



Northern Piedmont Beekeepers Association

Volume 30

Number 11

November 2009

IN THIS ISSUE

For New Beekeepers
Survey
Stingless Bees

NOVEMBER MEETING

When: Thursday November 19

Time: 7:30 PM

Where: Culpeper Extension Service building,
corner of Davis St and West Street

What: Problems—with pollinators
And Some Miscellaneous Things

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NOVEMBER MEETING

Ann Harman will be the speaker, bringing good and bad news.

Bring your questions about beekeeping and we can have a Q&A Session.

She will be looking for your answers to the survey in this newsletter. After all, this is your newsletter.

Stained glass bee raffle—winning ticket will be drawn!

HIVE WORKS FOR NOVEMBER

Whatever you haven't done for winter, do it now! Your success next year depends on it.

It's a good time to clean up your bee bucket. You can wash hive tools in your dishwasher after scraping off chunks of wax.

Wash your beekeeping coveralls, jackets and other beekeeping clothing. Dried venom on them can cause people to develop sensitivity to stings.

Look through your equipment. Do you need any woodenware for next spring. Equipment suppliers really love orders placed in December and January -- even November!

Order a nuc and put it together for next year.

Subscribe to the bee journals to have something to read during winter weather.

Holiday time coming—be sure to use honey in your cooking. Remember to give recipes to your family and visitors during November and December.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

We will hold our annual election of officers at the upcoming November meeting. Those who have agreed to help the club by serving are:

President – Mike King
Vice-president – Deb Parker
Secretary – Craig Williams
Treasurer – Lele Hankins

If you are interested in running for any of these positions, please call or email Lele Hankins at 540-547-4711 or hankins77@comcast.net so your name can be added to the ballot. A big “thank you” to Craig Williams, who graciously put his hand in the air when I asked for volunteers at the October meeting.

Don't forget the Virginia State Beekeepers' meeting is November 7th in Weyers Cave, VA. Walk-in registration is \$20 (lunch is also available for purchase). Vendors at the VSBA meeting will include: Dadant, Frank Wyatt (misc. bee items, collectibles), Ralph Figgers (Honey B Healthy), Ann Harman and Bob Cole (C&H Books), and Honey Rustlin' Farms (woodenware).

If you have a particular topic, idea or speaker you'd like to see scheduled for an upcoming meeting, I am collecting ideas from members for the 2010 meeting schedule. You can call email me with your ideas at kahu9@juno.com or call me at 540-937-4792.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I put some information on my Simple Survey on page 3. I realize that not everyone attends NPBA meetings, so if you wish to answer the survey you can e-mail, or phone me (info on page 1) with your comments.

I would also appreciate any suggestions for topics for newsletter articles. I try to keep hive management articles seasonal (i.e. swarming in spring).

In addition—would you like to write an article for the newsletter? If so, great! Just e-mail it to me or snailmail at 1214 N Poes Rd, Flint Hill, VA 22627. Please include your phone number in case I have a question.

SO YOU WANT TO BE A BEEKEEPER...

Stingless bees. Sounds tempting, doesn't it? Yes, stingless bees do exist but the ones I am referring to are not found in the United States. These little bees are a tropical bee, inhabiting Latin America and parts of Africa.

They are a native bee in their lands and are important pollinators. They have been and are important in the cultures of their native habitats.

They do make wax, produce honey and gather propolis. But the quantities are small. They are social, like our honey bees and can swarm.

These stingless bees are quite small and many are really beautiful. They can be kept in hives but are not “managed” in the sense that we “manage” our bees. These stingless bees are only managed in the sense that they are robbed of honey and the resultant wax.

The honey produced by them is considered medicinal and people are willing to pay a very high price for the small quantities of honey available.

Professor Kerr of Brazil, although officially retired, is promoting the preservation of stingless bees. This effort is critical. Latin America, as well as Africa, is losing native forests and other suitable wild habitats for many critters. The pollination efforts of the stingless bees is important for their habitat.

When the African bees arrived in Latin America and started spreading, some beekeepers gave up keeping honey bees and started providing homes for stingless bees. These beekeepers found that harvesting the honey brought them more income than from the honey from their European stock bees.

Do the stingless bees have any defense? Oh yes! One will fly into your nose, ears, into your open mouth if you are talking. It can get really annoying. Another pulls and tugs at the hairs on your arms, face and is equally as annoying. Another just quietly poops on your skin then turns around and spreads the liquid poop around. Ugh. They are all very effective!

A SIMPLE SURVEY

Since this is your newsletter I do like to ask from time to time what you want and don't want. A typical issue has:

- a bit of info on upcoming meeting
- comments from the President
- comments from the editor (if any)
- a column for beginners (So You Want To Be a Beekeeper)
- column(s) on various aspects of beekeeping found on page 3
- on page 4—an assortment
 - recipes
 - blooming plants
 - miscellaneous notices
 - book ad (or other ad, if any)

Now is there anything you don't want? Do want? Be courageou—let me know.

I realize that the newsletter is rather plain but I do not know if many have broadband (hi-speed Internet). I do not want the newsletter to take forever to download.

STAINED GLASS RAFFLE

Thanks to all those who have supported NPBA to date by purchasing tickets for the upcoming stained glass “bee” window raffle. The drawing will be held at the upcoming November 19th meeting, although you need not be present to win. Tickets are still available, and are \$1 each. You can mail your check (made payable to NPBA) to Karen Hunt, PO Box 213, Amissville VA 20106, and I'll mail your raffle tickets back to you. Thanks to all you “mailers” who have included self-addressed, stamped envelopes—very helpful! If you have any questions, you can call me at 540-937-4792.



LET'S GET SOMETHING STRAIGHT!

I read articles in both beekeeping and non-beekeeping press and I am asked questions, and also I attend presentations. It is apparent that few, including beekeepers, know the difference in the meaning of two words: **aggressive** and **defensive**.

In the beekeeping world we face honey bees, including the African bee, and their stings, wasps, yellowjackets and the occasional hornet. As beekeepers we are frequently asked about “those Killer Bees” and are asked to help some homeowner who feels under attack from a swarm or a carpenter bee.

Unfortunately **aggressive** becomes the word of choice. The correct word is usually **defensive**.

When we go to our beeyard and open a hive—**we** are the **aggressor**. We are invading, unasked, their home with young and food. Their **defense** is their stings. What would you do if a complete stranger burst into your home? You would **defend**.

When we mow over a yellowjacket nest, hidden in the ground, **we** have become the **aggressor**, disturbing their nest with young and food. Their **defense** is their stings.

When someone swats at a flying insect—whether it is a bee or something else—**we** have become an **aggressor**, attacking without cause. The bee may have been attracted to some perfumed cosmetic; an insect may have just been going somewhere else.

In the spring homeowners feel threatened by drone carpenter bees that cannot sting and are working hard to **defend** the female and her nest. **We** are perceived as an **aggressor**. You have moved too close to the nest area.

The African bee is simply overly **defensive**, defending nest with food and young in large numbers. An African bee out foraging is no more ready to attack and sting you than a European stock honey bee in the same circumstances. There is no nest to defend.

Let's use these two words correctly!

COOKING WITH HONEY

How about trying a new sweet potato recipe for Thanksgiving. One with honey, of course.

SCALLOPED SWEET POTATOES AND APPLES

3 large tart unpared apples, cored
4 medium sweet potatoes, cooked
1/4 cup butter
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup honey

Slice apples 1/2 inch thick; cut potatoes 1/2 inch slices. Saute apples in 2 tablespoons butter in skillet until light brown. Arrange alternate layers of apples and potatoes in greased casserole. Sprinkle with salt. Combine remaining butter and honey. Pour over casserole. Bake at 375° for 40 minutes. Yield 6 servings

NATURE'S GOLDEN TREASURE HONEY COOKBOOK Joe M. Parkhill

BROCCOLI WITH SOUR CREAM

1 pound broccoli
1 cup sour cream
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons vinegar
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1/4 teaspoon salt

Cook broccoli until just tender and still bright green. Combine sour cream, honey, vinegar, mustard and salt. Heat gently. Pour over broccoli or serve separately. Serves 4 to 6

A HONEY OF A COOKBOOK
Alberta Beekeepers Association

Gently warmed honey mixes better with other ingredients.

A small amount of honey sprinkled over vegetables enhances their taste.

Guests for Thanksgiving dinner? Send them home with a jar of your honey and a recipe.

WHAT'S BLOOMING?
not very much
the warm weather brought violots in bloom
and I did see a few dandelions

November 2009

NPBA

GOOD STUFF

Meeting dates for NPBA:

November 19
January 21, Feb 18

Website info: www.npbee.org

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For information about Virginia State Beekeepers Association go to the website:
www.virginiabeekeepers.org

Save this date: Tuesday November 17

NORTHERN VA BEEKEEPERS –INVITATION

A reminder that the Beekeepers of Northern Virginia (BANV) has graciously extended an open invitation to attend their upcoming meeting featuring Michael Palmer. Mr. Palmer, who is the past president of the Vermont State Beekeepers' Association and 30-year beekeeper, is an engaging speaker and will be discussing sustainable beekeeping.

The BANV meeting will be held on November 17, 2009 from 7 – 9:30 pm, at the Falls Church High School Cafeteria 7521 Jaguar Trail, Falls Church, Virginia 22042, just off Rt 50 E at Beltway. A link to map directions can be found on the BANV website at <http://www.beekeepersnova.org/meeting>.

There will be refreshments served prior to the meeting, which will begin promptly at 7 pm. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to BANV president Denise Taylor at yarnoverboard@verizon.net so they can plan refreshments and chairs accordingly. A number of NPBA members are going—don't miss this opportunity! Carpool will make it easy.

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!

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