

THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

Volume 11, Issue 8

September 2019

What You Missed

Our last meeting was the annual potluck dinner. Over twenty Beeks and friends descended on the Nordquist's home in Novato to share food and drink, stories about bee adventures and a myriad of different topics. It's a great way to get to know your fellow club members on a more personal level. Returning to our potluck again this year was home-made ice cream produced using the club's liquid nitrogen container.

A big thank you to Neil and Mary Nordquist for opening up their home to the Club once again for this great event.



Making Ice Cream

What's the Buzz?

Our next meeting will be on Thursday September 5, 2019 at the American Legion Log Cabin, 20 Veterans Place, San Anselmo, CA. starting at 7:30 pm. The meeting will feature a talk by Rosalyn Johnson, yardbio.org, Yardbio, short for backyard biodiversity, is a biodiverse garden consulting company that is managed by an adventurous naturalist and wildlife ecologist, Ros Johnson, PhD, whose education is in native bee ecology, and who has experience with native plants from the prairie wilds of the Midwest to swampy Florida, and the San Francisco Bay Area. Yardbio's vision is to add to the growing patchwork of native garden spaces in the Bay Area to help support local pollinators and wildlife one backyard at a time.

Ros will be speaking about habitat for bees and wildlife. You'll hopefully leave with some new ideas for your garden. Perfect timing as fall is a great time for planting since your new plants can take advantage of fall & spring root growth, as well as winter rains, before our next dry summer sets in.

Upcoming Meetings:

October 3, 2019

[Jon Zawislak](#), Apiculture Instructor, University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service, "Small Hive Beetles"

See What's the Buzz continued on Page 2

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November 7, 2019

A Panel of local beekeepers, "Products from the hive: demos and sales"

December 5, 2019

Megan Denver and Jorik Phillips, [Hudson Valley Bee Supply](#), [Bees for Development](#), "The Resource Hive" and auction to benefit Bees for Development

January , 2020

[Toni Burnham](#), DC Beekeepers Assn, Regular Bee Culture contributor, "Teaching Bees to Kids"

Februaury 6, 2020

A Panel of local beekeepers, "Beekeeping in Other Countries"

March 5, 2020

[Andony Melathopolous](#), Asst Professor, Pollinator Health Extension, [Department of Horticulture](#), Oregon State University, Topic TBD

April 2, 2020

[Meghan Milbraith](#), Michigan State University Extension, [Northern Bee Network](#), "Why Bees are the Coolest"

May 7, 2020

[Anne Leonard](#), Associate Professor, University of Reno, "How Flower Rewards Shape Interactions between Bees and Plants"

June 4, 2020

[Wyatt Mangum](#), American Bee Journal columnist, Author *Top-Bar Beekeeping: Wisdom and Pleasure Combined* and *Bee Child*, "History of Bees and Hives in America"

July 2020

Marin County Fair

Fair Results

Here are the final results for the 2019 Marin County Fair Honey Competition.

Honey

Eucalyptus Blend

1st Marina Wright
2nd Linda Albion

Wild Flower

1st Bonnie & Gary Morse
2nd Marina Wright
3rd Bonnie & Gary Morse
4th Daniel Stralka
5th Jeff Kent

Crystallized

1st Dan Stralka
2nd Jeff Kent
3rd Rob Tysinger
4th Bonnie & Gary Morse
5th Jeff Kent

Chunk

1st Daniel Stralka

Comb

1st Daniel Stralka

Hive Products

Natural Beeswax

1st Rob Tysinger
2nd Bill Papendick
3rd Bonnie & Gary Morse
4th Daniel Stralka
5th Marina Wright

Molded Beeswax

1st Bonnie & Gary Morse
2nd Ashley Hyde
3rd Ashley Hyde
4th Richard Hyde
5th Beth Renneisen

See Fair Results continued on Page 3

Hand Dipped Beeswax Candles

1st Daniel Stralka
Full Frame

1st Richard Hyde
2nd Daniel Stralka
3rd Bill Papendick
4th Bonnie & Gary Morse
5th Kyle Chartrand

Special Awards

Best of Show – Crystallized Honey “Marin Beekeepers Award”
Daniel Stralka, Mill Valley, CA

Best of Show – Beeswax
Bonnie & Gary Morse

Best of Show – Full Frame
Richard Hyde

Salvisberg Award
Bonnie & Gary Morse

Party at Peterson's

An invitation from Dave Peterson:

The summer nectar flow is coming to an end and hopefully our girls have put away enough honey to get them through our mild winter with some left to share with us. Soon it will be time to pull those supers and see what you have to extract. I plan to do my extraction the week of September 16th.

Those who have used our extractors know it requires some effort to pick up, use, clean up and return. With this in mind, I plan to again leave my "Honey House" (garage) set up through the weekend of September 21st & 22nd, if necessary, for **Club Members with less than 36 frames** to extract. That way it's only one set up and one clean up and I do it all.

If you are interested doing your extraction at my house, drop me an e-mail and we can schedule a workable time. Include **in your e-mail how many frames you expect to be extracting** so I can schedule accordingly. <dpeterson307@aol.com> If some of you don't have enough stores to extract and just want to observe, let me know and we'll set a time. Be sure and leave 40 to 50 pounds of honey for your bees to over

winter.

Before you reserve a time, **please re-check your hives to be sure you will have some excess honey to extract**. Try to make a reasonable estimate of the number of frames you will have. Last year some Members reserved a time to extract only to find they did not have any excess making scheduling and instruction more difficult.

When you come to my place to extract, bring your frames in some arrangement so that the frames hang from the tabs as in the hive and with a bottom so that the honey does not drip all over your car and my garage. The easiest way to do this is by leaving the frames in your supers and set them on a plywood base to catch the drips. Or you can purchase various sized plastic bin and modify so as to be able to hang your frames from a stick or rod.

If you just put the dripping frame in a plastic tub, they will sit in the dripping honey and slide all around on the bottom and drip whenever picked up for uncapping. And... you will lose a lot of honey in the bottom.

Also, **please remove all the bees from the supers** so that you don't bring them into the Honey House. You can use a fume board, blow them or brush them off. Then give them a few good bumps to shake loose the hangers on.

When you know what you have to extract send an email and preferred time on Saturday. If there are too many to finish on Saturday, we will extend to Sunday.

From the Librarian's Desk

Welcome back to the Library! For those of you who have been enjoying your books/DVDs over the summer, now's the time to bring them back & look for something new. And what's new, you ask? We have a super addition called Queenspotting by Hilary Kearney. It's full of fun exercises to test your skill at finding a queen. For those of you involved in presentations for young people, we have the Kids and Bees Handbook by Sarah Red-Laird which provides some great suggestions for games & activities to teach kids about bees.

Hive Tips

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

We're finally getting a reprieve from the yellow jacket problems of the last few years. Nonetheless, this is the time of year when their populations will peak and they can cause a problem for bee colonies.

They can be seen around many apiaries now hauling off dead and weak bees around hives. While this activity can be beneficial, it is prudent to keep an eye out. If you see yellow jackets entering healthy hives, it would be a good time to reduce entrances (or add a robber screen) to help make it easier for the colony to protect itself. If the population (and cluster size) of your colony is already reducing in preparation for winter, it may be time to consider harvesting excess honey or removing unneeded boxes to reduce amount of space the bees need to defend.



Yellow Jackets at the Door

Do NOT hang yellowjacket traps on or near your hives. The pheromones that help lure the yellowjackets into the trap may actually be attracting more yellowjackets to your apiary.

A fake hornet's nest can be hung nearby to try to discourage them. This can be in the form of a paper bag. We've had mixed results with this, but hey – it's just a crumbled up paper bag so it's inexpensive and worth a try if you're having trouble. You can also pick up a "wasp scarer"....a slightly more impressive looking fake hornet's nest....from the Fairfax Backyard Farmer. A plate or bowl with balsamic vinegar may also help to deter yellow jackets.



A "Fake Hornet's Nest" to Deter Yellowjackets

Robbing by other bees tends to become more problematic at this time of year. If you have a smaller colony, keep an eye out and perhaps consider reducing the entrance (if you haven't done so already) to help make it easier for the colony to protect itself. If robbing starts, you need to stop it immediately. Some good suggestions for options on how to do so are available on the website of Michael Bush: <http://www.bushfarms.com/beesrobbing.htm>

Comb building is done for the season

While there are places in the county where some bees seem to be finding the nectar resources to build a little new comb, in general, comb building is done for the season by this time of year. Don't expect bees to be able to build out on new frames.

If your bees have a lot of honey, you might consider extracting some now and returning the wet frames to them so they can refill with more nectar.

See Hive Tips continued on Page 5

Varroa mites. Now is the time to start monitoring your mite levels, if you haven't started already. As fall approaches, we tend to see decreasing colony populations and increasing varroa mite populations. This can be a deadly combination for your colonies. "But we're hardly into summer!" you might be saying. While that may be true, mite numbers are building up now – or may be building up now in your colony.

By regularly monitoring the levels of mite infestations in your colonies, you'll have a better idea if high mite levels are due to your bees inability to deal with mites in the colony (which some bees do through hygienic behavior (often observed as uncapped pupae), grooming, broodless periods, etc.) or whether a sudden spike this fall might be due to your colony finding and robbing out a nearby crashing hive.

Information on [how to do a sugar roll to determine varroa infestation % is available from the University of Minnesota](#)

There are passionate voices on both sides of the debate on whether to treat or not to treat. There is logical reasoning on the pros and cons on both sides. Keep in mind that your bees' problems could quickly become another hives problem. And because of the increasing number of beekeepers – and increasing hive density, particularly in some neighborhoods - a moderate approach to consider would be to treat if mite levels go above a certain threshold. If your bees have shown no method of resistance (you should be looking for it every time you inspect), you might consider requeening the colony with more resistant stock when that option next becomes available. If you have been monitoring your bees and they have shown mite resistance, you might consider a treatment as a way to help them reduce the number of introduced mites, but consider giving their queen another chance.

Visit www.scientificbeekeeping.com for information from Randy Oliver on treatment options and application information. Get as much information as possible on the pros/cons of different approaches before/if you decide to treat for mites.

Seeing queen cells? Not just cups, but cells with larvae floating in royal jelly. This is the time of year when bees may supersede their queen prior to winter.

Hoping the smart bees know that swarming would be a suicide mission at this time of year :-). In preparation for winter, you may also notice more propolis in the hive and a reduced rate of laying by the queen, observed as bees fill cells in the brood area with nectar rather than allowing the queen to lay eggs once brood has emerged.

Bee Classes

Overwintering Your Bees

(Saturday, September 28, 9am – 12:00pm, \$60)

Preparing for winter, how to handle common winter problems, how to clean up / store equipment.

Location: The Fairfax Backyard Farmer, 135 Bolinas Rd, Fairfax.

Register through [The Fairfax Backyard Farmer](#)

Beauty from the Hive

(Saturday, November 9, 9:00am – 12:00pm, \$85, includes materials fee)

Using the recipes from Janice Cox's books and ingredients from the hive, we will make: 1) Bath bombs, 2) Bath salts, 3) Hand cream, 4) Lip balm. You will get to take home your creations.