

THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

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August 2011

What You Missed

At our June meeting our guest speaker was Jeremy Rose. Jeremy is the owner of California Bee Company near San Luis Obispo. He is also the author of a book on beekeeping, "Beekeeping in Costal California.

He started beekeeping as a hobby with twelve packages of bees. As he states, "It was a hobby that got out of hand". Jeremy is now a commercial beekeeper with several hundred hives working pollination contracts around California and producing honey. Jeremy states that most commercial beekeepers rely on chemicals to help combat bees pests and diseases. In the last several years Jeremy has been raising his own queens from mite-resistant stock in an effort to eliminate the use of chemical treatments in his hives. His criteria for breeding selection are hives with low mite counts that are also good honey producers.

Honey Production Tips from Jeremy:

- Keep bees free of mites and diseases
- Have hives full of bees at the beginning of nectar

see Missed on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | What you Missed |
| 1 | What's the Buzz |
| 2 | Dues Reminder |
| 3 | Fair News |
| 4 | Celebration of the Bees |
| 4 | Marin Pollen Project Update |
| 5 | Upcoming Workshops |
| 5 | Just the Facts |

What's the Buzz

There is no regular meeting of the Marin County Beekeepers in August. Instead, please plan to join us on August 6th at Draper Farms for the annual potluck dinner. The event starts at 6 pm. RSVP to Mea at mea@onthefarm.com

Location:
Draper Farms
11 Sacramento Avenue
San Anselmo, CA

Cups, plates, napkins, silverware provided. Please bring your dish in a reusable container. This is a "no waste green event".

Bring your favorite dish and/or beverage

Upcoming Meetings:

September 1, 2011

Mike Andree
Mike is an Apiarist working for Bee Informed project testing beehives for Nosema Ceranae, hygienic behavior, and Varroa mites as part of the largest data bank ever assembled.
Mike's talk will be "How Bees Stay Healthy - Bee Biology"

October 6, 2011

John Jacobs, proprietor of Old Sol Enterprises.
John's topic has yet to be determined.

November 3, 2011

Dewy Caron, Emeritus Professor, Univ Delaware
Affiliate Scientist - Horticulture Dept, Oregon State Univ., Corvallis

The title of Professor Caron's talk will be "BACK to the

see Buzz on page 2

Future"... How have your bees been preparing for over-wintering and what might help them survive and prosper this next season? What could/can we as bee stewards do to better insure survival and colony "success" (however we might care to measure it) this season?

December 1, 2011

Steve Sheppard, Entomology Department Chair
Professor, Graduate Faculty
Apiculturist, Thurber Memorial Chair
Washington State University
Professor Sheppard's topic has yet to be determined.

January 5, 2012

Thomas D Seeley, PhD, Biologist, Cornell University

Dr Seeley's talk will focus on his book "Honey Bee Democracy".

February 2, 2012

Diana Sammataro, Research Entomologist
USDA-ARS Carl Hayden Honey Bee Research Center.

Diana's topic has yet to be determined.

March 1, 2012

Eric C. Mussen, Ph.D., Extension Apiculturist
University of California Davis

Dr. Mussen will speak on the current state of beekeeping.

Missed continued from page 1

flow

- Hives with younger queens make more honey
- Provide supers liberally
- Don't use a queen excluder if supers only have frames or foundation
- In California, you can harvest before the frames are all completely capped over

Jeremy also spoke about dividing hives:

- Hives can be divided from March to July
- The parent hive should have 18+ frames with

bees.

- Use new caged queens or queen cells in your divides

For quality splits you should have two frames with honey and pollen and at least 3 frames of brood at all stages with the emphasis on good frames of emerging brood and, of course, lots of bees. If you are making walk away splits, where the bees will produce their own queen, then you should plan on feeding them sugar syrup as long as they will accept it.

Jeremy also spoke about American Foul Brood, which is an issue that he is currently dealing with in his apiaries. AFB larvae look as if they have been melted down. Inspect every brood frame of the hive before putting on supers and before harvesting any honey. Despite the name, he says that it doesn't always produce an odor. He says that good pictures can be found on line.

Jeremy's book is full of useful information about local beekeeping practices. It is one of the few books written for beekeeping in our area and has a section devoted to hive management throughout the year. You can check out his book from the club library at any Marin Beekeepers meeting or to order your own copy visit Jeremy's website at <http://www.californiabeecompany.com/>

Dues are Due

A reminder that annual dues for 2012 are now due. Dues are still just \$20 per year. You can pay in person to David Peterson at the monthly meeting or mail you check made payable to Marin Beekeepers to:

Marin Beekeepers
c/o Mary Nordquist
2072 Hatch Road
Novato, CA 94947

New members and members with new contact info please make sure to include your address, phone number and e-mail.

Membership includes free admission to all meetings, access to the Club's honey extracting equipment, and subscription to the Club's "MarinBuzz" listserv, which serves as an online discussion forum and a way to notify Club members of local bee swarm information.

Fair Results



Here are the results from the 2011 Marin County Fair:

Honey

Eucalyptus Blend

- 1st Linda Albion, Woodacre
- 2nd Bonnie Bollengier /Gary Morse, San Rafael
- 3rd Peter Bauer, San Rafael

Floral

- 1st Richard Hyde, Belvedere
- 2nd Peter Bauer, San Rafael
- 3rd Richard Hyde, Belvedere

Wild Flower

- 1st Marina M Wright, Sausalito
- 1st Jeff A Kent, San Rafael
- 2nd Bill Papendick, San Rafael
- 3rd Bonnie Bollengier /Gary Morse, San Rafael

Crystallized

- 1st Bill Papendick, San Rafael
- 2nd Helen E Douglas, San Rafael
- 3rd Lora Templeton, Novato

Chunk

- 1st Daniel Stralka, Mill Valley
- 2nd Marina M Wright, Sausalito

Comb

- 1st Daniel Stralka, Mill Valley
- 2nd Bonnie Bollengier /Gary Morse, San Rafael
- 3rd Marina M Wright, Sausalito

Hive Products

Natural Beeswax

- 1st Bonnie Bollengier /Gary Morse, San Rafael
- 2nd Daniel Stralka, Mill Valley
- 3rd Rebecca Ets-Hokin, Tiburon

Molded Beeswax

- 1st Bonnie Bollengier /Gary Morse, San Rafael
- 2nd Daniel Stralka, Mill Valley
- 3rd Bill Papendick, San Rafael

Hand Dipped Beeswax Candles

- 1st Anna Garvey, Corte Madera
- 2nd Daniel Stralka, Mill Valley

Full Frame

- 1st Lora Templeton, Novato
- 2nd Bonnie Bollengier /Gary Morse, San Rafael
- 3rd Daniel Stralka, Mill Valley

Special Awards

Best of Show – Honey

Jeff A Kent, San Rafael

Salvisberg Award

Bonnie Bollengier /Gary Morse, San Rafael



Thanks to everyone who entered the competition and a special thanks to all the Beeks that manned the booth.

Celebration of the Bees

The second annual Celebration of the Bees proved to be another big success. The Savory Thymes hosted and Mea and Jerry Draper organized event resulted in a fun, family-friendly afternoon. Ticket sales, donations, and honey sales raised approximately \$2600 for the 2012 Marin Pollen Project and the Survivor Stock Project.

Descending into the garden, visitors could easily identify the many flowering bee plants scattered along the path - as each was clearly marked with a number that corresponded to a take-home handout with plant names (the common name as well as the Latin name). Hillside gardeners were readily available to answer questions. Further along was a mead tasting station, where 3 types of mead were presented by Heidrun Meadery. A fabulous spread of food and wine lined the path and ultimately led visitors to a large patio/seating area. Charlie Kennard demonstrated how to weave a skep hive. Mea McNeil Draper, Master Beekeeper, and Robbin Thorp, Professor Emeritus from UC Davis, spoke about bees and answered questions from the crowd. Desserts followed, with the accompaniment of music.

Back up in the house, guests sampled local honey as well as Gibson Golden varietal honeys. Several types of honey sampled were available for sale. An information station included an observation hive and general information on bees, Marin Beekeepers, and the 2012 Marin Pollen Project.

To quote Keith Wedmore "It was the party of the year."

Marin Pollen Project

Here's the latest:

HIVE LOCATIONS

24 beekeepers with over 40 apiary locations have expressed an interest in participating. Thank you! Hives in the central Marin area are well represented, while Novato, Nicasio, Ignacio, Hamilton Field and Sausalito are lacking. We are actively seeking beekeepers in underrepresented areas to balance out the study. Hives in the overly represented areas will ultimately be selected based on both map location as

well as our ability to fundraise for the testing of particular hives. We will start to finalize locations to use (pending winter survival) in the fall.

FUNDRAISING

Our fundraising goal is \$10,000.

The recent Celebration of the Bees event raised about \$2600. (A big thank you to Jerry and Mea for your amazing work in organizing it and to Savory Thymes for hosting!)

Additionally, another \$3400 has been pledged in hive sponsorships and general donations. We anticipate these funds to be donated once the non-profit tax status of Super Organism (www.superorg.org) has been finalized.

A booth at the Fairfax Ecofest recently resulted in a list of potential donors to the project with whom we will now follow up.

WHAT NOW?

Upcoming Events:

Two workshops will be held to benefit the pollen project. For more information see the Workshops section of the newsletter.

Sponsorships Needed: Know of a group, company or individual who might be interested in a full (\$300) or partial hive sponsorship? Seven full sponsorships already have been pledged by organizations and individuals. Spread the word and let's see if we can get seven more!

Bee t-shirts anyone? One fundraising idea is to create a t-shirt, sales of which would benefit the pollen project. Anybody out there interested in spear-heading this effort?

Considering that organization for the project began only 2 months ago, we seem well on our way to making it happen. Thank you for your support!

For more information contact Bonnie Bollengier at info@marinpollen.org

Workshops

BEEKEEPING FOR BEGINNERS

Date: Saturday, July 23, 2011
Time: 9:30am-12:30pm
Location: Marin Art & Garden Center
Cost: \$25 per person, all proceeds to benefit Sustainable Fairfax and the Marin Pollen Project
Instructors: Bonnie Bollengier and Mea McNeil Draper
Registration: communityed@sustainablefairfax.org.

Now's the time to get some guidance from experienced beekeepers. This workshop is designed for those with little to no knowledge or experience with honeybees. We'll offer the participant a basic understanding of the honeybee hive. Topics will include:

- Keeping bees using natural methods
- Basic bee biology & hive structure
- Pests and diseases of the bees
- Cost and time required to get started in beekeeping

For further information visit
www.sustainablefairfax.org

Bonnie Bollengier is a successful beekeeper who teaches at the Strybring Arboretum in San Francisco. Mea McNeil is a Master Beekeeper who writes regularly for The American Bee Journal. They are part of the Marin survivor stock project and the Marin Pollen Project.

AN INTRODUCTION TO HONEY BEES AND THE LIFE OF A COLONY

Taught by local beekeeper, Bonnie Bollengier

Date: Saturday, August 20, 2011
Time: 9:30am - 12:00pm
Location: 400 Tamal Vista Dr. #402, Corte Madera (Tamal Plaza Bldgs)
Cost: \$25 per person, all proceeds to benefit the Marin Pollen Project
Instructor: Bonnie Bollengier
Registration: Visit our website
www.marincountybeekeepers.org and go to the events page.

Class open to all who have an interest in learning more about bees. A great class for new or aspiring beekeepers. Learn the basics about the European Honey Bee (*Apis mellifera*). Learn about the duties of the queen,

workers and drones which populate a colony. With a general understanding of the life of bees, we'll discuss how the cycles of the colony interrelate with cycles of plants and the seasons and what practical steps can be taken in the home and garden to support bee populations.

Local honey will be available for tasting and for sale.

More information on the 2012 Marin Pollen Study can be found at:
www.marinpollen.org.

Just the Facts

Honey won't cure allergies? It's enough to drive you to drink; well, never mind, it will cure your hangover.

The science news on honey is that no, it does not relieve pollen allergies, according to a study at the University of Connecticut. In addition, Dr. Stanley Fineman, president of the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, said "Seasonal allergies are usually triggered by windborne pollens, not by pollens spread by insects."

In Dan Stralka's copy of Chemical and Engineering News, The Royal Society of Chemistry suggests honey and toast for a hangover. Symptoms of nausea and headache are the result of the body turning alcohol into the toxic chemical acetaldehyde, which the body breaks down -- leaving it malnourished. Honey on toast is suggested to replenish the body with essential fructose, potassium, and sodium. (It's even more enjoyable if you aren't in a fog.)

Mea McNeil