

Communication



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

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APIARY INSPECTION PROGRAM UPDATE

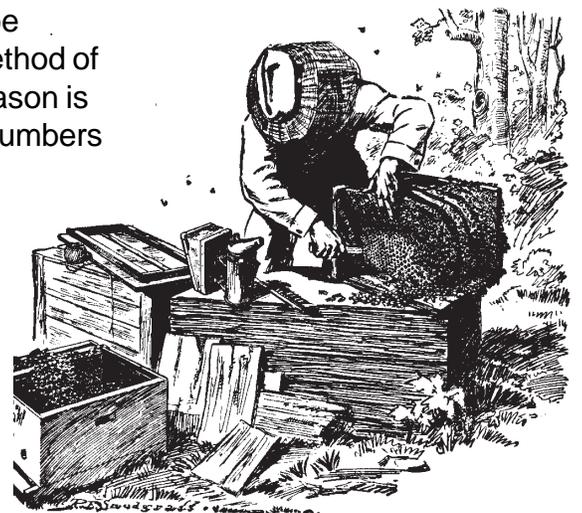
John Grafton

The ODA apiary program has seen some changes this season which we hope have resulted in a more efficient program to serve the beekeeping industry. Our office space has been consolidated and we are now within the Plant Pest Control section. Most beekeepers don't think of honey bees as a plant pest; however, this move puts apiary in line with the other entomology related programs of the division.

We have also made the transition to a new computer program to aid in registration and tracking inspection progress. This transition provided a couple of glitches; however, as the program is used, those are being worked out to make it much easier to use.

Registration is up from last year with the current number at 3,124. There does not seem to be the number of sideline or larger beekeepers coming in; however, the number of people with 5—10 colonies is taking a jump.

Inspection numbers are behind at this point; however, some of that may be appearance due to transition in method of record keeping. The end of the season is quickly approaching and the final numbers will give a clearer picture. Disease numbers are about where we would expect them to be and samples being sent to USDA, labs are confirming the diagnosis of the field inspectors.



PREPARING LIGHT COLONIES FOR WINTER

James E. Tew

In all parts of Ohio, going into winter with light colonies is risky, but sometimes it happens. This past season's spring and fall nectar flow was minimal. Splits, packages, and swarms that were hived this past spring, are probably light in stores. For beekeepers having only a few colonies, intensive feeding could have been helpful, but for those having significant numbers of colonies, feeding would have been both expensive and would have required a large amount of labor.



Figure 1. Colonies in hives properly prepared for winter. (Photo. James E. Tew)

Cold weather feeding is not a desirable procedure and fails many times, but if you intend to feed in cold months consider the following points.

1. Only use internal feeders, such as hive top feeders or division board feeders and put them as near the cluster as possible.
2. At all times, try to position the feeder so it can be filled with minimal disturbance to the cluster. If the cluster must be disturbed, manipulate feeders only before noon on warm days (50° or above with very little wind).
3. Feed either thick syrup or corn syrup.

4. Granulated sugar can be fed on the inner cover, but some colonies won't take the feed well. A fondant, or sugar paste, can be fed with a degree of success. Fondant recipes are readily available in cookbooks, but a simple recipe for an uncooked fondant patty is: **3 1/2 cups powdered sugar, 1/3 cup hot water and 1/3 cup corn syrup**. Do not use corn starch in your recipe. Knead and form into a patty and put just above the brood nest. The October issue of *Bee Culture* has an article on making feeder candy.

OTHER SEASONAL MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

James E. Tew

1. If inner covers are used, flip them so the deep side is down. This deep side provides the bees with additional cluster space.
2. Provide an upper entrance. Commonly, twigs or stones are used to raise the inner cover approximately 1/4" across the front (or back). Be certain to push the outer cover forward (or backward) in order to leave the upper inner cover opening clear. Upper entrances allow bees flight if snow or ice is covering the bottom entrance and upper entrances allow wet, warm moisture to escape the hive. If a migratory cover is used, raise the front of it 1/4".
3. Either flip the bottom board on reversible bottom boards so the 3/8" side is used as an entrance or install entrance reducers. These reducers primarily keep out mice and not cold air.

continued on page 3

4. So much as possible, raise the hive above the reach of varmints, such as skunks or raccoons.
5. If you use screen bottom boards having a metal slide insert, and the insert was removed during summer months, re-insert the metal slide.



BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATIONS

John Grafton

Beekeeping associations, clubs, or groups have always served an important function in the beekeeping world. These groups serve their area beekeepers by providing a source of information through regular meetings with speakers, by sponsoring “bee schools”, by providing a group of experienced mentors for new beekeepers, and by providing educational material to non-beekeepers.

The local groups are also able to provide information to the state association giving direction as to what is important to them. This grass root effort helps to maintain a strong beekeeping industry within the state.

It is important for beekeepers to be a member of the local, state, regional, and national associations and through these groups let their voice be heard about issues they deem important. These may range from pollination, Africanized honey bee, disease controls, to registration and inspection.

NATIONAL POLLINATOR WEEK

John Grafton

As beekeepers when we hear the term pollination we automatically think honey bees. That was not entirely the case at a meeting recently held in Washington, DC. The USDA Forest Service, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) jointly hosted a Pollinator symposium.

Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Chuck Conner opened the symposium by announcing the signing of a proclamation by Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns in recognition of pollinators and designating June 24-30, 2007 as National Pollinator Week. This action, building on a recent senate resolution about pollinators (S. Res.580), is part of a growing effort by USDA to address pollinator conservation challenges, and lays the groundwork for a national outreach campaign in 2007.

In another major development, the United States Postal Service, unveiled the intricate design for a commemorative stamp series highlighting the interconnectedness of nature and the process of pollination. The pollination stamps will be issued during National Pollinator Week in 2007 as part of NAPPC’s planned national pollinator awareness campaign.

The slogan used for the symposium was “The Future Flies On The Wings of Pollinators”, and ties plants and pollinating insects together in an easily explained way. It also indicates that honey bees, while important, are not the only pollinators on the block. Beekeepers, by allying themselves with this type of effort, may give the honey bee more influence, awareness, and public acceptance in the overall issue rather than arguing who is the best pollinator.

See the following web sites for more information, www.pollinator.org and www.napcc.org.

NEMATODES FOR SMALL HIVE BEETLE (SHB) CONTROL

James E. Tew

Though still considered a new procedure and research is on-going, using selected strains of nematodes (e.g. *Heterorhabditis*, *Steinernema*) to control the small hive beetle is receiving both research and managerial interest in the beekeeping community. A limitation is that only beetle grubs in the ground are killed, but apparently they are readily eliminated. Early research indicates that 100,000 nematodes are required per hive. While that number sounds large, a plastic bag of these organisms contains 5,000,000 nematodes (microscopic round worms) and will easily fit in your shirt pocket. These nematodes do not affect other biological entities such as tomatoes or wildlife. Water is used to disperse the nematodes.

Much is still unknown and more information will have to be developed before nematode use is recommended. The Ohio Department of Agriculture will have to review and approve any future nematode materials before they are legal for use in Ohio.

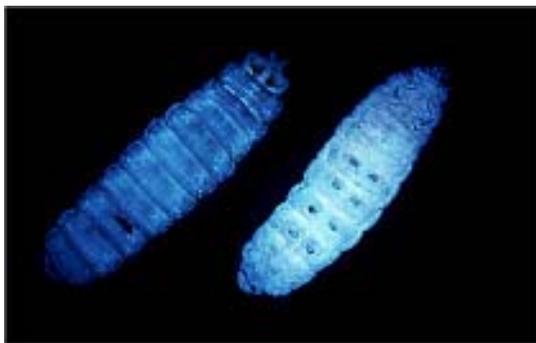


Figure 2. *Heterorhabditis bacteriophora* infected waxmoth larvae. 36 hours post-infection, these larvae glow due to the symbiotic bacteria, *P. luminescens* (http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/nematodes/photo_gallery.htm) Photo: Marshall Johnson. Univ. of Hawaii)

FOR DISCUSSION -- WOULD WE BE BETTER BEEKEEPERS IF:

James E. Tew

1. We kept a 4-frame nucleus hive for every 3-4 colonies we manage?
Essentially, the nucleus hive would be a small "Band-Aid" colony that could provide emergency queens, brood, or frames for exchange. Make a split into the nuc in early spring from overwintering colonies and let it produce its own queen. Remove brood and bees if it becomes too large. Use the nucleus colony components as necessary to repair problems in the larger colonies. In the fall, if you have not extensively used some of the nuc's components, recombine it with other colonies or make preparations to winter it.
2. We provided pollen supplement every time we fed or colonies syrup? If colonies are in need of nectar, would they not also be in need of protein?
3. We provided a dependable water supply for our colonies during warm months?

BEEKEEPING FIELD DAYS IN PLANING STAGE

James E. Tew

Planning and negotiations are underway for beekeeping field days to be held in Wooster (date not scheduled) and in Piketon, Ohio on July 26, 2007. The Ohio State University Extension, *Bee Culture* magazine, and Ohio State Beekeepers' Association, are cooperating on the project. It is anticipated that topics such as proper application of miticides and antibiotics will be covered during open-hive sessions. Another potential topic is queen types. If practical, various queen stocks will be exhibited to show differences in queen offspring. Formal meeting announcements will be made during early 2007.

BEEKEEPERS HAVE TOLD ME. . .

James E. Tew

1. A Tennessee beekeeper told me that he dribbled castor oil along the ends of tops bars of frames suspended in hives to prevent excessive propolis accumulation. Apparently, a few applications per year are enough. (*I have no personal experience with this procedure.*)
2. An Alabama beekeeper told me to attach strips of adhesive-backed foam insulation that is used to insulate windows and doors along the top edges of top feeders to prevent robber bees from getting into the syrup reservoir. Other beekeepers supported this notion but suggested that even thicker insulation strips (1" thick and about 1" wide), used to patch around window air conditioners, are more effective. Otherwise, propolis and wax will prevent a tight fit and allow robber bees to enter. (*I have no personal experience with this procedure.*)

FERRELL'S FAVORITE RECIPES

Sherry Ferrell

Yogurt Honey Dip

from Sunkist Growers

- 1 Carton (8 oz.) lowfat vanilla yogurt
- 1 Tablespoon honey

In small bowl or blender, combine yogurt and honey. Cover and chill to blend flavors. Serve with tangelos, grapes, pineapple segments, kiwi, or your favorite fruit.

You can make mini-fruit kebabs by using rounded toothpicks and sliding the fruit, 2 to 3 pieces, on the toothpick. Then pour fruit dip in a squeeze bottle or honey bear for easy application on the fruit kebabs.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Ohio State Beekeepers Association Fall Meeting -- Saturday, November 11, 2006.

Location: Ohio Depart. of Transportation, Central Office, 1980 W Broad St., Columbus, OH. Key Note Speaker is: Mr. Roy Hendrickson, he will speak about "*Being Self Sufficient*". For more information contact: Dawn Feagan @ 800-289-7668, ext 3220 or dawn@beeculture.com

American Honey Producers Association -- January 9-13, 2007 in Pheonix, Arizona.

Website: www.americanhoneyproducers.com or write American Honey Producers Assn, PO Box 158, Power, MT 59468.

American Beekeeping Federation -- January 10-13, 2007 in Austin, Texas.

Website: www.abfnet.org Contact: call 912-427-4233 or e-mail: info@abfnet.org.

OSU Extension & Tri-County Beekeeping Workshop -- Saturday, March 3, 2007 at

Fisher Auditorium & Shisler Conference in Wooster, OH. Contact: Key Note Speaker is Dr. Jamie Ellis from University of Florida in Gainesville, FL. He is a leading expert on Small Hive Beetles. Sherry Ferrell at 330-263-3684 or e-mail: ferrell.6@osu.edu.

Southwest Beekeeping School-- Saturday, March 27, 2007 at Oasis Conference Center

in Loveland, OH. Contact: Warren County Extension Office at 513-695-1311 or e-mail: meyer.213@osu.edu.

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