



Northern Piedmont Beekeepers Association

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IN THIS ISSUE

For New Beekeepers
Bee Course Announcements
Lots of little news

President: Bob Duxbury
148 Weaver Rd
Amissville, VA 20106
540-937-6026
duxamiss@gtcinternet.com

Secretary/Treasurer Lele Hankins
540-547-4711
hankins77@comcast.net

Regional Inspector Bob Wellemeyer
540-428-0420

JANUARY

Date: Thursday, January 15
Place: Cooperative Extension Service , corner
of Davis Street and South West Street
in Culpeper
Time: 7:30 PM

HIVE WORKS FOR JANUARY

Sometime this month you need to check your hives.

Choose a warmish day. Sun is nice. No wind!

Make certain nothing has blown over.

Take off the covers and see if you hear or see bees. Note where they are and that there is plenty of food. The worst part of winter is January and February.

While this past season is fresh in your mind, make a list of equipment and supplies you will need. Try to put your orders in during January when the suppliers can give full attention to your order.

Come to the Bee Course Registration Social on February 8 (see page 4 for information).

Snow is predicted for this winter (really?). Don't worry about snow on your hives. It's good insulation. Don't worry about finding dead bees in the snow. It's normal death— 50 to 100 each day.

Sit down and read those bee books you got for Christmas.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

It's dues time!

Sending reminders after January is bothersome for all. Why not send your dues in now?

Dues are \$10/year. Mail check, to NPBA, to
Lele Hankins
18182 Pine View Drive
Culpeper, VA 22701

See - it's not difficult to do that!

COMMON SENSE

We are coming into the real winter months.

If schools are closed, no meeting.

If your roads are bad, please stay home and stay safe.

We need our beekeepers.
Your bees need you.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Thanks for your vote of confidence in electing me your President and Mike King as Vice President.

We plan to bring to your attention as many resources as possible and make this a great year for beekeeping.

Please tell us your thoughts and concerns as well as any input you may have to further help the NPBA.

The newsletter is a super way to keep up with what to do and when to do it. It also gets information to members who can't attend meetings.

A meeting is scheduled for January 15. Watch the weather. If schools let out early or are closed, then no meeting. The main topic will be the need for volunteers and mentors for the beekeeping classes that start on February 10. I would like to have some volunteers to help Ann, Karen and myself on Sunday, February 8th. We want to show the new beekeeper that the club members care and support them.

Your questions are always welcome, so call me or Mike.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I really want to make this newsletter useful to you. I realize it's the same old format and doesn't have many little drawings. However I can add them if you want.

In the past I have had an article designed for beginning beekeepers, on page 2. Sometimes it carried over to page 3. Page 3 was to be one or two articles on a variety of subjects—everything from history to problems of today. Since I attend many beekeeping conferences I try to bring any news to you that is important.

On page 4 I have had a recipe, plants blooming (or not), announcements, trivia, meeting info—a real grabbag of stuff.

LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU WANT/DON'T WANT! Ann Harman 540-364-4660
1214 N Poes Rd Flint Hill, VA 22627
ahworkerb@aol.com PLEASE!
Also—article contributions welcomed!

SO YOU WANT TO BE A BEEKEEPER...

About this time of year the beekeeping equipment catalogs start appearing in your mailbox. Each year the suppliers try to have something new.

Beekeepers love gadgets of all kinds. Are all those new items really useful? Will they help your beekeeping? If you are in your first or second year of beekeeping you might want to consult with more experienced beekeepers to see if you really need such a gadget. If you are still convinced you must have it, why not give it a try—then let the rest of us know what you think.

One item found its way into the catalogs some several years ago. Known as "small-cell foundation" it is supposed to help with varroa mite control.

Well, Jennifer Berry presented her research on this foundation and found that it did not help. I just received a scientific journal with an article by some New Zealand scientists. They tried the small-cell foundation and found exactly the same results—not effective.

So please continue to use standard foundation for your European honey bees. Use other methods of control for varroa.

You may have heard or read that *Nosema ceranae* is a new arrival in our bees. Well, some bees were taken from the freezer at the Beltsville Bee Lab and—guess what—*ceranae* has been in our bees for quite a few years. It was just not recognized. Now whether we are having a sudden increase in it or whether we should have blamed it for colony deaths over the years is unknown at this time.

Since nosema is a spore-forming disease, it gives us one more good reason to change comb in our hives on a three-year cycle. Researches have also found that heating equipment, including frames of comb to 120° for 2 to 3 hours will kill the spores. Wax melts at 143°.

I will be attending the American Beekeeping Federation annual convention in January and will report to you anything I hear about CCD, *ceranae*, and other topics.

MEET ANOTHER HONEY BEE

As you may have read, beekeepers supplying the almond orchards with bees for pollination have had to import bees from Australia to have enough colonies to do the work.

Unfortunately Australia discovered that in the far north of the country the Asian bee, *Apis cerana* has been discovered. Although bees for pollination originate in the south of Australia, both the US Government and the Australian have agreed to stop the importation of Aussie bees into the US.

Cerana (now the common name for this bee) is the host for another parasitic mite—*Tropilaelaps clareae*, not a nice mite—it eats brood. Cerana is able to live with this mite but our European bees will suffer if it is ever introduced in the US.

Now for a little bit about cerana. It is native to Asia—from Afganistan east to the Pacific, from the colder north of China to the south, except for Australia.

Cerana is smaller than our European bee but it is a honey bee. It produces honey, does pollination and is perfectly happy in a small-size Langstroth-type hive.

Cerana has been the mainstay of honey production and pollination in the Asian countries. Unfortunately our European honey bee has been imported into the Asian countries and is replacing cerana. Unfortunately—because mite control for European bees living in countries with varroa and *Tropilaelaps* is difficult.

Cerana has the same basic biology and behavior of our bees but a few differences in behavior. Cerana will abscond if it has too much disturbance, say by a beekeeper.

Since it is a small bee you need to keep two cerana colonies to equal the honey production of one European colony. Cerana lives with varroa. After all it is the native host. *Tropilaelaps* can be controlled with a break in the brood cycle, Cerana beekeepers usually cage the queen for 2 weeks as a control measure.

Our beekeeping industry cannot tolerate any incursion of cerana.

A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING



Join Virginia State Beekeepers Association. It's only \$10 and you get 4 newsletters per year with information. Contact Karen Hunt at 540-937-4792 or kahu9@juno.com



A NEW BOOK!

HONEY HANDBOOK by Kim Flottum
Published by Quarry Books, 168 pp, \$24.99
(another in the Backyard series)

It is about time we had a book that concerns honey. This book's subtitle is "A Guide to Creating, Harvesting and Cooking with Natural Honeys."

The book begins with the foraging habits of bees and their collection of nectar. You will find a guide to honey plants followed by how to harvest your honey. There are plans for a honey house along with equipment needed. The book concludes with a chapter of recipes for many kinds of foods.

At the end of the book is a Glossary and an index. The book is filled with photographs to help you every step of the way in producing honey and on to marketing your crop.

This new book fills a definite gap in our beekeeping library and it does a very good job of that. It is a book that belongs in every beekeeper's home, whether a beginning beekeeper or one with many years of experience.

It is a delight to read. And you will learn much.



BEES HARD AT WORK

Researchers have discovered that the bee's buzzing sound changes when exposed to chemicals in the air. The bees are so sensitive that they react within 30 seconds to an odor. The sounds also indicate differences in odors. So bees can be used as monitors of toxic gases. Although some people can detect the changes, researchers are developing a detection system much more sensitive than a human ear.

COOKING WITH HONEY

Just about everyone buys SPAGHETTI SAUCE and perhaps adds something. On a nice cold day why not make your own, using honey.

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 green bell pepper, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped or pressed
1 large sweet onion, finely chopped
1/4 to 1/2 cup finely chopped fresh parsley
1/4 cup finely chopped celery
1 pound ground beef
1/2 pound ground pork
1 16-oz can tomatoes
1 15-oz can tomato paste
2 tablespoons honey (can use a strong flavor)
1/4 teaspoon oregano
1 pound sliced mushrooms
salt and freshly ground pepper

In a large skillet heat the oil over medium heat. Add the pepper, garlic, onion, parsley and celery and cook until tender. Then add the beef and pork and brown slightly. Pour off excess fat.. Then add the tomatoes, tomato paste, honey, oregano, mushrooms, and salt and pepper to taste. Combine well. Simmer for 2 hours. Serves 4 to 6.

HONEY HANDBOOK Kim Flottum

You can accompany your spaghetti with a simple salad. Here is a HONEY SALAD DRESSING

1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon celery salt
1/2 cup honey
3 tablespoons lemon juice
1/4 cup vinegar
1 cup salad oil

Mix dry ingredients. Add honey, lemon juice and vinegar. Slowly add the oil, beating until well blended. Makes about 2 cups.

THE HONEY KITCHEN ed. by Dadant & Sons

WHAT'S BLOOMING?

Rain—for the trees and bee plants.
Snowballs would be nice.
House plants
Icicles

JUST STUFF

Virginia State Beekeepers Association Spring Meeting will be in Hampton, April 17, 18 Information later. It's a bit of a drive but the information you get is valuable.



BEE COURSE INFORMATION

Please pass this information around to those who may be interested in becoming a beekeeper.

The Bee Course will hold a Registration Open House on Sunday, February 8 from 2 - 4 PM at Verdun Adventure Bound, in the Classroom building.

The classes start on Tuesday February 10, 7-9 PM, and will be every Tuesday through the rest of February and March, with the last class held on March 31 (snow date April 7). Cost is \$85.

Open hive classes will be during April-May during appropriate weather on Saturdays or Sundays.

There will be textbooks, a few handouts and the opportunity to order packages of bees. Please remember that the bees originate in Georgia,

All NPBA members are invited to the Open House on February 8 to meet the prospective beekeepers and just have a chat about bees and beekeeping.

If you took a previous Bee Course you are welcome to attend the classes FREE.

Please come and volunteer to serve as a mentor for these new beekeepers.

C & H BEE BOOKS

If you are interested in bee books contact C & H Bee Books for a list of books available. Call Ann to request a book list.

We cannot accept credit cards but checks and cash are just fine!