

THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

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June 2014

What's the Buzz

Our next meeting will be on Thursday June 5, 2014 at the American Legion Log Cabin, 20 Veterans Place, San Anselmo, CA. starting at 7:30 pm. The meeting will feature a talk by Dr. [Deborah Delaney](#), Assistant Professor at the University of Delaware. Dr. Delaney's research includes the genetic characterization of unmanaged bee colonies, savethehives.com feral bee project, and evolutionary biology of honey bees.

Upcoming Meetings:

July 2 to 6, 2014

The Marin County Fair
Watch the Beek News and the Buzz for more information about how you can participate.

THERE IS NO REGULAR CLUB MEETING IN JULY.

August 9, 2014, starting at 6 pm.

There is no regular meeting of the Marin County Beekeepers in August. Instead, please plan to join us on August 9th at the home of Neil and Mary Nordquist, 2072 Hatch Road, Novato, CA for the annual potluck dinner. Sign up will be online again this year. Go to: <http://marinbees.org/wp> and click on Club Resources for more information on the event and to sign up to bring a dish. Everyone should bring their own plates, utensils and drinking glasses. This is a **GREEN "ZERO WASTE" EVENT**. All items should be brought in a reusable or recyclable/compostable container. Please plan on taking your recyclables / compostables / garbage with when you *leave the event*.

Directions to Neil and Mary Nordquist, 2072 Hatch Road, Novato:

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What You Missed

Our last meeting featured a talk by Dr. Rémy Vandame. Dr. Vandame received his PhD in ecology from the University of Lyon, France.

Rémy Vandame has lived in Mexico for many years and is a bee researcher at Mexico's El Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR). He is a visiting scientist at UC Berkeley this year.

Dr. Vandame began his presentation talking about native bees in Mexico. Worldwide, there are over 2500 species of bees. Mexico has about 2200 species. There are two main species of native bees that have been managed in Mexico for many years. Mayan writings from centuries ago include mention of bees. *Apis mellifera* was introduced by the Spanish in the 16th century.

Mexico is sixth worldwide in honey production. Most Mexican honey is exported to Germany. There are

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approximately 40,000 beekeepers in Mexico, mostly in the south. Beekeeping has developed as a way to earn money without having to own land.

Recently, there has been an effort to develop regional honeys in Mexico. The purpose of this is to raise the price of the exported honey. An example is the development of "coffee garden honey". Coffee is a shrub that requires shade from other trees. Placing bees among the coffee tends to increase coffee yields by about 10%. Along with the coffee plant, the bees collect nectar from the shade trees that are grown to protect the coffee plants from the direct sun. Developing the honey market encourages biodiversity in Mexico as well as providing income to many people.

Dr. Vandame then spoke about genetically modified (GM) crops. GM crops have been debated in Mexico for the last ten years. There have been no studies of the effects of long term ingestion of GM crops. He pointed out that 70% of the genetic diversity of corn is found in Mexico. Corn has always been an important part of the Mexican diet. Planting of GM corn would reduce the genetic diversity over the years. Growing of GM corn has only shown a modest increase in yield over non-GM corn.

Recently, GM soybeans were introduced in Mexico with Monsanto supplying the GM soybean seed. This has become an issue for beekeepers since the GM soybeans are grown in the south where most of the bees are kept. The European Union has restricted the consumption of GM foods by humans. Since Mexico exports most of its honey to Europe the introduction of GM crops into Mexico has a huge potential impact. Honey traders in Europe will not buy honey that contains pollen from GM crops.

Monsanto claimed that honey bees don't visit soybeans. This has proven to be false. When honey bees are introduced into soybean fields the soybean yield increases by as much as 50%.

Dr. Vandame then did studies locating apiaries at different distances from GM soybean crops. Out of 40 pollen samples almost all had soybean pollen of some kind. Approximately 60% of the samples that had soybean pollen contained GM soybean pollen. Apiaries up to 150 kilometers from the GM soybean fields still contained some GM soybean pollen.

Beekeepers are concerned that they will lose their market for honey and with it their livelihood. They have been fighting back and have managed to get restrictions placed on GM soybeans limiting them to certain areas.

Take the San Marin Drive/ Atherton Avenue exit from US101. Turn west onto San Marin Drive.

Continue on San Marin Drive to Simmons Lane, the first stop sign. Turn left onto Simmons Lane. Follow until you come to a stop light at a T-junction with Novato Boulevard. Turn right onto Novato Boulevard and then make a left turn at the next light onto Wilson Avenue. Follow Wilson for approximately 1 1/4 miles.

There will be stop signs at Center and Vineyard Roads on the way. Hatch Rd will be a right turn shortly after Wilson narrows.

The Nordquists are 1/4 mile down Hatch Road on the right. 2072 is on the mailbox just before the gate. Please park on the street and walk in through the gate.

Fair News

The fair is fast approaching. This year the fair runs from July 2nd to the 6th. Now is the time to assemble your entries. The categories and criteria can be found on line at http://www.marinfair.org/2014/competitive-exhibits/~media/Files/Fair/2014/Exhibits/2014_HONEY.pdf

Entries can be dropped off at the rear of the fair building across from the Civic Center Friday June 6th from 3pm to 7pm and Saturday, June 8th from 10am to 5pm.

Please bring them in even if you did not pre-register, that can be taken care of at that time. Judging will be on Sunday.

Final plans are being made for the Fair exhibit. There are still spaces available at the booth. Please check your calendars and sign up. Remember that you get a pass to the fair and enjoy the rest of the fair while not at the booth: music, exhibits, animals, artwork and fireworks. The sign-up sheet will be passed at the June club meeting and is available on the Buzz, or email Dan Stralka at stralka.daniel@epa.gov with the time and date you are interested in signing up for along with your contact phone number.

Hive Tips

- **Prevent your bees from swarming: make sure there is adequate space in the brood chamber.**
 - Strong hives are building quickly. If your bees are starting to get crowded, add more space. Most importantly – be sure there is contiguous space in the brood chamber. If you add additional space, but there is only honey between it and brood area, you will not prevent brood area congestion – which is the cause of swarming.
 - Adding a new hive body above the brood with new frames? Help entice bees to move up by adding a frame with built out comb in the new box. Are you a new beekeeper who doesn't have any frames with built out comb? Help entice the bees to move up by pulling a frame with young brood (young larvae & eggs) up into the new hive body from area below. Nurse bees will stay with these bees and their presence above will entice building in the new hive body. If you do this:
 1. Be sure frame you pull up is kept directly above other brood frame(s) for easy access by nurse bees.
 2. Replace frame you pulled in lower box. At this time of year (warmer temps so bees can break cluster to access food in different parts of the hive), you can place the replaced frame in the brood cluster area, OR between outermost brood frame & food frame, OR outside last frame in the box.

Don't be surprised if you start to see the nectar flow starting to slow down in some areas. In the next newsletter, look for tips on determining whether or not your bees may need supplemental feeding during the summer.

San Rafael Bee Ordinance

Bee ordinance proposal to be discussed at San Rafael City Council meeting on Monday, June 2nd, 7:00pm, City Council Chambers, 1400 5th Ave, San Rafael.

Beekeepers were not made aware of this proposed change until Tuesday, May 27th and had no input on the ordinance. We want to urge the council to table the proposal until they have had a chance to get further information and get beekeeper input. A petition

has been circulating that supports NOT having an ordinance and to all beekeeping in San Rafael to fall under existing nuisance laws (like in San Francisco, Fairfax, Davis, etc.)

All are encouraged to attend to show support. **We should all be asking the council to approve that beekeeping will be covered under existing laws of nuisance.**

The petition states:

"I support San Rafael adopting the unincorporated Marin County standard that allows people have bees and use best management practices to avoid creating a nuisance without a permit of any kind or associated permit fee. Hence, no official ordinance or performance standards.

In consideration that there have never been complaints about bees in San Rafael (feral or managed colonies) this is a common sense approach that would protect the public without creating unnecessary and difficult to enforce legislation."



Visit to the UC Davis Laidlaw Bee Research Facility

The City of Davis does not have regulations regarding beekeeping, but controls problem bees under the nuisance ordinance.

Beekeeping Classes

Master Classes Workshops

\$20 fee per class, \$15 current local bee organization members, \$10 limited income. 6:30-9:00PM.

These Master Class Workshops:

- Provide the foundation to move your beekeeping practices comprehensively to the next level;
- Convey critical awareness about the obvious clues and timing for each seasonal next step;
- Share insight into the rhythmic patterns unique to San Francisco and the Bay Area.
- Will be especially meaningful to those who have had hives for several years but need to know what's next, and will provide a full spectrum of valuable insight for new and recent beekeepers. These synergistic classes weave together core knowledge of hive management with a bird's eye view of the entire year, and how timing is critical at each phase for overall hive success and prosperity.

August - (date/location to be announced)

MAINTAINING HIVE HEALTH THROUGH THE ANNUAL CYCLE, PLUS FOUNDATIONAL WORK FOR NEXT SPRING'S SUCCESS

- Fall nectar flow patterns, seasonal population decline, protein feed health essentials, preparation for winter & hive shutdown, working hives through winter.

For further information - 415-722-7640,
robert@citybees.com, or
<http://citybees.com/classes.htm>

Upcoming workshops with Bonnie & Gary Morse:

Summer and Fall Hive Management class series

(9 hours, \$99)

Classroom sessions: Tues. July 8th – Tues. July 22nd
(3 sessions), 6:30pm – 8:30pm

San Rafael Community Center, 618 B St., San Rafael
Field Day: Sat., July 26th, 9:00am – 12:00pm (location
TBD, tentatively in San Geronimo)

Register through the [San Rafael Community Center](#),
course barcode 21743

Fall Hive Management and Honey Harvesting (4 hours, \$39)

Saturday, July 19th, 10am – 2pm

Fairfax Women's Club, 46 Park Rd, Fairfax

Additional information and registration will be available in June through [Sustainable Fairfax](#)

Workshops

Dr. Deborah Delaney, who is our June speaker, will also be leading two workshops on Saturday, June 7th (each workshop is \$40 per person and limited to 20 people each) that you can register for on the Marin Beekeepers Association website:

<http://marinbees.org/wp/workshops-2/>

Pest & Disease ID and Treatment Options

Saturday, June 7th, 9:00am - 12:00pm

Identification of some of the diseases commonly seen in the area including mite vectored diseases (Deformed Wing Virus, "snotty" brood, etc.) and chalkbrood. Using a microscope, learn to identify Nosema and tracheal mites.

Handling Bees

Saturday, June 7th, 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Learn how to handle and mark your queens (starting with practicing on drones) and attending (adding nurse bees) queens in queen cages for transport.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn, in a small group setting, from a bee expert!

From the Librarian's Desk

Thanks to everyone who has been enjoying the library. We're about to take our summer hiatus. If you have borrowed an item for more than a month, Thursday's meeting would be a great time to bring it back. Especially needed are the children's books so that they can be available for visitors at the Marin County Fair. If you're not able to attend the June meeting, please email me at marinamay@earthlink.net to make return arrangements. Items borrowed at this months' meeting do not need to be returned until September.

Thanks much!
Marina