every year and you will not only learn more about beekeeping but also learn a great deal about your local plant life (and the variations from year to year).

## Busy Bee

After LCBA participated at the Good Earth Home & Garden Living show in January, we were asked by the home show coordinators to have a booth at the Spring Home and Garden Show on March 9th-March 12th. They felt that bee education is so important for the community that they offered the booth to us at no cost. Thank you volunteers for stepping up at the last minute to participated in this event!

### Thank You Home Show Volunteers!

Polly & Doug Habliston, Francis & Frannie Rothauge, Rick Olson & Rebecca Fain,  
Larry Larson, Mike Harrington, Deb Elder, Kelly Goodwin, Ray Krass, Brian McGinley

Ken Orgain was also asked to a presentation on "Beekeeping for Backyard Gardeners".

LCBA encourages community outreach to talk about bees and if you present to a group or volunteer at an event, please be sure contact Pam Leavitt at [pamseaver2000@yahoo.com](mailto:pamseaver2000@yahoo.com).



Doug & Polly Habliston



George Kaa & Maggie Matoba



**Save the Date!**  
**Lane County/Linn Benton Beekeeper's Field Day**

**Date:** Saturday, June 3, 2017

**Time:** 10:00 am to 2:30 pm

**Location:** Oak Creek Apiary at Oregon State University (NE corner of 35th St & Western Blvd)

Field Day is a great hands-on learning experience especially for new beekeepers. This year Lane County Beekeepers and the Linn Benton Beekeeping Association are again hosting this event. There will be discussion sessions and hive demonstrations. The goal is to give the optimum learning experience to the new/intermediate beekeeper and also to the advanced beekeeper who has successfully overwintered hives for at least two consecutive years. The primary points of interest differ based on where a beekeeper is in their journey into beekeeping. The experienced beekeepers who will lead the demonstrations will focus their talk on the needs of their groups experience.

We will have three discussion sessions and hive demonstrations with an experienced beekeeper. You can bring your own lunch or a brown bag lunch will be available for purchase. Water will be provided by LCBA. Bring a lawn chair, bee suit, veil and gloves.

OSU requires a signed "Waiver & Assumption of Risks Agreement" be signed by all attendees. We will be sending these out to our members who will attending along with a map to the facility. Registration forms and waivers will be available at our May meeting.

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## Have you seen a Swarm Yet? by Dewey M. Caron

Before the end of April we begin to hear of local bee swarms. There will be more in May and June.

Swarming means different things to different individuals. Some beekeepers see swarms as a management failure, especially when the swarm issues from their colony. However many more view swarms as an opportunity to start a new colony. Swarm removal for some is a public service. Non-beekeepers may fear a swarm or view it as nuisance. Beekeepers, and non-beekeepers alike, see swarms as a curiosity.

Swarms are a great way to start a new colony. They are “free” when not counting your time. Swarms are available in spring when it is a good time to start a new colony. They are “easy” to capture, most of the time. Swarms are great wax producers when hived on foundation.

Swarms are useful to beekeepers as they expand rapidly once the queen returns to her egg laying when drawn comb cells become available, but, like packages, one-half of the adult population will be dead before new adults are produced. Unfortunately the queen may be quickly replaced with the ramp up of brood rearing when hived. The colony from which the swarm has emerged is set back on its spring build up.

What is swarming? Swarming is bee family reproduction. When successful, one colony becomes two or more colonies. It is the passing of genetic material on with creation of a new family. What we see as the swarm is the adult cluster, 10,000 or so bees, that have exited an established nest/hive to cluster at a temporary bivouac site. Swarming is the process of a colony dividing. Swarming takes about two weeks to complete. Our European-bees swarm when conditions are favorable and colonies have expanded but some bee races, such as carniolan or Africanized bees, swarm earlier and more frequently in their developmental cycle.

Swarming is due to several interrelated factors. At the core, it is initiated by a lack of/failure in distribution of sufficient queen pheromone to the adult population in a colony. It may relate to total size of adult population and/or rearing of drones (or these may be coincidental relationships). Environmental conditions, including abundant nectar/pollen resources, may shut it down. Beekeeper intervention that removes brood and/or adult bees &/or expands the area for brood rearing in the hive or removal of the original queen/developing replacement queen (cells) may halt the behavior.

It is difficult for beekeepers to detect when the bees have started swarming preparations. Our best signal is rearing of queen cells by spring expanding colonies. Swarm queen cells are usually attached to the lower comb margin of the brood sphere; in hives, cells are built between brood boxes. By the time we detect queen rearing we are at a disadvantage as the bees are often well into their swarming preparations. And since it is basic reproductive biology of bees (basic to all living organisms), it is difficult to halt the behavior once it is in progress. We must perform extensive hive manipulations but success in halting swarming is not high.

Swarm capture can be a most pleasant experience or result in one heck of a story. The secret to swarm capture is getting the swarm queen into a collection container so the bees follow her. Second or third swarms from the same colony will often have multiple queens, making them difficult to capture. If the swarm cluster remains for awhile at the swarm site they can be uncharacteristically defensive (a dry swarm).

There is some risk associated with swarm capture. The bees in a captured swarm might be carrying “baggage” from their home colony such as mites or possibly disease. For that reason it is best to seek to keep swarm captures away from your established colonies, as much as possible, to evaluate their behavior/brood and to sample them for mite infestation level. With all mites phoretic on the swarm adults, treatment with acids can reduce the mite load of a swarm upon hiving.

While waiting for the first swarms, now is a good time to prepare a checklist of questions to ask when you hear of a swarm. Also assemble your ‘swarm capture kit’ (a good list of what to include in your ‘kit’ is on the SOBA website [www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org](http://www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org) click on How to capture a swarm). If a member, sign up for swarm capture with LCBA and/or OSBA. Let the swarming begin!!



**Classified Ads**

Bee-related classified ads cost \$5.00/month for non-members and are free to members. Classified ads run for three issues and may be renewed by contacting the editor. Bee-related business ads start at \$35 a year. To place an ad, contact Nancy Ograin by the 1st of the month. 541-935-7065 or via e-mail [nancy.ograin@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.ograin@gmail.com).

### For Sale Bee Supplies

Brood boxes, honey/ western boxes telescoping covers, bottom screen boards.

Wood frames with drawn comb. All frames have been frozen & stored in sealed tubs with no wax moths!

For more information and pricing. Contact Jen Hornaday at [healthybeeshealthygardens@gmail.com](mailto:healthybeeshealthygardens@gmail.com) or call/ text cell at 541-914-2225.

### For Sale Top Bar Hives

Complete Top Bar Hive with bees that have survived winter.

Contact Barbara Bajec for more information or if you have any questions.

Barbara: [541-767-9086](tel:541-767-9086) (text or call); or email

[barbbajec@gmail.com](mailto:barbbajec@gmail.com)

### For Sale 5 Frame NUCS

5 frame Nuc @ 135.00 ea  
Deep frames in cardboard nuc box. Contact Jason about Queen choices and possible delivery dates.

Email Jason Rowan to order at [beetanical@q.com](mailto:beetanical@q.com).

Payment at time of delivery.

Jason Rowan, Beetanical Apiary

### Wanted Child's Bee Suit

Do you have a toddler bee suit or two that you no longer need?

Wanted: 2 bee shirts/gloves for our twin 4 year old grandkids. They love watching the bees and are not afraid of them, much to our delight. They would love to get in the hive with us. We were hoping not to have to spend a lot of money for brand new suits that they will soon outgrow.

If you have 1 or 2 for loaning or selling, please let Mimi or Fred know at [fremi01@yahoo.com](mailto:fremi01@yahoo.com) or call Fred at [541-505-0647](tel:541-505-0647). Thanks!

### For Sale

Will have **honeybee swarms** for sale, \$35. Call and get on my waiting list, if you would like one.

Julie at [541 9372577](tel:541-937-2577)

For discounts on American Bee Journal subscriptions contact Nancy Ograin for discount form.

### For Sale Warré Beehives

I sell complete kits for Warré top-bar beehives and also fully assembled hives.

See the details at [www.beeologique.com](http://www.beeologique.com) (under products)

I also offer free guidance in Warré top-bar beekeeping.

**Bill Wood**

~ (541) 687-8211 ~  
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Membership forms for new members and renewals are available on the LCBA website. [Click here](#) to access.

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