

# LANE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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## June 2015 NEWSLETTER



### President's Message

Pam Leavitt, LCBA President

In May, Morris Ostrofsky gave a very comprehensive journey through a hive with his program on "Reading Frames". Our secretary, Jodi Wiktorowski, always prepares a very good article for our newsletter, highlighting the previous months talk. If you were unable to attend, reading her article will give you an idea of what was presented and the slide show is posted on our website.

Our Field Day, on Saturday June 6 was attended by 40 people. They were treated to hive demonstrations lead by Max Kuhn, Kenny Williams and Morris Ostrofsky. Judy Scher and Ken Ograin held workshops on reading sticky boards, splitting hives, robber screens, and moisture boxes. After the demonstrations, many gathered to enjoy a picnic and the opportunity to "talk bees" with other beekeepers. We thank Jason Rowan and his family for allowing us to use their apiary in Creswell.

The Lane County Fair is July 22-26, 2015. We hope many of your will enter honey or honey products. The entries must be products collected after last years fair. To encourage our members to enter their products LCBA will be awarding the 1st place winners a premium of \$10 each. See page 6 for all the information for entering.

LCBA will be hosting the Oregon State Beekeepers (OSBA) booth on Friday, August 30th. Thanks to those who volunteered to help out. We wouldn't be able to do it without you. Be sure to stop by and say hi if you plan on attending.

This month I will give a talk on "Varroa, the Enemy" and Ken Ograin will do an early presentation on varroa treatment options at 6:15 pm just before our meeting, which includes a caution on the latest approved product. For those who cannot come early Ken will do a recap on this new product after our meeting.

Under the leadership of US Environmental Protection Agency and US Department of Agriculture, the Task Force has released the "National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators".

*continued on page 2*

### NEXT MEETING:

June 16, 2015

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

**Early Educational Class!  
"Treatment Options for Varroa Mites"**

**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, the Enemy  
Speaker: Pam Leavitt**

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

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**President's message continued** The 3 overarching goals of this strategy are to:

1. Reduce honey bee colony losses to economically sustainable levels.
2. Increase monarch butterfly numbers to protect annual migration.
3. Restore or enhance millions of acres of land for pollinators through combined public and private action.

There will be a request to Congress for additional resources to respond to pollinator losses that are being experienced. The Oregon State Beekeeper Association will publish in their newsletter all pertinent information regarding the Federal Government action. I will continue to report news as it becomes available.

National Pollinator Week is June 15th to the 27th. Our club plays an important part in public education about bees and their role in our delicate ecosystem. Visit the *Pollinator Partnership* website for more information.

[http://pollinator.org/pollinator\\_week\\_2015.htm](http://pollinator.org/pollinator_week_2015.htm)

### Pollinator Week



Pollinator Week was initiated and is managed by the Pollinator Partnership. They announce that June 15-21, 2015 has been designated National Pollinator Week.

Eight years ago the U.S. Senate's unanimous approval and designation of a week in June as "National Pollinator Week" marked a necessary step toward addressing the urgent issue of declining pollinator populations. Pollinator Week has now grown to be an international celebration of the valuable ecosystem services provided by bees, birds, butterflies, bats and beetles. The growing concern for pollinators is a sign of progress, but it is vital that we continue to maximize our collective effort. The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture signs the proclamation every year

Pollinating animals, including bees, birds, butterflies, bats, beetles and others, are vital to our delicate ecosystem, supporting terrestrial wildlife, providing healthy watershed, and more. Therefore, Pollinator Week is a week to get the importance of pollinators' message out to as many people as possible. It's not too early to start thinking about an event at your school, garden, church, store, etc. Pollinators positively effect all our lives-let's SAVE them and CELEBRATE them!

### Extractor Information

Extracting time is here. The club has 6 extractors with hot knives for use by its members; five are manual and one electric. These are on a reserved use basis. Please limit your use to no more than three days, and always clean the extractor before returning or passing along to the next member. Extractors clean very easily if cleaned with warm soapy water and flushed out with a garden hose after you finish for the day. If you wait until the next day cleaning is more difficult. The three frame units are the easiest to use and to transport.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Eugene, River Rd Area - Peggy Jillson 541-689-7964 | Cottage Grove - Kev Ashley 541-767-0761           |
| Springfield - Justin Boe 541-844-2364              | Pleasant Hill - Tina & John Franklin 541-953-2028 |
| Elmira - Ken Ograin 541-935-7065                   | Creswell - Amy Sierzega 541-505-4033              |

The only electric unit is located in Springfield and is a four frame. It is heavy and you will need a truck to transport it. Call Kaylene Stewart 541-743-3925.

**Remember--return it on time, and return it clean!**

**\*\*Note:** Looking for one of our members to take over the management of the East Springfield extractor. If you can help out please contact Ken Ograin at 541-935-7065 or [woodrt@pacinfo.com](mailto:woodrt@pacinfo.com)



# 2015 LCBA Field Day

Our host, Jason Rowan & daughter Eva Rose



President Pam Leavitt (on left) welcoming members to Field Day.



Judy Scher - Reading collection boards.



Ken Ograin - Splitting hives, robber screens & moisture boxes.

## Thank You!

Thanks to all our demonstrators and the volunteers who came early to help set up and help with the parking. We could not do it without all your help!

A special thank you to Jason Rowan for hosting our LCBA Field Day.

## Hive Inspections



Morris Ostrofsky



Max Kuhn



Kenny Williams (Holding frame)



Ready, Get Set . . . Inspect!



## May Highlights

by Jodi Wiktorowski, LCBA Secretary

## Announcements:

- LCBA has donated \$45 to Project Apis M. An acre of wildflowers will be planted in California to offer forage to bees.

- Ramesh Sagili spoke at Sam Bonds on May 6<sup>th</sup> as part of the Ideas on Tap series. There was a very good LCBA member turnout!
- LCBA has purchased a new, large screen for the meetings! The screen will be installed and donated to the church. Our group has grown and we are in need of a bigger screen for the meetings so everyone is able to see the power point presentations.

**Speaker:** Morris Ostrofsky, a master beekeeper in Oregon, discussed reading frames. Morris stressed that it is very important to be efficient when inspecting your hives. Every time you open the hive, the bees lose a full day of production. During the blackberry bloom, the bees have approximately three weeks to collect enough nectar to make honey for the entire year! Minimally invasive, efficient inspections are important. Start by numbering the frames one through ten. Usually the frames are organized in a predictable pattern of symmetry. The brood will be in the center of the hive, usually centered on frames three through seven. The outer two frames on either side are used for pollen and honey storage. This is useful when inspecting a hive because each frame will have a corresponding frame that is its mirror image on the other side of the box. Frame one should be very similar to frame ten; frame two and nine should match; and so on.



The second way to read a frame is from top to bottom of the frame. Again there is usually a predictable pattern to frames when evaluating them in this manner. Typically the bees work the frames from the top to the bottom. It is not unusual to have more mature brood, or even capped brood, near the top of the frame and younger brood closer to the middle or bottom of a frame.

Frames two and nine typically have mostly pollen, which may vary in color. This variation is due to the phenomenon of "flower fidelity". Foraging bees will only collect pollen from a single flower source all day. Frame three and seven are very important frames. Morris called these frames the "barometer" frames. These frames usually have a combination of pollen, honey, and brood. The honey is typically stored on the outermost band, in an arc along the top of the frame. Between the stored honey and the brood is the pollen band. The pollen band constantly moves back and forth on these frames as the bees balance the needs to feed the brood and to store pollen. The pollen band is very important as it provides the protein necessary to rear brood. If there is plenty of pollen, then the brood will appear wet in their cells, but if there is not enough pollen for rearing brood, then the brood will appear dry within their cells. Lastly, frames four and five, directly in the center of the box, should be mostly brood with little stored honey or pollen.

Morris recommended centering a cluster if they are filling only one side of a box. If you open a hive and there are empty frames on one side and the bees are all crammed onto frames on the other side, just move one or two of the empty frames to the other side of the box so there is symmetry and the cluster is in the middle. If 70% of the frames in the top box are drawn and have bees on them, then it is time to add another box! If adding a honey super, a queen excluder can be used, but it is very important to remove this before winter if you are leaving the honey for the bees!

Morris also discussed swarm indicators. The first indication of a coming swarm is the presence of lots of drone brood. A second indicator of swarming would be the presence of a tongue of bees at the entrance of the hive. If the bees run out of room and don't fit in the hive, they are likely to swarm. Backfilling also occurs when the bees are getting ready to swarm. The queen stops laying eggs so the workers start to fill the brood cells with nectar. The last indicator of swarming Morris discussed was the presence of queen cells being built. He pointed out the difference between actual queen cells, and queen cups. Queen cells will have larvae in them, and these tell you that a swarm is coming! Queen cups, on the other hand, are always made by the bees but they are empty and do not mean anything. Sometimes the bees will beat you to swarming. If you find queen cells with holes in the side, this tells you that a queen hatched and then went and killed the other queens before they hatched. The location of queen cells on a frame is also very informative. Queen cells located along the bottom of a frame are typically swarm cells, but queen cells along the face of a frame are usually supercedure cells.

Morris' slide show can be view on our website on the "Reference" tab. [lcbaor.org](http://lcbaor.org)

Be sure to read Morris' article in *Bee Culture*. "Overcoming Barriers, How to Continue Doing What You Love" May issue Part 1 & June Part II.



## Busy Bee - "Giving Back to the Hive"

The Wildflower & Music Festival took place on May 17th at Mt. Pisgah. Our members who volunteered to help out at our LCBA booth were Jenny Buckley, Rebecca Hale, Polly & Doug Habliston, Max Kuhn, Brook Kintz and Catharine Florence. The festival each year has plant sales, nature walks, and displays hundreds of wildflower species. This was a great venue for our club.

Nancy Ograin helped out at the Farm Food Festival on May 23rd at the Children's Science Museum. The focus was on how bees make honey. Nancy had honey to sample and the festival also showed the kids how to make butter and cheese and there were animals to pet. All the kids had a great time.

Ken Ograin also gave a talk last month to the Eugene Symphony on the history of bees. They provided snacks with a honey theme to all the attendees and Ken said they were yummy.

Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and energies. LCBA encourages community outreach to talk about bees and if you present to a group or volunteer at an event, please be sure to let me know so it can be included in the newsletter. [pamseaver2000@yahoo.com](mailto:pamseaver2000@yahoo.com)



Poly Habliston, Max Kuhn,  
Jenny Buckley



Nancy with Katharine Hunt's  
granddaughter, Cordelia

## Avoid Heat Exhaustion While Working Bees by Judy Scher, Past President

With the hot weather already upon us this month I have had two episodes of (early) heat exhaustion while working only two hives. This situation is never to be ignored. Thankfully, I know the symptoms to catch this fast. My early symptoms are a flushed face and rapid heartbeat and this tells me to close up the hive, sit in the shade, and get cooled down with either ice water with electrolytes or a sports drink. Then, not get up until my heart rate is normal. Here are things every beekeeper needs to have on hand in the hot weather:

Always stay hydrated before and while working bees in the hot weather. If you do not replace fluids in hot weather heat exhaustion may easily occur. If this happens, you need to take it seriously to avoid heat stroke. Your summer inspection tools should contain the following:

- A container with ice
- 1 gallon of water (yes, a GALLON!)
- Electrolyte tablets (you can purchase these at REI or at a drug store)  
(Sports drinks can also be used in place of water with electrolytes)
- A cool wet cloth to wrap around your neck while working hives
- Your cell phone in your pocket

If you get flushed in the face and your heart rate increases, you feel dizzy or weak, close up the bees, drink ice water with electrolytes (or a sports drink) while sitting in the shade for 15 – 30 minutes. The shade of your car will work, or your car air conditioner. If your symptoms don't decrease in 15 minutes pack up and go home. Heat exhaustion, which may lead to heat stroke isn't worth it; you can always work the bees the next day!

## Lane County Fair

Lane County Fair takes place July 22nd –26th. Here are some important dates you need to know for entering your honey and bee products for the fair. Anything harvested after July 23th of last year can be entered.

### Registration - Deadlines

Mail in paper forms June 29th

Online July 8th

2015 products themselves are to be delivered on Monday, July 20 from noon to 7 pm to the auditorium, which is where the floral displays usually are if you registered on line. You can also bring in your entries and registration form in person on July 20th from noon and 7:00 pm to the “Expo 1” (Grange display building). Registration forms will also be available at the grange building.

### Honey Categories—Honey is Division 1125

Honey must be strained in one-pound jars for Class 02, 03, 04, & 05.

Class 01 - Honey in comb (Ross Rounds)

Class 02 - Water White Honey

Class 03 - Light honey

Class 04 - Medium honey

Class 05 - Dark honey

Class 06 - Beeswax, approx. 1 lb. blocks

Class 07 - Honey in Frame Capped

Class 08 - Cut Comb Honey (comb cut in squares out of a capped frame)

Class 09 - Chunk Honey

For more information and to register click on link below and scroll down to “Open Show Creative and Land Products”. Click on ‘Stills Fair Book’ for all the information. For those who do not have internet service you can contact the fair at 541-682-7332.

<http://www.atthefair.com/Exhibits-openshow>

One pound queen line honey jars are available from the club for your entries. Contact Ken Ograin if you need jars at [woodrt@pacinfo.com](mailto:woodrt@pacinfo.com).

### LCBA to Award Fair Entries

To encourage members to enter their honey in the Lane County Fair, LCBA will be awarding the first place winners a premium of \$10 for each category except Class 01 and 08 will be combined.

## Upcoming Events & Announcements

**June 17th - Ohio State University Bee Lab Webinar Social Insects: an Overview**, Joe Raczowski, Ohio State University. Click on link below to sign up or review previous classes. These are free classes. You can join the seminar live or review at a later date.

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

**June 20th - Linn Benton Beekeepers Assoc. Field Day** OSU's Oak Creek apiary site, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm LCBA is invited to attend. See page 8.

**June 24th - Eugene Pro Rodeo Kids Club Day**, Oregon Horse Center Kids \$1, Adults Free For more information:

<http://www.eugeneprorodeo.com/kids-club/>

LCBA will have a booth from 10:00 to 6:00 pm

**July 10th-12th - Oregon County Fair** 11:00 am - 7:00 pm, Veneta

**July 22th to 26th - Lane County Fair**

**Aug 28th to Sept 7th - Oregon State Fair, Salem** LCBA will host the state fair booth on Sunday, Aug. 30th.

**Kelly's Beekeeping Blog: “Lane County Hiveways”** Follow Kelly as she does her inspections, observations, and other beekeeping activities.

<http://lanecountyhiveways.com/>

## Volunteers Still Needed

We still need 2 volunteers to help out at the Pro Rodeo Kids Club Day on Wednesday, June 24th from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the Oregon Horse Center in Eugene.

### New Request:

**July 16th - Willamette Oaks**, 455 Alexander Loop, Eugene, 11:00 am

They would like someone to speak on the history of bees and their important role today. They would also like a display of bee equipment which the LCBA has for events. If you are interested in helping out please contact Nancy Ograin at: [nancy.ograin@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.ograin@gmail.com) or 541-935-7065



## June Beekeeping Tips

by Chuck Hunt, LCBA Member

1. Our first blackberry blossom was seen on May 10<sup>th</sup>. This is over a week earlier than ever before observed. As of the first of June the blackberry flow was in full course and the nectar can be smelled around the hives as they process it into honey! Add supers to your hives. Look into the hive from above and if you see capped honey or see whitening on the top bars of the frames in the super, add at least one more box to your hive.
2. It does not harm the hive to super a little ahead during the early part of the honey flow. In other words, you can put on two supers instead of just one even though you think that one super might do for the time being.
3. Get your equipment ready for extracting.
4. Watch for outbreaks of foulbrood now that all medications have been removed from the hives. Make sure that you know the difference between American Foulbrood (the most dangerous) and European Foulbrood. American Foulbrood can be diagnosed using the "ropiness" test.
5. Mites can be observed in the drone pupa cells that are revealed when you break the two brood chambers apart. Look for Varroa mites on the white pupa where they are readily visible at this time. If you see Varroa, be aware that the hive is in trouble. Use a sticky board and other monitoring devices to assess the Varroa infestation. In serious cases, honey supers may have to be removed and treatment started in order to save the hive.
6. Swarming can still occur in June, especially early June. We caught one on June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Watch out for swarming and take countermeasures.

### Welcome New Members

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| Keith Duberowski | Monroe      |
| Wilma Holden     | Brownsville |
| Susan Roberts    | Springfield |

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## New Screen

We have a new screen and projector! This month's presentation will be shown on our new big 10' X 5' screen. Everyone now in the back of the room should be able to see much better. It was installed last week by Jim Rundall, Brandt Weaver, and Ken Ograin. The old basketball hoop was removed, which was behind the wood facade and the new screen was installed. Brandt provided the scaffolding needed. A huge thank you to Jim, Ken, and Brandt for volunteering your time and equipment!

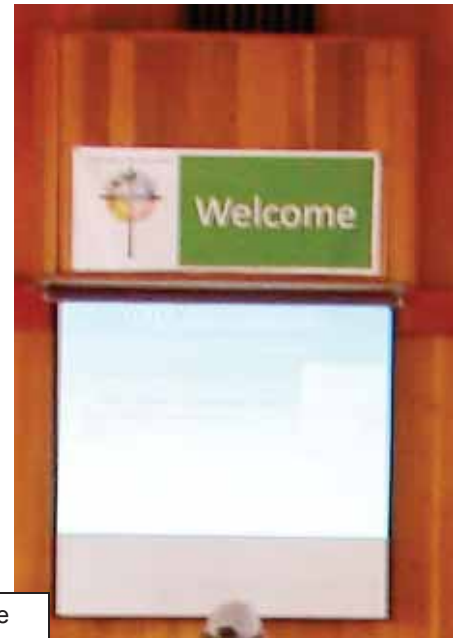


Brandt weaver & Ken Ograin taking down basketball hoop.

Thank You  
Trinity United Methodist  
Church for giving  
permission to LCBA  
to install a new screen!



After: Jim Rundall and Brandt Weaver



Before

## Linn-Benton Beekeepers Field Day

LCBA members are invited to attend The Linn-Benton Beekeepers Field Day.

**Date:** Saturday, June 20, 2015, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

**Location:** OSU's Oak Creek apiary

**Cost:** Free for member of any Regional Bee Club, if not then cost is \$25 which includes membership in LBBA.

The annual LBBA field day is on Saturday, June 20th from 10 am to 2 pm at the OSU Apiary which is located at the Oak Creek Center for Urban Horticulture. This year's attendees will learn about queen introduction, honey labeling, varroa management, and brood diseases. A frame of American Foulbrood will be part of the presentation. This is a unique opportunity to learn to recognize the signs of this serious disease. After lunch, we'll open some hives to do some in-depth assessments, and learn to recognize indicators of queen status, colony health, and more.

OSU Catering box lunches are available for purchase. For the registration form and legal release, see our website at [www.lbba.us](http://www.lbba.us).

If you do not have access to the internet or for more information contact: Steve Oda 541-760-1772.

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## Top Bar Hive Visit

by Nancy Ograin, LCBA Editor

I visited Barbara Bajec's Cottage Grove home to see how she manages her top bar hives. Barbara has a mixture of hive styles, Langstroth, Kenyan top bar with sloped sides and a Tanzanian top bar with vertical sides. This is Barbara's third year exploring top bar hives. Her hives are doing well, in fact her queen from her first top bar hive continues to lay eggs with a good brood pattern.

Barbara and her husband, Mel, build their own hives; this after investigating top bar hives on the market and finding them rather pricey. After making several Kenyan style hives, Barb and Mel built a Tanzanian hive to compare comb construction in a square style.

Barbara was attracted to top bar hives for ease of handling and less trauma on the bees. She also wanted to give the treatment free approach a try: less stress for all. Barbara says that management on top bars is about the same as a Langstroth. Her bees are very gentle and it seems that working a top bar hive is less invasive than Langstroth. After removing the top she works horizontally to remove top bars with no comb attached. You can really look down into the hive and see the bees working on their newly drawn comb.

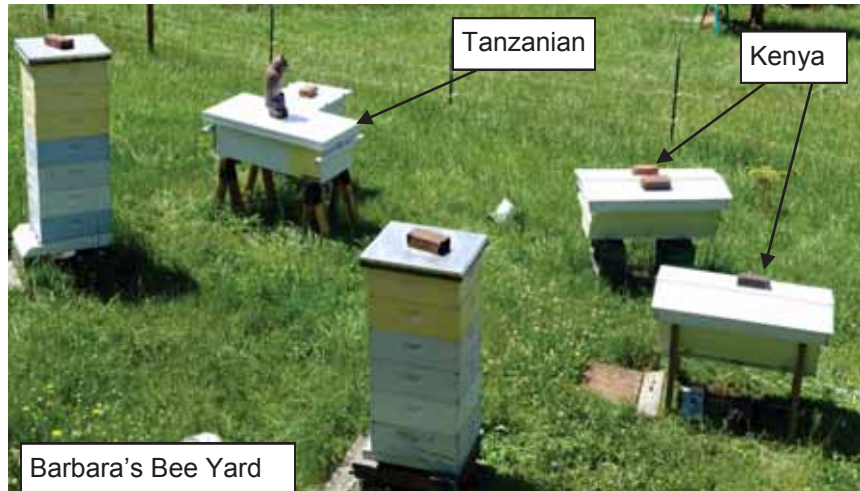
One important thing I learned, you must loosen the comb from the side of the hive if it's attached before picking it up or it could be destroyed. You need to look into the hive every five to seven days to make sure the comb is being built straight. The bees can build out their comb pretty fast. Barbara likes to let her bees decide on the cell size even in her Langstroth hives.

One thing I really loved was looking at the beautiful comb the bees built.

Perhaps the main benefit of a top bar hive is the ease of working it. You are not picking up heavy boxes. You are working sideways not upwards. With the top bar hive you lift one top bar at a time versus lifting an entire box. She also believes top bars are less disruptive to the bees and the beekeeper.

I learned a lot and next year I will be looking forward to having a top bar in my bee yard. Thanks Barbara!

Les Crowder's book "Top Bar Beekeeping" is a very good reference.



Looking down into the Kenya Top Bar



Build up of comb in first days



Comb build on Langstroth



## “2015 LCBA Winter Loss” by Dr. Dewey M. Caron

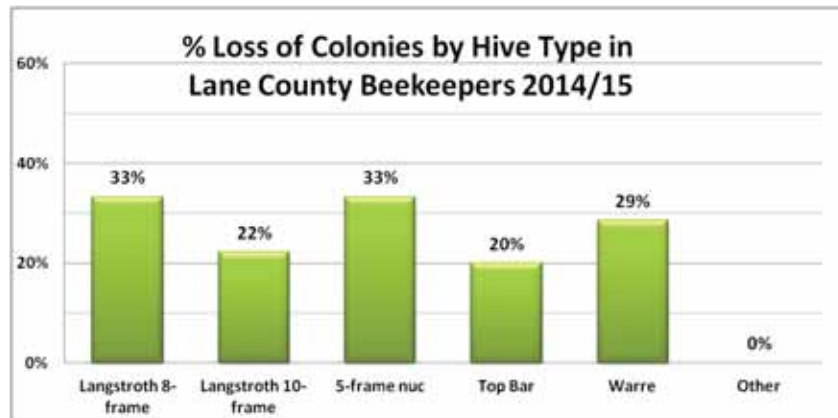
At the April LCBA meeting paper copies of the “Winter Loss Survey” were distributed. This was the 7<sup>th</sup> year of survey activity. 230 responses from Oregon backyarders, keeping anywhere from 1 to 50 colonies were received. Lane County members sent in 46 surveys, a

considerably lower number of responses compared to the 71 survey returns last year (see LCBA April 2014 newsletter for 2014 loss report).

A more complete report of the survey responses will soon be posted at [www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com](http://www.pnwhoneybeesurvey.com). Click on survey results on site top bar, then on 2015 survey results Lane. If you have questions and comments please post them to the site and I will get back to you promptly.

Overwintering losses of LCBA respondents was 23%. This is 20% lower than the statewide loss of 29% (database of 230 Oregon backyarders). Lane County losses were 10% lower than the previous year and 16% lower than the average of the last 5 years.

The loss rate was determined for eight and ten frame Langstroth hives, five frame nucs, Top Bar, Warré and a category of other hive types. LCBA member respondents started the winter with 144 Langstroth ten frame, nine Langstroth eight frame, seven Warré, five Top Bar, three five frame nucs and one other, a feral colony. The graph shows percent loss of each hive type.



Not everyone had loss. In fact 20 individuals (46%) reported total winter survival; 6 (13%) unfortunately lost 100% of their colonies. Seventy-two percent indicated acceptable overwinter loss as zero or 5%-15%.

Lane County survey respondents reported a wide range of beekeeping experience. Ten individuals had ten years or more of bee experience, with the highest of 60 years, while 19 individuals had one, two or three years experiences. Thirty-two individuals said they had a mentor available as they were learning their beekeeping. Club meetings (28%), followed by readings (22%), were listed as the major source of how respondents received their beekeeping information with bee schools and mentors listed next.

Lane County respondents mostly keep one, two, or three colonies and the largest number was 24. Seven of these individuals have more than one apiary location and five moved bees during the year. One to pollinate, one due to bear attack, one for neighbor issue and two to have colonies more accessible.

The survey also asked for hive loss by hive origination. Seventy-one of 86 overwintered colonies were alive in the spring (17% loss rate). Respondents reported loss of 40% of packages and 42% loss of swarm captures. Colony divides and feral colony transfers did considerably better, each with only 8% loss rates.

Individuals with loss were asked to what they attributed their loss. Weak in the fall, queen failure and varroa mites were the major factors selected, each 16% - 19%. Starvation and poor wintering were about equally chosen, 10%. CCD (6%) and yellow jackets (4%) were the lowest along with pesticides (4%) and Nosema (2%).

Remaining survey questions inquired about feeding practices, wintering preparations, sanitation measures utilized and mite controls used, such as screen bottom boards, drone brood removal, and chemical controls. LCBA members do more than just one thing to control mites and improve overwintering success.

Two other sections of the survey asked about method and frequency of mite monitoring and queen replacement by bees or beekeeper. Complete analysis is being done and will be available later on the website.

Thanks to all who completed a survey – if you found this, or the more complete website report of use, and you didn't have a chance to submit your information this year, please consider doing so next April.

NOTE: Commercial & Semi-commercial beekeepers (managing approximately 60% of total estimated colonies in Oregon) reported a 12.4% overwinter loss rate. The BeeInformed survey, a mixture of both large and small-scale beekeepers, reported a 25% Oregon loss rate.

**Classified Ads**

Bee-related classified ads cost \$5.00 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 cost \$35 a year. To place an ad, contact Nancy Ograin by the 1st of the month via e-mail [nancy.ograin@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.ograin@gmail.com) or phone 541-935-7065.

**For Sale**

1 ea honey Dispenser complete with base unit & stand  
\$20.00

2 ea Honey dispensers with stand only. \$10.00 ea

12 ea Dispenser/bucket valves \$3.00 ea

Contact Jerry Carter  
cell phone 541-968-4047

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