



SEMBA NEWS

Volume 19 Number 9 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association

December 2009

OAKLAND BEE CLUB MEETING (a chapter of SEMBA)

When: Tuesday, January 5, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.

Where: E.L. Johnson Nature Center, 3325 Franklin Rd., Bloomfield Township, MI

Program:

Winter: Time to make equipment, wiring boards, frame jigs, and how to make wire frames
Dennis Holly

SEMBA BOARD MEETING

When: Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

Where: Schoolcraft College, Lower Waterman, 18600 Haggerty Rd., Livonia, MI

Agenda:

72nd SEMBA Beekeeping Conference
(planning details)

2010 Bee class

2010 SEMBA meetings

All SEMBA members are welcome to attend.

SEMBA BEEKEEPERS TO BE AWARDED PRIZES FOR INNOVATIONS AND INVENTIONS

At the September 8, 2009 SEMBA Executive Board meeting, the board voted to hold a contest that would encourage SEMBA member beekeepers to submit new beekeeping ideas and inventions. Prizes of \$75 for 1st place, \$50 for 2nd place, and \$25 for 3rd place winners were approved. A committee will be appointed to determine contest criteria. Entries will be judged at the 72nd SEMBA Beekeeping Conference on March 20, 2010.

DON SCHRAM PRODUCES CUSTOM-MADE BEE JACKETS

At the November 22nd SEMBA meeting, Don Schram displayed one of his newly-developed bee jackets which are custom-made to fit you. He welcomes your suggestions for making the jackets more beekeeper user-friendly.

For information, call Don Schram, 248-310-8205, or E-mail don.schram@gmail.com

BEEKEEPERS MAKE THE NEWS

Winn Harless and Teresa McCurdy were featured in the October 7, 2009 *Oscoda Press*. Teresa and Winn displayed an observation hive and provided information on honey bees. Hundreds attended a Fall Family Fest to learn about nature, science, gardening and math at the event in Glennie, MI.

NEW VIDEOS AND DVDs AVAILABLE

The SEMBA library has two new items available for loan, free to SEMBA members. One is a DVD, produced locally by SEMBA members, entitled *Removing and Saving Honey Bees*. In one segment of this DVD, Deborah Zahn Simmons and Richard Mendel record their efforts showing the physical removal of honey bees from a building and from a tree hive -- how they opened the building wall and split open the tree to remove comb and honey bees. Another segment shows Winn Harless, Richard Mendel and Roger Sutherland trapping bees from a nest in a cement-block building wall. The final segment chronicles the removal of a tree section containing a honey bee colony by arborist Carl Loomis of Arbor Valley Tree Service. On December 7, 2009 Mr. Loomis delivered a third bee tree to the Sutherland residence.

Barbara Lucas of In-Site Video has produced two excellent DVDs -- *Pollination Pyramid* and *An Adventure with Bees*. Several SEMBA members are featured in these programs.

For a complete list of videos and books go to sembabees.org. Click on SEMBA Resources.

Contact Roger Sutherland, 734-668-8568 or E-mail rsuther@sembabees.org if you are interested in borrowing any of these resources.

GROEB FARMS BEE SUPPLY RETAIL SALES OUTLET HAS MOVED TO "THE MILL"

Directions to The Mill: From M-50 head south on Onsted Highway. Travel approximately 4 miles to The Mill, 230 N. Main Street. Phone: (517) 467-2194, E-mail: themill@rocketmail.com. Tom is the contact for bee supplies. Steve and Darryl are also around the store. The Mill is open 8 am to 6 pm Monday thru Friday; 8 am to 4 pm Saturday and 9 am to 3 pm on Sunday. If

anyone would like to order bee packages through them, orders will be taken in January 2010. Their supplier is 'Spell Bee' located in Georgia.

~ Thanks to Sandra and Randy Graichen for this information

SEMBA MEMBERS FILL MBA OFFICES

SEMBA members are well represented on the Michigan Beekeepers' Association list of MBA leaders. The following were recently elected at the MBA Annual meeting: Roger Hoopingarner, President; Judy Schmaltz, Treasurer; Don Schram, Secretary; Dennis Holly, District 3 Representative; and Barbara Hoopingarner, District 7 Representative.

Several SEMBA members continue to serve MBA in elected or appointed positions: Brad Perez, MBA Historian; Rich Wieske, SEMBA Representative; Barbara Hoopingarner, MBA Newsletter Editor; Robert Hollis, District 6 Representative; Roger Sutherland, MBA Board Member-at- Large; Roger and Mary Sutherland, MBA Calendar Editors.

RASBERRY CRAZY ANTS ATTACK BEEKEEPERS

For much of the past year, Raspberry crazy ants have taken aim at beekeepers throughout Southeast Texas with devastating results. Whittington lost eight hives this summer. Other beekeepers have lost more than 100.

"We're probably just looking for a few more years in the area and all of us will be out of business," Steve Coplin of the Texas Beekeepers Association said. "I'm absolutely appalled at the inaction at the state and federal level," Tom Raspberry of Budget Pest Control said. Raspberry discovered the ants in 2002 and has spent the past seven years tracking their march across Texas. Scientists have classified the ants as a nuisance, not an actionable pest, which means there is little research and few state and federal resources to stop their spread. He estimates there are more than 1,000 crazy ant super-colonies in Texas, each with several queens. Conventional pesticides are effective, but the ants outnumber the efforts.

"At this point and time, all the beekeepers can do is actually run from the ants," Raspberry said. "I believe it'll probably devastate their businesses in the southern region of the United States in the coming years." Whittington, who once tended to well over 1,000 bees, now has

fewer than 800.

He said he's afraid his best years are behind him. "Somebody, somewhere has got to do something to stop them," Whittington said of the ants. Bees raised in Southeast Texas are often sent to California, where farmers use them to pollinate crops.

Source: khou.com, Houston, Texas.

~Submitted by Judith Durfy

UF- EXAMINES HOW COMMON PESTICIDES MIXES MAY AFFECT BEE DIE OFF

University of Florida (UF) Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences bee specialist Jamie Ellis, says the researchers have finished a first round of testing on bee larvae exposed to the pesticides most commonly found in bee hives. The work gives crucial insight to how the larvae react to these pesticides, which are usually only tested on adult bees. More importantly, the work sets the stage for the researchers to test how the bees react to combinations of these pesticides. Just like mixing the wrong medications can have deadly and unpredictable results in humans, chemical mixes pose a quandary for the bee industry. Bees are commonly exposed to multiple pesticides that are either applied to or nearby their hives. "Beeswax, honey and pollen can contain low mixtures of fungicides, insecticides, and herbicides. The larvae develop in the presence of and consume these mixtures," Ellis said. "Any one of these pesticides may not be that harmful to the developing larvae. However, it is possible that combinations of the pesticides can interact."

For a complete report go to University of Florida, [Environment](#), [Research](#) Thursday, October 29, 2009.

~Source: Apitrack News, Nbr 205

USA- 2009 WAS THE WORST HONEY CROP ON RECORD

Each October, Bee Culture magazine surveys our 100 or so regular honey producer/reporters from all parts of the U.S. By October 10 or so much of the U.S. crop has been harvested, and beekeepers have a pretty good feel for what they will be making, even if some is still in the field. Our predictions are that 2.22 million colonies (down from last year because of colony losses to colony collapse disorder and last year's poor honey crop) will produce 53.7 pounds (24.3 kilograms) of honey each, for a total of 119.37 million pounds (54,145 tons) of U. S. produced honey ... this is, friends, the

worst honey crop ever - EVER.

~Source: Apitrack News, Nbr 205

USA- REPRODUCTIVE TRAITS AND SOCIAL LIFE HISTORY OF HONEY BEES (Sex and Social Structure)

Two Arizona State University researchers, Robert Page and Gro Amdam, are the subject of a feature article in the Oct. 25 issue of the journal *Science*, which traces their collaboration, discoveries and extensive published works on the reproductive traits and social life history of honey bees. As detailed in *Science*, the collaboration between Page and Amdam has led to the synthesis of the "reproductive ground plan hypothesis," and catalyzed understanding of how genes and hormones might control social roles and longevity. Their focus on the role of the ovary in honey bee colonies has contributed insight as to how genetically related colony members partition the labor of the colony between raising young bees, nest construction, food processing, and foraging for pollen or nectar.

For the complete article go to the Oct. 25, 2009 issue of the journal *Science*.

~Source Apitrack News Nbr 204

AUSTRALIA FINDS 50th CERNA NEST

Australian biosecurity workers have found the 50th Asian honey bee (*Apis cerana*) nest in far north Queensland as the more than two-year fight to eliminate the invaders moves to a new area. Queensland state Primary Industries Minister Tim Mulherin says the latest nests were discovered by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service and a local council.

"One infestation was found on a business premises in the Cairns industrial suburb of Portsmith," he says. "It was the 50th Asian honey bee infestation found since the pest was first detected in Cairns more than two years ago." The nest was destroyed along with another infestation at Greenhill. Earlier, the Yarrabah Aboriginal Council's head ranger reported a swarm of foraging Asian Honey bees in the Yarrabah area, about 10 miles southeast of Cairns.

Mulherin says the nest, the first detection in the Yarrabah area, was found among mangroves and was destroyed. "We have now destroyed 52 Asian honey bee nests and Biosecurity Queensland is determined to seek and destroy every infestation," he says. The state Department of Primary Industries found the bees on a yacht in Cairns harbor in May, 2007. It is believed the species reached Australia on a freight ship and then colonized the yacht.

Biosecurity Queensland surveillance manager

Wim De Jong says it is important to track Asian Honey bee nests before the wet season set in. "The swarm found at Yarrabah was relatively small," De Jong says. "The Yarrabah council's swift response has helped Biosecurity Queensland get close to finding the possible source nest." The Asian honey bees have the potential to carry the Varroa mite, but thus far no mites have been found among the swarms destroyed by Biosecurity Queensland. "We still don't want these bees in Australia because they can compete with native bees and European honey bees for food sources," De Jong says. "We want to completely eradicate the pest bee from the Cairns environment."

~Source Catch the Buzz 11/16/09

WINN'S BEEKEEPING CORNER

Have you noticed unusual bee behavior in your bees this year? Some beekeepers tell of their hives absconding. I've noticed a lot of really late swarms and two swarms hanging under my active hives. Were these swarms trying to take over my hives?

To me, all of this looks like African genes in our honey bees. Could this be part of the answer to C.C.D? African honey bees abscond when messed with or during a nectar shortage. Also, they swarm all summer.

I stopped buying honey bees from down south a few years ago. I raise my own queens from my best hives, and I requeen my worst hives with these queens. This gives me a much better survival rate.

Give queen rearing a try. You may like it.

~Winn Harless

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 6-9, 2010, American Honey Producers, Sacramento, CA

January 12-16, 2010, American Beekeeping Federation, Orlando, FL

January 30, 2010, MBA Board Meeting, East Lansing, MI

February 21, 2010, SEMBA Meeting, Schoolcraft College, Livonia, MI

**Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year**

FEEDING DRY SUGAR

There have been many recommended ways to feed our honey bees to help them through a long winter or during periods of low nectar flow. Recently Winn Harless reviewed an article by Brother Frederick published in the April 1947 *American Bee Journal*, Vol. LXXXVII, No. 4. The following is a short summary of Brother Frederick's instructions for feeding dry sugar:

Construct a wooden rim to fit a standard Langstroth hive body. The height should be at least ¾" but could be deeper. Winn uses a 2" rim. Remove the telescoping and inner cover. Place two thicknesses of newspaper on top of the brood frames leaving an opening on one end for the bees to enter. This entrance could be either on the front or back of the hive. Pour dry sugar on the newspaper and replace the telescoping and inner covers. Winn puts 5 lbs. of white dry sugar on each hive.

Winn has used this method of feeding recently and reports that the bees are consuming the sugar. He claims that moisture from the hive cluster is absorbed by the sugar making it more usable by the bees. If you wish to call Winn for more information, his number is 734-543-2914. For copies of the entire 1947 article contact Roger Sutherland, 734-668-8568, rsuther@hotmail.com.

MYTHS OF MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE

MYTH: Beekeeping is not agriculture. (Recently a beekeeper in the Traverse City, MI area was cited for having a farm truck license on his truck used for transporting bees for pollination. He was told that beekeeping is **not** agriculture.)

FACT: Beekeeping is the oldest form of agriculture known to mankind

MYTH: Most farms in Michigan are "corporate" farms.

FACT: 95 percent of Michigan's farms are single family operated and/or family partnerships. Of the few farms structured as corporations, 99 percent of those are family-owned and involve multiple generations and family members.

SEMBA Bargain Corner

- Free:** 1 gallon glass jugs. Call Roger Sutherland, 734-668-8568, rsuther@hotmail.com
- For Sale:** Custom-made beekeeper's jackets. Call Don Schram, 248-310-8205, don.schram@gmail.com
- Honey bee removal service. Call Don Schram, 248-310-8205, don.schram@gmail.com
- Notice:** Honey for sale or honey wanted: **Send your name to the Sutherlands, 5488 Warren, Ann Arbor, MI 48105, or rsuther@hotmail.com** Names will be printed in the next newsletter and posted on the sembabees.org web pages.
- A light green shirt was left at the November 22, 2009 SEMBA meeting. Call the Sutherlands at 734-668-8568, rsuther@hotmail.com

Note: Ads in the Bargain Corner are free to SEMBA members. To place an ad, contact Roger Sutherland, rsuther@hotmail.com.

Southeastern Michigan
Beekeepers' Association
Organized April 1, 1934

Oakland Beekeepers' Club



Schoolcraft Beekeepers' Club



SEMBA Membership
5488 Warren Road
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