

THE MARIN BEEK NEWS

Volume 12, Issue 5

May 2020

What You Missed

Our last meeting featured presentations by club member Jennifer Berry. The topic was queen introductions and queen rearing.

Spring seems really good this year, for bees. There is lots of nectar and pollen coming into hives. When you open hives you should see a lot of eggs. It is crucial to see eggs although it can be difficult for new beekeepers.

Brood should be tight without a lot of gap.

A lot has to do with the queen pheromone. Much of the hive activity and characteristics are related to the queen's health and queen's genetics.

Nasansov gland - pheromones that assist in location and hive entrance

Koschevnicovi gland – alarm pheromone + in the queen is responsible for formation of the cluster of court bees

Dufour gland – related to the Koschevnicovi gland but its exact purpose is unknown

Mandibular gland – produces queen pheromone in queens.

Replace queens who are failing due to age and environmental factors. Drone worker brood comb are early indications of this type of failure.

Laying worker - This is indicated by multiple eggs in a cell. Workers can detect brood pheromone and may become laying worker if not enough pheromone is detected.

Reasons to requeen:

Brood pattern – deformed wing virus, gaps in the brood.

Chalk brood – ok at certain times of the year but not when it is warm and dry.

In short, replace queens when hive health is compromised.

Jennifer requeens whenever she has caught a swarm.

Swarm characteristics are highly genetically transmissible – if you populate the apiary with swarms you will encourage swarming characteristics.

Anyone can produce long-lived good quality queens with the right resources, timing and a healthy population

What's the Buzz?

Our next meeting will be on Thursday May 7, 2020. The meeting will be held online, via Zoom, NOT at the Log Cabin. Look for instructions in the Buzz about how to register for the meeting. The meeting will feature a presentation by [Anne Leonard](#), Associate Professor, University of Reno. She will be discussing "How Flower Shape Rewards Interactions between Bees and Plants".

Upcoming Meetings:

June 4, 2020

TBA

July 2020

Marin County Fair - **CANCELLED**

August 2020, TBA

Annual Marin Beekeepers Pot-Luck

-
- | | |
|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | What's the Buzz |
| 1 | What you Missed |
| 2 | Bee Classes |
| 3 | Help Wanted |
| 3 | Need Equipment Fast? |
| 3 | Marin County Fair News |

of nurse bees.

If you need to you can add pollen patties to boost the nurse bees' strength. Nurse bees consume the pollen patties. They don't feed it to the brood directly.

Never raise queens from a poor quality hive.

Consider raising your own queens.
Get some kind of calendar to help you keep track of the queen elevation.

What makes a good quality queen?

Health, age and laying characteristics - These qualities are mostly dependent on externalities. Better conditions result in queens performing better in this character.

Raising queens artificially - grafting, allows you to raise a larger quantity of queens and somewhat control the genetics.

Jennifer uses mini mating nucs which allows her to raise queens with a smaller amount of resources. It basically splits a nuc into two separate mating colonies.

Local queen breeders:
Select larvae from their best hives
Criteria for selection include characteristics that make hives adapted to local conditions.

Introducing queens:
Most foolproof method to prevent rejection is to introduce a ripe queen cell into a queenless colony.

You can also introduce queens using a queen cage.
Increasing your odds of success - care for queen while she is caged: Food, water, warm (but not hot) and with attendants in the cage.

Introduce the new queen in her cage, let her out by hand after a week or let the bees chew through the candy plug.

Be sure the hive is queenless
Make sure the hive has a large enough population

Several different queen cages are commercially available. Jennifer likes the plastic ones the best. Tube that hold the candy, she uses marshmallows, is longer.

Put in a place that is kept warm... Never treat when you have a caged queen.

Observe the bees as they surround the queen. It will give you an indication of acceptance.

With luck, they will accept the queen and she will be

laying in a few days

Common causes for queen failure:

Duration of queenlessness - wait 24 hours to introduce.
Acceptance diminishes after 3 weeks

Age of bees:
The younger the bees, the more likely they will accept a queen. Bees older than 21 days are also more likely to accept a queen. 8 -14 day old bees are more likely to reject a queen.

Age of queens:
Queen cells are usually readily accepted.
Caged queens 7 – 24 days have the most acceptance.

Method of introduction:
Swarms will readily accept any queens while older more established hives may only accept queen cells. Laying worker will often reject mated queens and not produce new queens.
Stack the odds when you can by adding nurse bees from other hives to increase queen acceptance.

Bee Classes

NOTE:
Field workshops are currently on hold. Classroom sessions to be via Zoom.

Upcoming classes:

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Class (Saturday, July 11, 9am – 12pm, \$65 or \$125 total if paired with IPM field workshop)

The challenges of managing pests and diseases in your colony can be overwhelming. We will look at the potential risks and benefits of various tools and techniques available to manage common pests and diseases in your colony.

[Location & Registration: The Fairfax Backyard Farmer](#),
135 Bolinas Rd, Fairfax
Limited to 12 people.

Help Wanted

The club is looking for a new newsletter writer/editor. After 11 plus years of putting the newsletter together I have decided it is time to give it up to another Beek. I will stop writing the newsletter by the end of the year.

The job entails:

- Attend monthly Marin Beekeeper meetings to report on the speaker's presentation (if you need to miss a meeting, there are others who will provide you with this report)
- Gather articles from others, usually Hive Tips from Bonnie Morse and Library News from Marina Wright. Others from the NUC will provide articles and/or announcements throughout the year.
- Combine everything into a newsletter format (I use Text Boxes in Microsoft Word).
- Convert all that to a pdf and distribute it to the members via The Buzz and posted on the Club's website.

If you are interested please email me at rob@tysingerengineers.us or come talk to me at the monthly meeting. I am not leaving Marin Beekeepers so I will be around to help and give advice about how I have done things until you get comfortable. If you want to keep this valuable asset of the Club going, please consider jumping in and being a part of it.

Rob Tysinger

Need Equipment Fast?

If you find your growing colony – or recently acquired swarm – or split made to prevent a swarm – is in need of equipment ASAP, we have a source in Marin County for bee equipment!

The Fairfax Backyard Farmer. Open Wed – Sat noon – 7pm, Sun noon to 5pm.
135 Bolinas Rd, Fairfax, telephone 415.342.5092.

Equipment is available for curbside pickup or Jim can still deliver equipment during this crisis. Let's help support our local bee equipment resource during this time.

Marin County Fair News

Unfortunately, the Marin County Fair has been cancelled this year, another effect of the COVID crisis. The Exhibit Hall is being used as the Emergency Response Center. With all the time we are spending sheltering-in-place, everyone should have an opportunity to create some interesting hive products for next year's fair.

In preparing for this year's fair, I was having trouble locating the Club banner; please look around and, if you have it or any other Club display material, please email me, stralka.daniel@epa.gov.

Thanks, stay safe, and let's look forward to next year.

Dan Stralka



Club member Charlie Kennard carrying on swarm collection while doing his part for clean air