

THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

Volume 7, Issue 10

November 2015

What's the Buzz?

Our next meeting will be on Thursday November 5, 2015 at the American Legion Log Cabin, 20 Veterans Place, San Anselmo, CA. starting at 7:30 pm. The meeting will feature a talk by Kim Flottum, Kim Flottum is the current editor of Bee Culture Magazine. He studied with an extension entomologist at the University of Wisconsin and subsequently worked at the USDA bee research lab in Madison where he researched crop pollination and the interactions of pesticides and honey bees. Before taking the helm of the magazine, he farmed apples and row crops.

He has worked with a number of beekeeping organizations, having served for over a dozen years as president or an officer in: his local club in Media, Ohio; The Ohio State Beekeepers; the Eastern Apicultural Society Board.

Flotum has written books on the science, craft, business and philosophy of keeping bees: *Backyard Beekeeper*, *Honey Handbook*, *Better Beekeeping*, *The Honey Connoisseur*. He is the editor of the reference books *The ABC & XYZ of Beekeeping* and *Honey Bee Pests, Predators and Diseases*.

He will offer practical advice on keeping bees and tell tales from the road as he assesses the state of the bee across the country.

Upcoming Meetings:

December 3, 2015

Elina Nino, PhD, UC Davis Extension Apiarist. Dr. Nino is working on issues of bee breeding and starting a Master Beekeeping Program.

January 7, 2016

Neal Williams, PhD, UC Davis entomologists. Dr. Williams is an expert on native bees and bee forage. He will speak on his model for bee habitat that will benefit native bees as well as honey bees.

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What You Missed

Our October meeting featured presentations by several of our club members of gadgets that they had built or found to make beekeeping life a little easier.



Here is a highlight of the gadgets. If you have any questions about a particular gadget, seek out the club member who presented it at our next meeting.

First up was Phillip Gerrie. Phillip showed off a honey filtering system that he built. He built a box that sits over a five gallon bucket. The box contains a heat

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lamp, which warms the honey and allows it to pass through the filter more easily. A Raytech heat sensor allows him to monitor the temperature so that the honey doesn't get too warm. Phillip cautioned to not leave the set-up unattended.

Next Richard Hyde showed off a heating blanket that wraps around a 5 gallon bucket. The heating blanket is actually sold as a plate warmer. It heats the honey up to about 105 degrees F.

Next up was Gary Morse. Gary showed off a rack that he had built that will hold a 5 gallon bucket of honey. The bucket is held off of the table so that the jars you are filling fit underneath. The rack also tilts allowing you to get that last bit of honey out of the bucket. He also showed how he uses a hair dryer to warm honey that won't go through the filter. He pointed out that food grade buckets transfer heat faster than regular plastic buckets. Food grade buckets can be found at local beer and wine making supply stores.

Next Volker Ackerman showed how he uses nylon grain bags as inner covers in his hives. He also showed a spacer that he built to allow room for feeding. The spacer is about $\frac{3}{4}$ " tall and fits on top of a hive body. Place the spacer on top of the hive then place a piece of wax paper on top of the frames and pour the drivert sugar onto the wax paper.

Bonnie Morse showed off several gadgets. She uses jute bags on top of hives to wick away moisture. She also showed how you can use a frame with open comb as an emergency feeder. Pour the sugar syrup onto the comb, flip it over gently and fill the other side. You can then place the comb full of sugar syrup directly into the hive. To clean up cappings after extracting honey, she places the cappings into a top feeder. The bees will clean out the honey but if you leave the cappings too long they will build comb over it.

Next Jennifer Berry showed off some bee art that she has been creating from comb with the help of her bees. Backlighting the comb brings out some interesting effects.

Bonnie then showed off a fake hornets' nest that member Linda Albion uses to control yellow jackets. You crumple up a lunch sized brown paper bag, tie the end closed, and then hang it up. Yellow jackets will stay away from the "hornets' nest". Do you have trouble with yellow jackets when dining outdoors? Try using some balsamic vinegar to keep the yellow jackets away.

Next up was Keith Wedmore. Keith showed off a feather that he uses to brush bees off of comb when he is collecting frames to extract honey. The feather

appears to be easier on the bees than the commercially available bee brush. He also showed off a French oyster knife, which is great for prying things apart.

Rob Tysinger ended the evening by showing a vented inner cover that he uses to provide air flow through the hive. It consists of a piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ " plywood that fits over the inner cover. A 3" x 4" x $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep groove is routed into one side and the groove is covered with #8 hardware cloth. He showed a feeder setup that is made of a piece of scrap plywood that sits on the inner cover. A hole big enough to fit a wide mouth mason jar is cut in the plywood as well as a series of smaller holes that are screened off to allow for ventilation. Any size mason jar can be used to hold the sugar syrup. He places an empty hive body over the whole assembly to shield it from the elements.

February 4, 2016

Dave Tarpy, PhD, Department of Entomology, North Carolina State University. He is a popular professor at NCSU and a respected researcher.

March 3, 2016

Greg Hunt, PhD, Professor of Entomology, Purdue University. Dr. Hunt studies the grooming traits of bees. He also works with a multi-state consortium of survivor stock breed to breed the grooming trait into honey bees. He will be discussing mite-biting bees.

April 7, 2016

Dewey Caron, PhD, professor emeritus, Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology, University of Delaware. He is the author of "Honey Bee Biology and Beekeeping". He now spend time living in both Oregon and Bolivia. He will share his hands-on expertise on the Africanized honey bee.

May 5, 2016

Yves Le Cont, Research Director at the Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique. After French apiaries were devastated by varroa mites in 1982, Le Conte investigated the few surviving apiaries and was able to identify traits in those bees that allowed them to rid their colonies of the mites.

June 2, 2016

Bonnie Morse, co-owner Bonnie Bee & Company. She will be discussing results from the broodless study.

July 2016

County Fair

Beekeeping Classes

Upcoming Beginner and Intermediate Classes

Save the dates! Registration will be open on December 1st through the San Rafael Community Center.

Beginner Series: *classroom sessions will include basic bee information, seasonal cycles of a colony, equipment options, where to place your hive, how to get bees and tips on working with your equipment. When the weather warms up, there will be a field session so you can observe and practice working with your tools and bees.*

Class room sessions: Wed., Jan. 13th – Wed. Jan. 27th, 6:30pm - 8:30pm (3 classes, course code 24633, drop in fee = \$30/class)

[San Rafael Community Center](#), 618 B St., San Rafael

Field Day: Sat., Mar. 12th, 9:30am – 12:30pm

Intermediate Series: *You've got your colony through winter (or not) - now what? Class sessions will include how to clean up your equipment, expanding hive size for spring, swarm prevention- and if that fails, swarm capture, setting up bait hives for swarms, identification of common pest and diseases and management options for them. Topics will also include dealing with special situations: aggressive hives, queen failures, and laying workers. Field day will include information on how to split a colony, pest and disease ID, and swarm prevention.*

Classroom sessions: Wed., Feb 10th – Wed. Feb 24th, 6:30pm - 8:30pm, 3 classes, course code 24632, drop in fee = \$30/class

[San Rafael Community Center](#), 618 B St., San Rafael

Field Day: Sat., Mar. 14th, 1:30pm – 4:30pm

Pollinator Plant Sale

The 2nd annual pollinator plant sale at Marin ACE hardware raised \$250 for Audacious conference while getting more drought tolerant, bee friendly plants in gardens around the county. Thank you to everyone who supported it.



Speaking of audacious...you can still get your t-shirt...or buy some for holiday gifts. [Current campaign](#) is open until November 15th.

Already got a t-shirt? Wear it to the next meeting. We'll be taking a photo of the "Enthusiastic Beekeepers" supporting conference organization. Photo will be taken outside the Log Cabin at 7:20pm next Thurs. (11/5) before the meeting.

From the Librarian's Desk

The Silent & Live Auction at last month's meeting was good fun and raised \$718 for the Bee Audacious conference. A big round of thanks to our generous donors: Heidrun Meadery, Marin Ace Hardware, Steve Lamb, Bonnie Bee & Co., Point Reyes Farmstead Cheese Co., Richard & Karen Hyde, Diane Greenberg, Charlie Kennard, Dan Stralka & Rob Tysinger. Many thanks as well to the bidders. Whether you were successful or not, you demonstrated once again the generosity of the Marin beekeeping community!

Hive Tips

By Bonnie Morse, [Bonnie Bee & Company](#)

They're here. Small hive beetles (SHB) appear to be here to stay.

During the 2014 bee season, we saw hive beetles were seen in a couple places around the county. This year they have been found in neighborhoods around Novato, Marinwood / Lucas Valley / Civic Center area of San Rafael, and in San Anselmo.

What does it mean? We're not really sure what the implications will be for populated colonies, but in the meantime, you're going to need to keep a closer eye out for dead out colonies (and get that honey pulled or you might find a slime out), get your honey extracted sooner rather than later after you pull off a colony, and think twice about storing honey frames overwinter to potentially feed back to the bees.

Be on the lookout for small black lady bug sized beetles with paddle shaped antennae running around when you open your colony. Lots of photos and information is available online, including <https://www.extension.org/pages/60425/managing-small-hive-beetles> from the University of Arkansas.



Small Hive Beetle Recently Found in Novato

If you want to be proactive about monitoring for small hive beetles, there are several traps available. A simple trap that hangs between two frames is the Beetle Blaster. It's economical, easy to install, and available through many suppliers. Chances are that your favorite bee supply company has it in stock.

Storing equipment for winter

Store your honey supers and built out combs in a manner that will not encourage wax moths, i.e. where light and airflow are abundant or in a freezer (or after freezing). If you stack outside, put spacers in between hive bodies to allow for airflow. Do not allow too much

space or mice might move in and make a nest and destroy your combs.



Comb Stored in Hive Boxes with Spacers for Airflow



Improperly Stored Comb Damaged by Wax Moths