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April 2022 NEWSLETTER

President's Message by Brian McGinley

April is a busy month right now for most of us. Another bee year is fully upon us. We now have a light nectar flow and strong pollen sources to give our colonies an excuse to expand. Queens are certainly busy doing their part, and foragers should now be accepting light sugar syrup. Bee packages and nucs have become available for installation. So we should have a lot of happy faces on busy beekeepers out there in our community.

Two big issues are likely occupying beekeepers attention right now. First, we are jumping into swarm season, which you will hear more about at this month's in-person bee meeting. Those that still choose to avoid gatherings, due to COVID, can view the presentations on YouTube a few days after the meeting. No Zoom option will be available now that we have resumed in-person monthly meetings.

Beekeepers lucky to have strong colonies that overwintered well, will need to mitigate their natural tendency to swarm, prompting colonies to send half their bees to a new home somewhere. Losing that many bees is never a good outcome for honey production. The second issue is the strength of your resident queens in overwintered colonies. This issue is connected to the swarm impulse, but also influences overall colony strength and honey production. Unfortunately, queen bees don't seem to last as long and need replacing more often. Either the beekeeper does it or the colony will through swarming or superseding. Fortunately, there are tactics to help reduce the colony's urge to swarm. Lots of resources available to learn these tactics and worth the time.

Last week I was heading over to the university district to create a split from one of my strongest hives in hopes of reducing the swarm impulse. As I pulled into the alley off 19th avenue, I came upon neighbors milling about. Coming closer revealed a swarm in their apple tree and my heart sunk, I was too late. When I asked if they saw the swarm flying they told me they watch it leave their Warre' hive and settle in the tree. Phew, not my bees. We chatted about hive types and I helped them gather the bees into a traditional hive. Then I went to work on my colony less than 50 feet away. Good luck this spring with your bee chores and hope to see you at this month's meeting.

GENERAL MEETING
In-Person Meeting!
April 19, 2022

Come early to socialize and share your questions with experience beekeepers.

Early Educational Class
Topic: Reading Collection Boards
Speaker: Judy Scher
Doors open at 6:15 pm
Program begins at 6:30pm
Fireside Room

General Meeting
Program begins at 7:30 pm
Topic: Swarms & Hive Management
Speaker: Brian McGinley
Trinity United Methodist Church
440 Maxwell Road, Eugene
Turn West off River Road (South of Beltline)

Inside this Issue:

Upcoming Events

April 22nd-23rd - Glory Bee Drive-Through Pick-Up for Package Bees & Nucs.

April 23rd-24th - Oregon Ag Fest
Location: Oregon State Fairgrounds, Salem See page 9.

June 4th - 2022 Oregon Honey Festival
Location: Medford, OR 10:00am-5:00pm

June 18th - LCBA Field Day
Location: Wild Everlasting Farm, Dorena, OR
Save the Date!

June 20th -26th - Pollinator Week
LCBA is planning on having an informational booth at the Eugene Library on June 23rd.

Upcoming Webinar

April 26 – At Home Beekeeping Series
Time: 4:30pm-5:30pm
Topic: How To Make Great Queens and Avoid Poor Ones, David Tarpy, North Carolina State University

Join via Zoom at: https://auburn.zoom.us/j/904522838
Join via Facebook Live at: https://www.facebook.com/LawrenceCountyextension/
(If you use facebook, after logging in, click on more, then events.)

The presentation will be recorded and posted on their Facebook page for 2 weeks.

Territorial Seed Packets For Sale
Available at the LCBA April Meeting

Annuals: Cosmos, Zinnia, Aster, Borage, Sunflower, Bohemian Rhapsody Mix, Heavenly Blue
Price: $1 & $3 depending on weight
Pay by cash or check.

Last year for Pollination Week we asked Territorial Seeds for a donation of seeds for the Eugene Library. We ended purchasing seeds as we did not received them until after the event.

All proceeds benefit the OSU Bee Lab, Oregon Bee Project and other bee research projects.

LCBA April Meeting Info

This is our first in-person meeting for the past two years. Please join us if you feel comfortable attending.

Our general meeting is "Swarms & Hive Management". An important topic for this time of year. Tips on how to try and prevent your bees from swarming.

Our early meeting is "Reading Sticky Boards" by Judy Scher. You can learn a lot just by checking out your sticky board and watching your bees coming and going.

We will have our T-shirts and hats for sale along with selling Territorial Seeds and raffle tickets for a double nuc.

We will also have available the Residential Beekeeping Guide for all our new members last year and this year.

Hope to see you at our meeting!

LCBA Raffle
8 Frame Double Nuc Hive

Tickets: $5 each or 6 for $25
Drawing will take place at the LCBA May 17th meeting. Need not be present to win.
Proceeds will be donated to the OSU Honey Bee Lab for research. Tickets available for purchase at the April & May LCBA meetings.

Hive details:
Sustainably harvested cedar and redwood. Includes: Solid bottom board, divided down the middle, with 6-inch entrances for bees on opposite ends. Eight wooden western frames with wired beeswax foundation. Division board to separate into two 4 frame units. Migratory style cover. Ends of the hive body have attached wooden strips for secure lifting.

Eric McEwen, SW Regional Rep. with OSBA, donated the nuc to LCBA just before the pandemic. This is our first opportunity to raffle it off. Thanks Eric!

Welcome New Members

Nancy Honer	Creswell
Patrick & Jessica Knox	Springfield
James Lemmon	Eugene
Eric White	Eugene

Bees in April by Max Kuhn, Oregon Master Beekeeper

April is generally a happy time in the apiary of most beekeepers. Full of hope, thankfulness, and wonder. Hopefulness for the future season's success in each of our own endeavors. Health of the honey bees being at the top of the list for most beekeepers. Followed by success at their own pollination efforts, or efforts at queen rearing, honey production, pollen collection, and all the many other reasons why we keep bees.

We are also thankful for the colonies that survived the winter as most do. Sadly, some do not. But the memory of those that do not survive will soon fade and that sadness will be replaced with optimism for the future.

Wonder is on many beekeepers' minds this time of year as we open our hives for the first time in several months. Wonder and amazement at what we see inside the hive. All the worker bees going about their duties in spite of our clumsy intrusion into their home. The sight of the queen going about her work with the majestic dignity that only the queen can display. All while being respectfully followed about by her loyal retinue. It is truly an amazing world inside the hive and never more amazing than in April. I look forward to it each year.

So what will we do on our first visit inside the hive this year? Well . . . As all the experienced beekeepers (all together now!) are saying in unison, "THAT DEPENDS." Yes, it does depend. But considering the limitations on time and space for this article I will only make a short list of things you may want to consider on your first visit inside the hive this year. I will attempt to list them in their order of priority.

#1 - Evaluate the overall health of your colony.

- Is it warm enough? (60℉ or above)
- Disease present? Mite count? Test? Treat?
- Population? Large, small, or appropriate to the season?
- Queen right? Observed or suspected? Marked?
- Brood? Eggs, larvae, pupae?
- Food supply? Nectar, capped honey, pollen?
- Bottom box empty of brood?
- Boxes rotated?
- Hive closed up in 15 minutes or less?

#2 - Log book updated after today's evaluation? Bloom log?

More comprehensive, printed, check-off sheets are available from different bee supply companies as well as some bee associations, the Oregon Master Beekeeper program website, and other outlets. If you want to try one, seek them out and choose the design you like.

Happy beekeeping and good luck with your bees in 2022.

Ask A Beekeeper - It's package Pick up time!

Package bees ad nucs are available now and through the end of the month and into May from several suppliers. GloryBee's pick up day is April 22nd & 23rd.

Need help or have a question? Visit our website at www.lcbaor.org and click on "Installing Package Bees and Introducing Nucs" on the "Home" tab. There will be information on installing package bees, nucs and feeding. There will also be a list of members with their contact information on "Ask a Beekeeper" to help with your questions.

We'll be there to help you out!

LCBA

2021-2022 PACIFIC NW HONEY BEE SURVEY
Annual Loss Survey is now Live!

Attention all beekeepers! Reminder that the survey is available to take throughout the month of April. This online survey, developed by Dr. Dewey Caron, is in it's 13th year. It measures honey bee survival/losses with diverse management variables. This year's data will be key for looking at bee loss through the lens of the weather variabilities through the years. There are other regional and national surveys out there, but the Pacific Northwest is a unique area. It is important for the local beekeepers to know what is happening specifically in their area and across the Oregon and Washington.

Thank you for participating in the survey.

***Editor's note:**
It is so important to take this Survey's so we know about the health of the honey bees. If you need a paper form please contact Nancy Ograin 541-935-7065 and one will be mailed to you.

TAKE THE SURVEY »

www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/

Apiary Registration
Dept. of Agriculture

Every person who owns, or is in charge of, five or more colonies of bees located within the state or Oregon, must register their hives with the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

If you currently own less than five hives you are not required to register your bees at this time. The current cost of apiary registration is $10 with an additional charge of $0.50 per colony for five or more hives.

After July 1, the registration fee will increase to $20. The fee per hive remains at $0.50 per colony for five or more. Click below to view Oregon's apiary registration rules and regulations and registration form.

All monies collected from apiary registration will be go to OSU Honey Bee Lab research.

Website: Business Xpress License Directory (oregon.gov)
Registration Form: ApiaryRegistration.pdf
Fact Sheet: FAQs Apiary Registration FAQs

April Beekeeping Tips
by Chuck Hunt, LCBA Member

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.
3. 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. Queens seem to be lasting, at best, one season. Re-queening may be necessary. 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).

March General Meeting Highlights, by Paula Sablosky, LCBA Secretary

General Meeting Presentation: Installing Package Bees & Nucs
by Mike France & Lynn Hellwege

Mike & Lynn

Mike has done many demonstrations on installing packages at GloryBee for the past years and has installed 50-75 packages. He has a fondness for package bees over nucs for new beekeepers. Package bees take you through the whole beekeeping experience, from the very beginning and growing into a complete colony. Nucs present you with a head start as the queen has already been accepted and is busy laying eggs.

Hive location and preparation is important. You want to position your hive south or east so that the morning sun hits the entrance to the hive. Morning sun and afternoon shade is necessary. The entrances should not face traffic areas. The hive should be off the ground and you will want to prop up the back of your hive about one inch so that moisture drains out of the hive if you are not using screen bottom boards. The hive should be assembled and painted at least two weeks before the bees are picked up. You want a nearby source of water.

The objective for your first year is to build up the colony so that it is strong enough to get through the winter. Don't expect to get honey the first year. First year hives rarely make enough honey for themselves let alone the beekeeper. The Queen is building up, she is laying a lot of eggs and needs drawn comb to lay all those eggs, so you need to feed them sugar water. You will be feeding that package for at least 3-4 weeks before the nectar flow starts. Feed with 1:1 sugar syrup to draw comb. The best feeders are the inside feeders and hive top feeders. It takes eight pounds of sugar syrup for the bees to produce one pound of wax.

Package Installation: All packages should come with instructions. Follow them. There are several different types of queen cages. Mike talked about how he does it and what he has seen. Three pound packages may or may not come with marked queens and perhaps 10,000 bees. The wooden package box has screens on both sides. Mike advocates installing them as soon as possible. If not then, definitely within 24-36 hours within receiving the package. Keep them in a cool dark place and lightly spray the bees with 1:1 sugar syrup the evening of your pick up and the following morning. If you install right away still spray with sugar water before installing.

The package includes a can of inverted sugar syrup and a queen who travels inside a separate queen cage. To install, remove some frames with foundation out of the hive box. Then spray the package with 1:1 sugar syrup and lightly tap the box on the ground to force most of the bees to drop to the bottom of the box. Remove the can of syrup, remove the queen cage and place a board over the package opening to keep the rest of the bees inside the box. Check the queen cage first to make sure she is alive. The queen cage has a hole at one end with a cork in it. Remove the cork, place your finger over the opening and place the gummy bear into the opening. Hang the cage with the candy plug facing up - **do not block the plug**. The bees will eat the candy plug to release her. The **screen must face the outside of the frame** so the workers can communicate with the queen and feed her. If not, the queen will die.

Gently pour a small number of bees directly over the queen cage from the package box. Then strongly tap the box bottom and pour the reminder of the bees into your hive box. You will not be able to get all the bees out. Carefully and gently replace the frames that were removed. You may not be able to get the last frame in, just wait a few minutes till the bees settle in. Close up your hive. Set the package box in front of the hive and the rest of the bees will gradually go into the hive. Smoking the bees at this time is not necessary.

Check on day four to see if queen has emerged and has been accepted by the colony. Check again on day 7 to see if there are eggs. If there are no eggs within 10 days, there is reason for concern. Talk to your supplier about a new queen.

The first three to six weeks you need to feed them sugar syrup. They need sugar to build wax as the queen needs wax to lay eggs. In four to five weeks there should be bees working 70% (7 frames with bees on top) in your deep brood box. When you see this, it is time to add a second brood box. Once you have established that the queen is laying eggs, resist going into the hive too often. Observe the bees going into the hive, if they are bringing in pollen, there is brood!

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highlights continued

Nucleous colony: A nuc is a five frame established colony of bees. Most nucs are 5 frames with two or three frames of brood, a mated queen and bees in all stages of development; eggs, larva, capped brood, worker bees and drones. They can vary between vendors in how many frames of brood, honey and hive strength. Nucs use deep frames. This is not a suitable option if you are using westerns or equipment other than Langstroth. Nucs may need their second brood box in three weeks.

Nuc Installation: Place nuc box on hive stand and remove the plug. The next day if weather permits, set nuc aside and place new deep on stand, lightly smoke, install brood frames in in exact order as nuc. If there is a honey frame, place it on the outside edges of the box. Add more frames with foundation to fill out the box. Look for brood, eggs and brood pattern. Install inner cover and lid. Place nuc box in front of hive with lid off and leave until all the bees have moved into the new hive. You will need to continuously feed your bees also with 1:1 sugar water if you have used undrawn foundation so they can build comb. If using drawn comb foundation they may not need it as much, but it definitely helps.

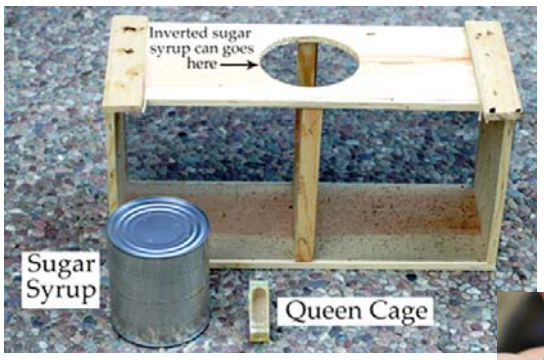
Do your first inspection in two weeks. Temperature should be 70 degrees plus. Smoke the bees, wait a few minutes, then try to be out of your hive in less than 15 minutes. You should see drawn comb, eggs and larvae, compact brood pattern and honey and pollen stores. Bee should be bringing in pollen.

For the most part, if your package bee came from reputable suppliers, there is no need to treat for varroa mites at this time. (Nucs, you need to ask your supplier.) The first necessary treatment is the beginning of July, this is when the major nectar flow has ended. This treatment is considered the fall treatment. Please see Honey Bee Health Coalition about information for various varroa treatments.

Note: *Mike also talked about the colony cycle, larval development, feeders, equipment, tools, varroa mites and much more. This information is important especially for new beekeepers. If you were unable to attend the zoom meeting last month or would like to review the information, contact Nancy at nancy.ograin@gmail.com for the YouTube link.*

*** Plastic frames -** If *reusing old frames be sure* ***to paint them with beeswax****. New plastic frames and foundation come pre-coated with beeswax, but adding additional wax greatly improves the acceptance of these frames by the bees. The* ***bees seem to draw these frames out faster****, which is especially important for developing colonies on new foundation.*

Package Bees



Queen Cage

Nuc being transferred into a brood box.

March Early Educational Presentation: Yellow Jackets by Ken Ograin

Ken Ograin has been keeping bees for 25 years and has been controlling yellow jackets for that long. Ken contacted Rescue 20 years ago and was involved in their early experiments using yellow jacket attractants.

Ken stated that it takes two to three years of setting traps before you will see significant reduction in these nasty insects. The first step is to learn how to identify a yellow jacket queen. She is very large, 3/4 to an inch long, and is very noisy. You do not have to put out your traps until you actually hear a queen. We have two types of yellowjackets, the Western and the German, in our area. Ken catches mostly the Western queens.

Yellow jackets are wasps and there are many other wasps. Paper Wasps and Mud Daubers are very beneficial insects for gardeners and they do not harm honeybees. Paper Wasps look very much like a yellow jackets. They just build nests in inconvenient places, like doorways. Their nests are usually roundish and open celled. Yellow jackets are harmful to honeybees. They pounce on their prey, unlike the bald-faced hornets that catch honeybees midflight. Yellow jackets are scavengers and are aggressive; mud daubers and paper wasps are predators. Fortunately In the Willamette Valley we do not have the giant Asian hornets here yet.

The majority of yellow jacket nests can be found underground. Their nests are made out of paper or wood pieces that they have chewed out of wood fences. Nests that are not found and destroyed will throw off up to 75 queens that will hibernate until next spring. You want to trap the queens in the spring and fall. In the fall the queens look for a place to hide till spring. You can trap them in rolled up pieces of burlap and then kill them in late fall or winter. Trap the emerging queens in the spring and start trapping the workers when they are first seen.

Spring queens will not emerge until there are three consecutive days above 60-65 degrees. At this point, the queen is hunting a new nesting site. She will build the nest, lay eggs and feed larvae until enough workers emerge to take on duties. When you see the queens hovering on the ground, she is looking for a nesting site. If you see them up in the eaves of your house, she has found a nest site and is looking for food to feed the larvae. Male yellow jackets do not emerge until later in the season. They only appear when it is time to fertilize the new virgin queens.

Five to six weeks after you have seen or heard the queen, she has built a nest filled with several thousand off-spring. Once the nest is established and you see workers, put out the Y traps. If you find an underground nest you can kill it with soapy water (1 cup liquid detergent to 1 gallon of water). Be sure to go out later in the day after the workers have returned to the hive. You can also put a gallon glass jar over the entrance to the nest and there are also foam sprays you can spray over the nest.

Trapping:
Fall - Use folded up burlap bags in the fall.

Spring - Trap the emerging queens using the RESCUE big hard plastic traps with the 10-week yellow jacket attractants cartridge. The other attractant reads queen pheromone and 4 weeks. Ken has found this one does not work for attracting queens. Again-the 10-week cartridge is what is used in Ken's experience as working well. Once these traps are set up in the air, leave them up. They will fill up and the smell will attract the workers. You can also try and catch the new queens with a butterfly net or kill them with a fly swatter.

Late Spring through Summer - IF YOU WAIT to trap yellow jackets around your hives, you have left the barn door open. Soft plastic bags that fill with water are the traps to set up in warmer weather to attract workers. Refill with water as needed. Each ½ inch of dead wasps equal 300. These traps should be placed as close to the ground as possible; that is where the workers fly. Place these traps 20 feet away from the beehives.

You can also put out poison bait traps using canned cat food. Ken found that the Ocean whitefish pate cat food or Swanson's white chicken chunks worked the best. Mix cat food with .55cc of onslaught. Be sure to place a wire a wire cage enclosing the cup so that neighbor cats or raccoons can't get at the poison. **Onslaught** is the only pesticide approved for this use in Oregon. Placing a water bait trap near the poison cage will help attract yellow jackets to the site. Set this up early when you see the first workers.

(If you missed the zoom meeting, the YouTube presentation link is available. Contact Nancy at nancy.ograin@gmail.com.)

highlights continued

AG Fest - OSBA Looking for Volunteers

The Oregon State Beekeepers Association will be at the 2022 Oregon Ag Fest to welcome thousands of kids and families, in person, once again at the Oregon State Fairgrounds in Salem.
Oregon Ag Fest, April 23 & 24, is a unique event that celebrates Oregon agriculture. Organizers expect 20,000 visitors from all over the state. Everybody loves honey bees! Adults and kids, in greater numbers than at the Oregon State Fair, will be anxious to hear about the honey bee's important role in agriculture.

The OSBA booth will be located in "Ag Country." We are looking forward to helping share information about Oregon's beekeeping industry, and to inspiring Inspire Future Beekeepers. We will have an observation hive where kids can "find the queen" and also a "selfie station".

The annual event strives to bridge the gap between urban and rural life, and to share the wonder and abundance of Oregon's bountiful and diverse harvest. Kids will ride ponies, plant seedlings, watch sheep get sheared, pet farm animals, climb on a tractor, and see live honey bees. An event like this can change lives, opening new doors to the possibilities of the future.

We will have a booth there both days, setting up 2 days in advance of the event. We need volunteers! If you can help with a 3-hour shift or with set up/take down, please let me know. **To volunteer or for other information, please contact me at bonjking@gmail.com, or 503-864-2100.**

"Save the Bees" - What You Can Do, by Dr. Dewey Caron

Dr. Marla Spivek in the October American Bee Journal, discussed some examples of "double-edged swords" beekeepers are facing. One was the conundrum of individuals starting beekeeping to save the bees, but then they don't properly care for their bees. New beekeepers don't initially know how to care for their bees, but also some individuals who start a bee hive have the mistaken belief that by not treating or feeding colonies, their bees will be more hardy and can build up resistance to mites/diseases. They didn't really want to keep bees, just save them.

Are honey bees going extinct? The short answer is no. Honey bees are not going extinct. In fact, the total number of bee colonies is growing in the U.S. fueled by the demand for colonies to pollinate almonds. Colonies are not healthy, but the actual number of colonies are increasing. Colony losses each year , however, can be extensive without a pro-active mite management plan.

The "Save the Bees" message gets mixed because of simple confusion between the words honey bee and bee and pollinators. The honey bee is one species of over approximately 400 bee species in Oregon. It is true that populations of some of our Oregon native bees are disappearing or are in danger of extinction. The suitable habitat for their nesting and the disappearing of flowering plants are major reasons for this. Especially critical are some of the bumble bee species.

Annual colony losses are too high. Honey bees have suffered high annual colony losses now for several years. The majority of losses are caused by high varroa mite numbers. Varroa causes the syndrome we call Parasitic Mite Syndrome (PMS). The mites transmit/enhance viruses which may reach epidemic levels. Additionally, each spring, colony losses might be due to starvation or freezing due to too small a population. Both starvation and colonies too small to survive often are indirectly due to varroa mites.

Full-sized colonies die, but especially vulnerable are new splits or feral hive transfers. We lose more package and nuc established colonies during the winter than we do previously overwintered colonies. Often it's double the losses of previously overwintered colonies. I have documented this in the Annual Oregon Colony Loss Survey conducted each March/April, www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/survey. That survey is now open and I look for continued LCBA members completing the survey as they have so generously done so in the past.

Winter is also a critical time for unmanaged or feral colonies that inhabit tree hollows, building hollows or other sites. Only one in five will survive their first winter. Although mites might be involved, new colonies and unmanaged feral colonies often fail to store enough resources to survive.

How to "Save the Bees" - So if individuals want to "Save the Bees" what is the best thing someone can do to help honey bees? One way is becoming a dedicated beekeeper, properly taking care of their bees. This means feeding, controlling swarming, timely adding of extra brood and honey storage space and then the most important thing, committing to controlling varroa mites so the colony might avoid a viral epidemic.

Short of becoming a beekeeper, planting flowers that bloom throughout the season will also help save our native bees and provide honey bees with their critical flower resource. Plant and take care of the new planting, including watering them, so bloom extends through the season, including during drought conditions. If an individual lacks suitable space, then investigate planting in the community to help the bees and pollinators or supporting such programs. Allowing lawns, slopes, vacant and public areas to grow weeds such as clover and dandelion will also help the bees. In addition to planting flowers, providing suitable habitat for bee nesting will be helpful. The use of less harmful pesticides can be of great assistance in "Saving the Bees".

Educating neighbors and consumers about the importance of pollination and the positive ecosystem service honey bees, native bees and pollinators provide is also helpful. Planting flowers, preserving habitat and reducing pesticide usage will directly help honey bees. "Saving the Bees" is in all of our interests. It is never too late to start.

New Beekeepers - Informational Page

Things to do to start preparing for your bees:

1. Order your bees.
2. Get your apiary site ready.
3. Assemble your boxes and other equipment.
4. Tools - gather all your tools and have them in a container. A five gallon bucket works really well.
5. Practice lighting your smoker. Even experienced beekeepers can find it difficult sometimes.

Helpful video for installing Package Bees & Nucs: Installing Packages and Nucs (lcbaor.org)

Honey Bee Suite A good website for all kinds of information. Want to know how to do something or what something means visit their website. My advice for new beekeepers - Honey Bee Suite

Find other useful information: Kamon Reynolds from Tennessee. He has a practical, down to earth style, and in addition to having a ton of good info, he speaks regularly at state beekeeping conferences https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkoAuqRakc1TtvXxL4Kr76Q

Educational Videos for New Beekeepers

OSU Honey Bee Lab Videos

Lighting a Smoker
American Foulbrood
Swarms
Sugar Candy
Early Spring Inspection
Finding the Queen
Chalkbrood
Package Installation
Oxalic Acid Vaporizer
How to Mark a Queen

In the Bees with the OSU Honey Bee Lab

Wooden Ware Assembly

How to Assemble a Frame
Assembling a Standard Bee Box
How to Install a Wax Foundation

Beginning Beekeeping Videos

Shonnard's Nursery in Corvallis has a series of beginning beekeeper videos available on YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9qbDVPNB12i2yzh7L5h9ng/videos

Other Informative Links

Life Cyce of the Honeybee
First 21 Days of a Bee's Life
How Varroa Destructor Devastates Honey Bee Colonies

Two Bees in a Podcast

Two Bees in a Podcast is hosted by members of University of Florida's Honey Bee Research and Extension Laboratory.

Learn about honey bees, beekeepers, researchers, and specialists from around the world in educational, fun, yet practical episodes!

Hosted by: Dr. Jamie Ellis, Professor of Entomology, Department of Entomology & Nematology, University of Florida

Podcast - Honey Bee Research and Extension Lab - University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences - UF/IFAS (ufl.edu)

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Research Service

ARS-Developed Varroa-Resistant Honey Bees Better Winter Survivors

Baton Rouge, La., April 7, 2022 - Pol-line honey bees, a type of varroa mite resistant honey bee developed by the Agricultural Research Service, are more than twice as likely to survive through the winter than standard honey bees, according to a study published in *Scientific Reports*.

Although ARS developed Pol-line bees in 2014, this study was the first time that they were tested head-to-head alongside standard honey bee stock in commercial apiaries providing pollination services and producing honey. Colonies' ability to survive winter without being treated to control varroa mites was followed in four states: Mississippi, California, North and South Dakota.

In this study, Pol-line colonies that were given no treatment to control varroa mites in the fall had a survival rate of 62.5 percent compared to standard bees colonies in commercial apiaries also given no fall varroa treatment, which had a winter survival rate of 3 percent.

When Pol-line colonies and standard colonies were treated against varroa mites in both fall and December, Pol-line bees had a winter survival rate of 72 percent while standard bees had a survival rate of 56 percent. So, Pol-line bees still had a better winter survival rate regardless of receiving double varroa mite treatment.

"These survival results continue to highlight the importance of beekeepers needing to manage varroa infestations. The ability to have high colony survival with reduced or no varroa treatments can allow beekeepers to save money and time," said research molecular biologist Michael Simone-Finstrom, co-leader of the study with research entomologist Frank Rinkevich, both with the ARS Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics, and Physiology Research Laboratory in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

This research was the culmination of breeding efforts to develop honey bee colonies with naturally low varroa populations that began at the Baton Rouge lab in the late 1990s.

Winter colony survival is crucial for beekeepers because in February each year, about 2.5 million honey bee colonies are needed in California to pollinate almond crops. Larger, healthier colonies bring beekeepers premium pollination contracts at about $220 a colony.

An ARS-developed line of bees that naturally has low levels of varroa mites is more than twice as likely to survive the winter than standard honey bees.

Varroa mites can cause massive colony losses; they are the single largest problem facing beekeepers since they spread to the US from Southeast Asia in 1987. While miticides used to control varroa exist, resistance is developing to some of them.

"We would like to replace reliance on chemical controls with honey bees like Pol-line that have high mite resistance of their own and perform well, including high honey production, in commercial beekeeping operations. Pol-line's high mite resistance is based on their behavior for removing varroa by expelling infested pupae—where varroa mites reproduce—a trait called varroa-sensitive hygiene (VSH)," said Rinkevich.

"Beyond Pol-line bees, we need to create advanced and easy breeding selection tools that beekeepers can use to select resistance traits in their own bees to promote VSH behavior in honey bees across the country," Simone-Finstrom said. "The great thing about this particular trait is that we've learned honey bees of all types express it at some level, so we know with the right tools, it can be promoted and selected in everyone's bees."

Evolutionary ecologist Thomas O'Shea-Wheller, now with the University of Exeter in England, who worked on the study while a post-doc with Louisiana State University under professor Kristen Healy pointed out, "This kind of resistance provides a natural and sustainable solution to the threat posed by varroa mites. It does not rely on chemicals or human intervention."

In addition, overall winter survival, the scientists examined the levels of viruses in Pol-line and standard bee colonies that are commonly transmitted by varroa mites.

The Pol-line colonies showed significantly lower levels of three major viruses: Deformed wing virus A, Deformed wing virus B and Chronic bee paralysis virus, all of which can cause significant problems for colonies.

"Interestingly, when we looked at the levels of virus infection separately from the levels of mite infestation, we found there wasn't a strong correlation between viral loads and colony survival. You could not use the level of these viruses as good predictors of colony losses," Simone-Finstrom said.

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