OHIO INFO BEE

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Communication

This is the third *OHIO INFO BEE* to be sent and we are asking for information from you the reader. While we are able to talk with various people around the state and attend meetings we would still like to hear from you. What is your local association doing? What are the colonies in your area doing? Is there a beekeeping problem in your area? E-mail Sherry at ferrell.6@osu.edu

APPROVED CONTROLS

John Grafton

Regardless of the industry being discussed there is always someone in that industry trying something different or new. Beekeeping is no different. Many times this is how a better approach is found. The problem arises when these "new and better" products are promoted and sold without the proper certification. This becomes even more complicated when a food product

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EAS 2005 Divelbiss Award Presented To Sherry Ferrell and Dave Heilman

James E. Tew

Charles Divelbiss was a dedicated Ohio beekeeper from Mansfield, Ohio. He was a lifelong school teacher and school administrator but was also dedicated to beekeeping. In his honor, The Eastern Apiculture Society established Charles Divelbiss Education Award for selected beekeepers who were doing exemplary work with both beekeepers and non beekeepers. This year's Divelbiss Award went to Sherry Ferrell and Dave Heilman for their activities supporting the Ohio and US beekeeping industry. Congratulations to both Dave and Sherry.

Sherry Ferrell receiving the 2005 Divelbiss Award

*FYI . . .*as of today we have 3018 beekeepers registered this compares to a total of 3024 at end of Dec last year. ***John Grafton***

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such as honey is involved not to mention the wax comb which may absorb an ingredient.

In my position I often hear of someone trying a home concoction or an unapproved product to control something in the beehive. My initial response is that even though the product may appear to be effective what are the long term results? Is there any residue in the honey? Is the wax absorbing anything? Are the pheromones being affected within the colony? Is the queens (or drone's) reproductive ability being affected? Is this product combining with some other item in the colony to produce a third product (which may be harmful)?

While not wanting to ban the beekeeper who wants to experiment, I must encourage beekeepers to use the approved control products. These products have been tested and found to be safe for use within the beehive in a manner described on the label. Failing to use these products according to label directions or using some rogue product may actually add to the bee's problems. It may also make it more difficult to diagnose and correct a problem within a colony.

Yellowjackets and Beekeepers

James E. Tew

From now until frost, Yellowjackets will be with us. As beekeepers, we are frequently held responsible for the actions of these stinging insects at county fairs and other outdoor events. Our houses will frequently be colonized by these social insects. While these insects, to the uninitiated, may look and act like honey bees, they are certainly not.

As beekeepers, with specialized protective equipment, you will occasionally be called on to help with the pestiferous insects. Gadgets and control suggestions abound. I am clearly no expert in the area, but like you, I have harassed Yellowjacket nests every summer and fall as long as I can recall.

Insecticides are frequently not very helpful. Application at the entrance occurs too far from the nest. Dusts applied at the entrance can take several days to have any effect – if they ever have any effects. Closing the entrances can be a bad idea. Members of a confined Yellowjacket colony will frequently find their way inside the house. Various trapping devices only reduce foraging populations and will not eliminate nests. There is no perfect procedure.

For the Beekeeper-Yellowjacket Remover

If a nest simply must be eliminated, a no-nonsense method is to don your beekeeping protective gear. Smoke won't have much effect on Yellowjackets unless you use so much it smells up your house. Do whatever it takes to expose the troublesome nest, but don't destroy the nest during the day. In the early evening or after dark, after foraging Yellowjackets have returned, douse the exposed nest with an approved insecticide or soapy water. Depending on how many individual foragers are out of the nest, the nest should be left open a day or so and sprayed again as needed. After all members have been killed, remove the nest, fill the void, and repair the house or structure.

I have no proof, but I suspect that individual Yellowjackets may spend several days away from their nest. The occasional individual may be coming home several days later. Secondly, I have no scientific proof, but I wonder if Yellowjacket colonies rob each other in the manner that honey bees will rob each other. If that is the case, some of these late returning individuals may be cannibalizing the nest remnants. In most cases, there will be modest activity until frost finally kills all workers.

In general, Yellowjackets are beneficial insects. Whenever possible, just live with them.

Winter Preparations

John Grafton

As I write this I realize that within a week it will be September. With that comes thoughts of cooler weather and getting those colonies ready for winter. The hot dry weather that we have had over most of the state has caused some colonies to lose weight and in some cases they need to be fed. So a quick check list for winter preparation would include:

- Any disease or pest problem that needs attention
- Is the queen laying good
- Are there enough honey and pollen stores
- Is there sufficient wind break
- Should any colonies be combined
- Any equipment need updated
- Ventilation

Remember that good preparations now may result in splits next spring rather than buying packages.

Preparing Honey bees Hives For Severe Storms

James E. Tew

Due to my Alabama affiliations, I have family and beekeeper contacts in the recently afflicted hurricane areas. As you know from past news, the Southeastern coastline has been battered by multiple storms in recent years. Having lived through hurricanes as a young man and respecting their ferocity, I wondered how one

Tornado storm damage

prepares their beehives for such a hit. Though Ohio rarely suffers a true hurricane, our state does contend with tornadoes and other high wind and rain storms.

Bottom line – you don't really prepare hives for these storms. If a major storm, boasting winds of 100-150 mph is coming your way, bringing ten inches of horizontal rain, and mandatory evacuations are ordered, as much as we love our bees, under those conditions, life and limb assumes priority. In general, the hives are left to protect themselves. Good luck is the best protection, but difficult to predict. Most storm precautions for beehives are little more than common sense, but hives that have survived major storms had some of the following features.

Some Suggestions for Protecting Beehives from Wind and Rain Storms

1. Don't establish yards in low-lying areas near streams or rivers.
2. Don't establish yards in open, exposed areas.
3. Bee yards should be readily accessible by vehicle.
4. In preparation for the storm (or for winter) reduce hive height to approximately two deeps and possibly a single super. Obviously, the heavier, the better.
5. Natural windbreaks are helpful – probably hills, heavy buildings, or stone fencing. Large trees or forests are not always good windbreaks and may very well fall on hives.
6. In preparation for a pending storm, strap or band individual hives. Even if it blows over, it should not break apart.
7. Hive outer covers should be nailed or banded to the hive. Otherwise, heavy rocks should be placed on top.
8. Hive stands should be rock solid and low to the ground. If not, consider temporarily putting the hive directly on the ground and provide an upper entrance. Depending on the type of storm, rising water may make this a poor suggestion.
9. As soon as it is safe or practical, visit the yards and set hives back up.
10. Depending on the type of storm, hives blow away, float away or break apart. Sometimes it can't be helped.

Even if these suggestions are helpful, if a serious storm is headed your way, I suspect you will have more on your mind than preparing beehives.