

THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

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What' this?

This is the first edition of a monthly newsletter for the Marin Beekeepers Association. The goal is to let everyone know what is going on with our group. The beginnings will be modest, but with the idea to expand and add items which may be of interest to beekeepers. Any suggestions, comments, offers of assistance are gladly accepted. You can contact me directly at rob@tysingerengineers.us.

Rob Tysinger

What You Missed

Our September meeting saw a full house at Draper Farms listen to beekeeper Alan Hawkins give a talk about preparing your bees for winter. Alan Hawkins has been keeping bees for 28 years. He has hives in the Tracy and Brentwood areas as well as at Green Gulch Farms here in Marin County.

Alan's approach to beekeeping is to minimize the stress that the bees experience. Some of the topics he covered included:

1. Mite control. Mites cause stress that leads to opportunistic disease. Alan does not subscribe to the "Strong Survive" method of beekeeping. He recommended controlling mites with Thymol treatments.
2. Nutrition. Nutrition is a very important factor, particularly when heading into winter. Alan recommended leaving at least 30 pounds of honey per hive, as a rule of thumb.
3. Critters. Animals can stress the bees, trying to gather honey or bees for their own food. Yellow jackets may be prevalent in the fall. Adding entrance reducers to the hives helps the bees keep pests out. A smaller opening is easier to guard.
4. Robbers. Fall is the time where robbing is most prevalent. In search of some extra stores for the winter bees may take advantage of a weaker hive and rob them of their honey. Alan warned against leaving supers or equipment out, which might attract robbers. Using an entrance reducer will help the hive guard against robbers.

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WHAT'S THE BUZZ

Our next meeting will be on Thursday October 1st at Draper Farms, 11 Sacramento Avenue, San Anselmo, starting at 7:30. Mea McNeil and Jerry Draper have recently returned from France where they attended Apimondia. Apimondia is a world beekeeping conference that is held every two years. It brings together researchers, commercial beekeepers and beekeeping enthusiast from around the world. Come and hear Mea and Jerry share what they have learned at Apimondia and of their travels in France visiting with other beekeepers.

OTHER EVENTS

PROGRESSIVE HIVE TOURS WITH ROB KELLER

There are still a few spaces left for the progressive hive tours for Southern Marin on October 10th, Northern Marin on October 17th and Middle Marin on October 18th. The cost is \$50 per person. The group will travel to three different hives and conduct inspections under the guidance of beekeeper Rob Keller. This is a great way to see what other beekeepers are doing and learn what to look for when you open your hives.

For more information contact Catherine Jasan at mcjasan@prodogy.net

MEAD MAKING WORKSHOP

There are also a few spaces left for the Mead Making Workshop with Joshua Archer. The workshop will be held at Draper Farms in San Anselmo on Monday October 5th starting at 6:30 pm. The cost is \$25 for the workshop plus \$6 per bottle of finished mead, with a limit of 3 bottles. The mead will require 6 to 8 weeks to ferment. A bottling session will be scheduled after that. The finished mead should be ready just in time for the holidays.

For more information contact Catherine Jasan at mcjasan@prodogy.net

Alan handed out a checklist for preparing bee colonies for winter. You can obtain a copy by visiting his website and clicking on the workshop handouts link.

Alan teaches several workshops a year on different aspects of beekeeping. Check out his website at awhawkinsapiaries.com