The Buzz
Newsletter of the Iowa Honey Producers Association

April 2015

www.ABuzzAboutBees.com

Beekeeper of the Month pg 5
Iowa State Fair Bid Sheet pg 6&7
Summer Field Day Registration pg 12
Dates to be Remembered
July 11th—IHPA Summer Field Day;
Lynville, IA

For Sale: Strong Doubles ready for honey production or to split: $225/ea
Strong Singles: $175/ea
Available early to mid May. Quantity discounts available.
Pick-up only in West Chester, IA.
Call for more details.
Call Tim Wilbanks 319-321-2494 or email:
kalonahoneycompany@gmail.com

For Sale: USED one weekend - fall, 2014
Motorized 6/3 Frame Extractor
-26 gauge stainless steel
-Holds 6 shallows, 3 medium, or 3 deep
-Variable speed control unit
-Gear driven, 110 volt motor
-Detachable hand held control unit with maximum RPM of 300
-1 1/2" honey gate included.

Set up and ready to use.
Can be found on Page 109 of the 2015
Mann Lake catalog

New $799.95 plus tax
Asking $700.00
Located near Fredericksburg, Iowa
Tim and Mary Wiltgen
563-920-9628

For Sale: 3lb. Carniolan packages with unmarked Italian queen
Pick-up in West Chester, IA
Load 1: March 21, 2015 --Sold Out
Load 2: Early-mid April -- Limited availability
Load 3: May 13th, 2015
Price: $110/ea (1-9); $105/ea (10-99); $100/ea (100+) (no cage deposit or refunds)
Also available: complete cypress hive kits (fully assembled) $225/ea
Pick-up only in West Chester, IA
Call Tim Wilbanks 319-321-2494 or email
kalonahoneycompany@gmail.com or visit website: kalonahoney.com

For Sale: 3lb Carniolan packages with a Carniolan Queen starting at $105 each with discounts for volume orders.
Carniolan queens available mid May for $18 each. We still have some Russian queens available for late summer requeenning of your hives for $30 each (Shipping available on queen orders).
Aromatic cedar hive kits (2 deeps, 2 mediums, cover, inner cover, bottom, reducer, all the frames, and a board feeder) starting at $278
Pine hive kits(2 deeps, 2 mediums, cover, inner cover, bottom, reducer, all the frames, and a board feeder) starting at $228
To order, visit us at
www.RussianBee.com
(orders can be placed online or print out an order form from our site)
For concerns with the website or large volume orders you call us at 515-991-4666. Otherwise please visit us on the web www.RussianBee.com

Nucs for sale: $140.00
5 frame 5/8 nuc includes 1 marked queen (Italian/Carniolan/Russian cross)
5 frames 9/5 of bees (various stages of their life) Our bees are breed for Honey production and Iowa winter hardiness. Nucs will out produce 4 or 5 lb. package bees.

For Sale - 6 5/8 9 frame wooden box with bees: $163.00
9 frame 6/5/8 box includes 1 marked queen (Italian/Carniolan/Russian cross) (no lid or no bottom board) in a 10 frame hive.
9 frames 6/5 of bees (various stages of their life)
Our bees are breed for Honey production and Iowa winter hardiness. You may add a lid, inner lid, and bottom board with an entrance reducer for $47.50.

For Sale - 9 5/8 9 frame wooden box with 1 marked queen & bees: $175.00
9 frame 9/5/8 box includes (no lid or no bottom board) in a 10 frame hive.
9 frames 5/8 of bees (various stages of their life)
Our bees are breed for Honey production and Iowa winter hardiness. You may add a lid, inner lid, and bottom board with an entrance reducer for $47.50.

Queens for sale $37.00
1 marked queen (Italian/Carniolan/Russian cross)

New Complete assembled painted Hive Kit $350.00
Includes 2 - 5/8 hive bodies
20 - 1/8 frames with foundation Waxed Rite-Cell
2 - 6 5/8 supers
20 - 6 1/8 frames with foundation Waxed Rite-Cell
Telescoping cover with inner lid
Bottom board with reducer AND How to get started FREE
No Bees (You will want to get this so you are ready when your bees arrive.)
Bees will be available April 15th 2015
(depending on weather)
Deposit of $75.00 when you place order.
(Place order early before we’re sold out)
Curtis Barnhart
PO Box 70
Monticello, Iowa 52310
319 480-4209
autum49@yahoo.com
New IHPA Cookbook

It’s time for a new cookbook!

Please submit your new Honey recipes, the Iowa Honey Producers Association is doing a new cookbook that will be available at the 2016 Iowa State Fair.

We would like to have as many NEW recipes in this new cookbook as possible, so bring on your newest tried and true delights. Submit all the categories you can think of including soap and honey mead.

We have the form available online through the Buzz, in the hard copy of the Buzz newsletter or available for pick-up at the 2015 Summer Field Day in July and at the 2015 Annual Meeting in November. Our cut-off date for the cookbooks to get prepared will be March 1, 2016.

We do have some incentives for you, the more recipes you submit, the better for you, stay tuned for those incentives in a later Buzz article.

Please submit recipes to:

Jodi Kraft
IHPA Cookbook Chairperson
P.O. Box 1
Goldfield, IA 50542-0001

or my committee members: Becky Elsbernd, Connie Bronnenberg, Rhonda Heston and Heidi Love.

Thank you and looking forward to seeing your new recipes for the 2016 Iowa Honey Producers Association Cookbook.

Buzz Quilt

The quilt has gone to the quilter. Thank you to all the quilters that made blocks for the 2015 Buzz Quilt. There are very nice blocks. I do want to apologize for making the challenge so difficult this year. When I ordered the fabric, it looked really great online. But, when I got it, the fabrics did not go together at all! I was planning on providing more of the three fabrics when I cut the fabric, but forgot.

If you would like to have the quilt visit an event you are involved in, please let me know. Please allow plenty of time for travel time. I will also need you to provide when you will be returning to me.

The quilt raffle tickets are $5 each or 5 for $20. Remember all the proceeds of the raffle go towards the Iowa Honey Producers Association Queen Program. To purchase raffle tickets, please contact Rhonda Heston, 515-724-2124 or r.heston@yahoo.com.

IHPA Membership

Are you expired?

Check the back of this Buzz Newsletter. If you have an expiration date of December 31, 2014, you are about to receive your last Buzz Newsletter. You don’t want to miss out on any of the monthly issues. We have Annual Field Day coming up, the Iowa State Fair and the Annual Meeting. If you don’t receive the Buzz Newsletter, you will be missing out on the good stuff that appears in the Buzz each month.

Membership dues are $20 for the first beekeeper in the house and $5 for each additional beekeeper in the house. One Buzz Newsletter will be sent to one address, no matter how many beekeepers are in the house.

Please mail your check payable to Iowa Honey Producer’s Association (IHPA) to Rhonda Heston, 52735 187th Ave, Chariton, IA 50049. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rhonda at 515-724-2124 or r.heston@yahoo.com

All unpaid memberships as of June 15, 2015, will not receive the July 2015 Buzz Newsletter.

Don’t let this happen to you!

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Pleasant Hill, IA 50327

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Fax: 515-266-1112

sales@blplasticiowa.com
www.blplasticiowa.com
Featured Beekeeper of the Month

Our featured beekeeper this month is Macy Arbuckle who is a member of the Youth Scholarship program with the IHPA. She lives with her parents, Jim and Carol, three sisters and one brother at Vinton. She is home-schooled, in the 9th grade and likes drama. She also plays the piano, guitar, working with her dog on obedience, spending time with the rest of her animals and being outside as much as possible. She has been a member of the Eldora Young Master Farmers 4-H club for five years. At this point in her life she says she doesn’t know exactly what she wants to study in college, but it will be something involving animals.

A friend of Macy’s had participated in the youth mentor program, really had fun and suggested Macy might want to try it. Macy took her beginning beekeeper classes at the Indian Creek Nature Center in Cedar Rapids. Dennis Nielson was her mentor and taught her hands on techniques and how to catch swarms of bees. Her inspiration to learn about bees comes from knowing that bees are really important to our everyday life and hopes others will realize that. She thinks we should “protect our bees as best we can”, and promises to never take a bottle of honey for granted again because she knows how much work the bees do for each drop of that honey, not to mention the work and skill provided by a local beekeeper.

Macy started her beekeeping season with one hive and ended with five colonies by the end of the summer, because her bees kept swarming. Because her bees liked to swarm so well she did not get any excess honey, however, Macy says it was still really fun. Some of her new hives didn’t do so well getting ready for winter so she says it will be exciting to see how many survived the winter.

In the future Macy wants to continue keeping at least one colony and learn more about beekeeping. If things go well she may even add another colony.

Thanks for your story Macy.

Submitted by Ron Wehr
2015 IHPA State Fair Bid Sheet

1. Bids must be received by Tuesday, June 30, 2015.
2. All liquid honey must be from 2015 harvest.
3. Honey must be no more than 18.5% moisture.
4. All glass honey containers and creamed honey must have a protection seal.
5. All plastic containers must have a pressure seal. This includes all large containers.
6. All bottled, liquid honey must be free of foreign materials, with no foam, sticky jars and even filling.
7. All products must show proper labeling – i.e. name, address and net weight.
8. All beeswax products, candles, ornaments, blocks, etc, must be packaged to maintain cleanliness and for presentation.
9. The following items will be paid a flat rate:
   a. 12 oz honey bear $ 2.87
   b. 24 oz honey bear $ 4.95
   c. 1 pound plastic $ 3.25
   d. 1 pound glass $ 3.50
   e. 2 pound glass $ 7.10
   f. 5 pound jug $14.80
   g. 12 pound jug (Gallon) $32.00

MINIMUM QUANTITY IS 24 BOTTLES (ONE CASE) OF ANY PRODUCT

10. Cut comb must be in a sealed plastic box, well drained without liquid honey. The following quality standards will be used (clean capping with all cells capped). We will pay $5.50 per unit of cut comb, which weighs at least 14oz.
11. Clamshells meeting quality standards will be paid $5.00 per unit.
12. Ross Rounds meeting quality standards will be paid $4.00 per unit.
13. Lip balms, lotions and soaps – please provide your bid price per item and the quantity you will be able to provide. As you may not be able to provide enough for the entire fair, the booth may use several suppliers based on the number of items supplied.
14. Please remember, you are able to bid on any items, but you must show the quantity of each item you are able to supply and your bid price.
15. You must deliver products to the booth. Please plan to deliver your products between Sunday and Wednesday. All products must be received prior Fair opening at 9:00 am Thursday morning. Please provide an invoice when product is delivered. Please make plans to pick up unsold product on Sunday evening between 9:00 and 10:00 pm or Monday between 8:00 and 12 Noon.
16. Any items not listed on the bid sheet or specialty items you wish to bid, is up to the discretion of the booth manager, based on counter space and the ability to supply. (i.e. buckwheat honey, bee related items, etc.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BID ITEMS</th>
<th>QUANTITY SOLD FROM 2014 STATE FAIR</th>
<th>$ BID</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pail Honey for Lemonade (50 lb)</td>
<td>2,080 pounds</td>
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<td>Honey Stix</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skew (1 lb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buckwheat Honey (1 lb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creamed Honey - Regular (1 lb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creamed Honey - Cinnamon (1 lb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creamed Honey - Flavored (1 lb)</td>
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<td>Flavored Honey</td>
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<td>4 oz Antique (Muth) jars</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 oz Antique (Muth) jars</td>
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<td>16 oz Antique (Muth) jars</td>
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<td>Bee Pollen (1/2 lb)</td>
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<td>Bee Pollen (1 lb)</td>
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<td>Beeswax Products:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beeswax Bars 1 oz</td>
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<td>Beeswax Bars 1/2 pound</td>
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<td>Bug Repellent</td>
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<th>PRICE</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 pound Glass Liquid Honey</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>$3.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 oz Honey Bear (light honey)</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>$2.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 oz Hon'ey Bear (light honey)</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>$4.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 pound Plastic (light honey)</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>$3.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 pound Glass (light honey)</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>$7.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 pound Jug (light honey)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>$14.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 pound Gallon (light honey)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>$32.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comb Honey</td>
<td>333</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clamshell</td>
<td>376</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ross Rounds</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$4.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Name & Signature: ________________________________

Business Name: __________________________________

Address, City, Zip: ______________________________

Phone / Cell Number: ______________________________

RETURN TO: Steve Heston, 52735 187th Avenue, Chariton IA 50049
10 Crops That Would Disappear Without Bees

Bees have been disappearing at an alarming rate and continue to vanish without a trace.

Why should anyone care? Well, they matter a lot more than most people think.

It’s exciting to see the reemergence of some of our favorite produce, including stone fruit, peppers, sweet, juicy melons, and succulent strawberries. But what if the arrival of these crops each summer were to come to an end?

Honeybees, among other pollinators such as bats, birds, butterflies, and bumblebees, are responsible in one way or another for the pollination of approximately 100 crops, according to Dr. Reese Halter, Ph.D., author of The Incomparable Honeybee and distinguished conservation biologist. And they’re not just the fruits of summer; imagine a Thanksgiving, for example, without sweet potatoes or pumpkin pie.

However, the implications of the disappearance of honeybees are not just gastronomic; they are also economic in scope and in that respect, the scale is significant. According to the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), more than $15 billion worth of crops are pollinated by bees each year just in the United States alone. Put another way, one of every three bites of food Americans consume comes from a plant visited by bees or other pollinators.

The problem was first observed in France in 1994, following the debut of a new type of pesticide by Bayer, dubbed Gaucho, which was first used on sunflower crops. Gaucho was part of a new class of pesticides known as systemic pesticides, or as Halter refers to them, neonicotinoids.

Bees collecting pollen from sunflowers treated with Gaucho exhibited confused and nervous behavior; thus, the phenomenon was initially termed the "mad bee disease" — the bees, according to Halter, were literally "shaking to death." Furthermore, the bees abandoned their hives, never to return, leaving only the queen behind. Following massive protests by farmers, the French government suspended the use of the pesticide.

More on this...

In the United States, the phenomenon was first observed in 2006 by a beekeeper, David Hackenberg. Hackenberg and his fellow beekeeper David Mendes testified before Congress about a problem that had become widespread, by then termed Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) by scientists. No longer were people chalking it up to bad beekeeping; everyone was experiencing the same rapid, catastrophic declines in hive populations in 35 states. And no one could explain why.

The theories were numerous, but the data were scarce. Some people thought that cell phone towers were interfering with the bees’ ability to navigate; others thought that the bees were falling prey to the usual suspects, including the varroa mite and the fungal bacteria Nosema Ceranae; while another popular theory was climate change. But, no one really knew for sure, because CCD very rarely left behind any dead bees in the broken hive that could be examined.

The most compelling theory, though, has to do with bee husbandry, and brings us full circle back to the issue of systemic pesticides. Beekeepers in the United States no longer generate the majority of their revenue from sales of honey; the value of honey sold annually in the United States amounts only to $150 million a year, according to the NRDC, a mere fraction of the value of the crops pollinated by bees.

The life of a typical bee in this business consists of following the major cash crops around the country as the seasons change, and that means a lot of traveling on trucks. California alone requires half of all the honeybees in the United States for its $2.3 billion almond crop annually, according to the NRDC.

So stress is probably a major issue, but far more relevant is the fact that while on the road, there is no access to local flora to collect nectar for honey. So instead, according to Halter, they subsist on a steady diet of corn syrup, usually genetically modified and laden with residual neonicotinoids. Halter estimates that about 2.5 million hives are trucked around this manner every year.

Just what is so insidious about neonicotinoids? Neonicotinoids differ from older style pesticides which were applied through spraying; instead, they generally come in the form of pellets, which are taken up by the roots of the plant when watered, and end up concentrated in the pollen and nectar that bees pick up when foraging. But, it doesn’t end there. Subsequent generations of the plant will also contain trace amounts of the pesticide and secrete them as well.

Studies performed by companies which produce these neonicotinoids have tested only in lethal doses and observed the bees immediately after exposure. But, in the real world, bees are never really exposed to such high concentrations all at once. Instead, the concern lies with the accumulated effects of repeated exposure in lower concentrations, which are difficult to test, and thus have not been tested. In other words, the use of these systemic pesticides could lead to a delayed detrimental effect on bee populations.

However compelling any one theory may be, it is more likely though, that CCD is due to a confluence of factors.

Halter estimates that about one-quarter trillion bees have succumbed to CCD since it was first observed in France in 1994. And it is an ongoing problem. Halter says that prior to CCD; beekeepers would normally observe natural attrition rates of 11 to 12 percent. Nowadays, it is common to lose upward of 30 percent of the hive during transport.

Policymakers are beginning to act, however. In Europe, Halter says that neonicotinoids are starting to be banned. And the NRDC
successfully sued the EPA in New York State in December 2009 over the questionable approval of a new systemic pesticide. Sales were halted nationwide in January 2010 pending further investigation. Similar actions will help bee populations from declining further.

Here are a few things you can do, however, to combat the problem.

1. **Buy Organic.** Buying organic fruits and vegetables keeps more pesticides from being introduced into the environment and helps encourage more sustainable farming practices that are beneficial to bees.

2. **Buy Local.** Shop at farmers markets when seasons allow supporting smaller-scale farms that are less likely to engage in monoculture. When the choice is between imported, certified organic produce and local, non-certified produce, choose local first; chances are, smaller-scale farmers are already engaging in practices that comply or exceed the requirements of organic farming, but choose not to get certified due to high costs and other pragmatic barriers.

3. **Host a Hive.** Urban beekeeping provides a safe refuge for honeybees and in return, they help cross-pollinate the local flora. In 2010, New York City lifted the ban on urban beekeeping, following similar actions by Seattle, San Francisco, and Chicago, and since then, it has become quite popular among city residents. Most recently, the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel has set up a beekeeping operation on its roof to harvest honey. And they’re not the only ones to jump onto the beekeeping bandwagon; hotels around the world have started providing homes for bees as well.

We’re serious folks — the foods that make America great are at stake here. Not just fancy-schmancy chef food, but all-time greats like cranberry sauce, peach cobbler, and apple pie. And the continued decline in bee populations would lead to the continued increase in world food prices. Here are some of the crops that would disappear without bees:

1. **Apples.** The nation’s largest producer of apples is Washington State. In a typical year, 10 to 12 billion apples are harvested every year by hand, or put another way; about three out of five apples in the United States come from Washington. That’s staggering — and without bees, the cross-pollination needed to produce apples just wouldn’t happen on a scale large enough to produce today’s crop.

2. **Almonds.** About 80 percent of the world’s almond supply comes from California, which requires about half of the honeybee population in the United States for pollination each year. Valued at more than $3 billion, this crop is California’s top agricultural export. This year’s crop is the largest ever, at 1.9 billion pounds, most of which is destined for locales in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. The almond crop is completely dependent on honeybees for pollination.

3. **Blueberries.** Besides being loaded with antioxidants, they’re also delicious on top of pancakes, in muffins, and of course, in pie. The loss of the blueberry crop wouldn’t just be felt at the kitchen table, however — the National Agricultural Statistics Service values the nation’s blueberry crop, most of which comes from Maine, at more than $593 million, 90 percent of which is pollinated by honeybees.

4. **Cherries.** Honeybees are responsible for pollinating about 90 percent of the cherries in the United States, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, most of which come from Washington State. Sweet cherry trees require the pollinating activities of honeybees in order to produce enough fruit for a commercially viable crop.


6. **Cucumbers.** Cucumbers are a popular option for cooling down in the hot summer months. Their cool, fresh flavor and crunchy bite make them a popular addition to salads, sandwiches, and cocktails. Without honeybees, though, the majority of the country’s $193 million cucumber crop would be nonexistent.

7. **Onions.** No onions? Well, you’re pretty much out of luck. Onions are the base for myriad classic sauces, soups and stews when cooked. And when raw, are pretty much de facto in tacos, salsas, sandwiches, burgers, and salads. You’ll still be shedding tears even when they’re gone.

8. **Grapefruit.** Sweet-tart grapefruit, whether eaten with a spoon or cut into segments by the ambitious, is a breakfast staple for the health-conscious. It’s also delicious in salads and blended into smoothies and cocktails. Grapefruit is just one of many kinds of citrus almost entirely dependent on honeybees for pollination.

9. **Orange.** It probably goes without saying that if you’re going to bring up grapefruit; you have to bring up oranges. And the data actually do back this up; like grapefruit, oranges are 90 percent dependent on honeybees for production. That morning cup of orange juice would get a lot more expensive. Maybe we’ll just import our way out of this one — except, colony collapse disorder is a worldwide problem.

10. **Pumpkins.** Halloween just wouldn’t be the same without pumpkins, nor would Thanksgiving. This iconic American crop is heavily dependent on honeybees for production, and without them, there would be no pumpkin carving and no pumpkin pie.

Source:

Published July 19, 2012
Interstial Space: Keeping Bees As Best We Can with What We Know
Lots of Questions with Few Real Answers

By Dr. James E. Tew, State Specialist, Beekeeping,
The Alabama Cooperative Extension System,

Dr. Tew, Keeping Bees in the Gap

An interstitial space or interstice is an empty space or gap between spaces full of structure. For the past twenty-six years we have been keeping our bees in the interstice formed between mites not in our bees and mites in our bees. Presently, we know mites are in our colonies but we do not yet have conclusive control procedures to rid our bees of them. We know the question—“How do we effectively control mites?”—but we don’t yet have the final answer.

In what will soon be three decades, we have tried a plethora of remedies. None have positively risen to the top of the “control procedures” pile. Though it has been the goal of scientists worldwide, nothing has been found that will let us routinely keep bees as we did in the 70s. Frequently, today’s bees seem lethargic and weak. Replacement queens don’t seem great. Why? I don’t know. Welcome to bee life in the gap. It’s disconcerting.

A Frustrated Beekeeper

The beekeeper on the phone was upbeat, energetic, and clearly frustrated. He had several hundred hives going into winter of 2010-2011 that were strong and heavy. By late January, half were already dead. The fate of the living was uncertain. Sure, he had had winter kills in the past, but not this many this early in the winter.

Through the years, I have heard many variations on this theme and this guy seemed to know what he was talking about. In just about a decade, he had gone from two colonies to more than 400. In many instances only a few dead bees were still present, not like the old-fashioned starved colony of miteless years past where entire dead clusters remained within the hive. Sometimes honey was there and sometimes the colony was already surprisingly light in stores.

What in the world was causing this high winter mortality and what could he do to stop the remainder of his colonies from dying? Was it Nosema? CCD? Old combs? Nectar from GM plant sources? He suddenly said, “But if you knew the answers, you would be very popular and very wealthy!” Wow! Was he ever right on that score? I’m neither.

Another Frustrated Beekeeper - Me

During the second week in January, snow had fallen and was crunching beneath my feet as I returned from my storage barn. It was a bright day so it was easy to see the little black spot on the brilliantly white snow. It was a dead bee that I duly noted. “Humph.” A few more crunching steps and yet another black spot. “Whoa!” In fact, there were dead and dying bees everywhere. What in the world is going on? My three beehives were near the storage barn. They were from packages in the spring and had built up nicely. I had given them full frames of capped honey. I provided fully drawn combs on which they could initiate a brood nest. They accepted the new queens without signs of supersEDURE. They exhibited good flight all spring and summer. Now this. Where were all these dead bees coming from?

In fact, they were coming from the middle of my three hives. It was 28° F outside on a bright, still day. Yet the hive was alive with frantic bees at all entrances and a small pile of dead bees accumulating on the ground. They appeared agitated and frantic, as though they were all trying to leave at once. They seemed absolutely eager to die. As I stood there, watching in confused amazement, a few bees departed on suicide flights. What was going on? The same issue plaguing the beekeeper who had called? I don’t know.

Some Thoughts on Unexplained Die-Offs
– Both Yours and Mine

Reusing Old Combs
The frustrated beekeeper mentioned his reuse of old combs to establish replacement colonies. That is a common procedure throughout beekeeping. Most beekeepers recycle old combs as they manipulate their colonies. The potential problem with this procedure is a low-key subject that is periodically brought up by various scientists and beekeepers: Beeswax is a chemical blotter. It seems that any chemical that comes near it is partially absorbed by this wax. It has been suggested that, at some levels, harmful levels of residues are reached that negatively affect developing brood. Testing combs is impractical for nearly all of us. How long to use combs, when to replace, and how to replace are some of the common unanswered questions in this area. This is one of those partially answered questions in beekeeping. We know that chemicals accumulate, but when is too much too much?

As has been the case with most gap beekeepers, the concerned beekeeper on the phone kept records comparing packages initiated on combs compared to longevity of colonies begun on foundation. He could see no difference so he will continue to recycle combs. This event was not analytical science. It does not speak to all of us, but in his case, it speaks to him. For the present, he will not destroy old combs.

Package Bee Costs and Availability
My frustrated caller flatly stated that it was presently worth the money for him to replace dead-outs with early spring packages. Last season his package bees built up in time to produce tons of honey. He installed packages during cool weather in March, something he had never done before. He worried and tossed that night, but all went well.

He has made some interesting observations. Installing packages during cold weather restricts excessive bee flight. Honestly, I never knew what truly happens to all those randomly flying bees that
fill the sky when multiple packages are installed at the same time and installed near to each other. I would like to think that they all find a hive somewhere but I know that some (even many) are lost forever.

Installing packages on warm days gives the bees a chance to take cleansing flights and to position themselves on combs, but they do drift toward the end colonies. No big deal—equalize the colonies later in the summer and all is back on course. But installing earlier (and colder) would eliminate a colony equalization procedure and would get the bees on the job earlier.

As we talked, and as I have talked to others, we lamented the fact that winter-kill percentages are significantly higher than 20-30 years ago. In “the good old days,” less than 10% would perish during the winter. Now, 40-50% is not unheard of and the survivors are weak. It seems inconceivable, but will the early spring day come when we find that all colonies have died?

“Well, we would just have to buy more packages.”

How will the package producers keep their bees alive if ours are all dying in significant numbers? Then what will happen to our bee enterprise? Like rotting fruit on a leafless limb, that question just hung out there somewhere in phone land. This discussion was nothing more than a friendly “pity party” and neither of us was predicting that such winter loss events will come to pass. But once we talked and laughed about it, our light-heartedness left a threatening taste. It was the same feeling I had as a kid when I tossed stones at wasp nests. Started out funny but didn’t always end that way.

Even So, Too Many Colonies Die During Winter Months

So, if we agree that we have plenty of questions and not enough answers, what are we to do here in the gap? Like New Year’s Resolutions, each winter/early spring I make a list of things I will do differently this upcoming season.

I am now leaving plenty of honey—plenty. That is a change from seasons past. In fact, I commonly have honey left on the colony for the splits/packages that I install the following spring. But for six years or so, some of the most unexpected colonies have died and on occasion, some of the weakest colonies survive. Go figure. Am I just misremembering? Decades ago, did populous colonies sometimes die and I have just forgotten? Regardless, I want to address this abnormal winter flight that some of my colonies have exhibited for many years now. Even if the effects of Nosema are not the only problem, I suspect that it may be part of the problem, and I suspect that Nosema has been some part of my bees’ problems essentially every year for many years.

Fumagilin-B Tends To Be Hard To Feed

But here’s the truth: I have always found feeding Fumagilin-B to be a hit/miss procedure. Some colonies would take the medicated syrup while others either ignored it or could not figure out to make the feeder work. The powder would clump and the product was a bit pricey. Time and again, I threaten to put it on the following fall or spring. But officially, Nosema treatments are on my “to-do” list. This is not the first time that Nosema treatments have been on that prestigious list.

Somewhere in Maryland, many years ago, I visited a beekeeper who was feeding sugar syrup in plastic bags into which he had cut clean slits with a very sharp knife. I was certain that the syrup would all leak out. It didn’t. That idea is now being used by some to supply Fumagilin-B medicated syrup in spring or fall. Individuals using this procedure do not have to store feeders and problems with mold growth are eliminated.

While listening to the frustrated beekeeper explain the unfolding mystery, my memory drifted back to one of my earliest academic years in beekeeping: 1975. I was at the University of Maryland, working for Dr. Dewey Caron. I had wintering colonies fecal spotting the whole area so I was using a hemocytometer to count Nosema spores to determine if the University bees were suffering from Nosema. At the time, Dr. Basil Furgala, University of Minnesota, was actively promoting Nosema as the unseen illness of the bee world. Though I really can’t remember, I feel certain that some level of Nosema Apis was present then and that it is still very much present today.

Now here I am, 37 years later wondering if I should be looking at Nosema once again for being the current bane of my bee colonies. This time, I will be expecting to see Nosema Ceranae rather than Nosema Apis but the treatment will still be the same: Fumagilin-B.

I realized that “gap beekeeping” is not restricted to mite problems. We have actually been keeping bees in the gap in regards to issues such as Nosema, American foulbrood, chalk brood and now small hive beetles (SHB). I snapped back to the conversation with the frustrated beekeeper with the refreshed realization that many of these issues are like old, familiar enemies. While we have not defeated a single bee enemy, we—and our bees—are still here.

Our bee industry is much like the plight of Andrew Barton:

I am hurt, but I am not slain;
I will lay me down and bleed a while,
And then I will rise and fight again.

Time and again, our industry has been hurt, but after a while would rise to fight again. So whatever is killing my frustrated beekeeper friend’s bees is certainly making him and many other beekeepers bleed, but we will continue to find ways to keep our bees. After we rest for a while.

Source & re-print permission: Kelly Beekeeping May 29-2012
2015 IOWA HONEY PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION
SUMMER FIELD DAY
Saturday, July 11th, 2015
at Lynnville Bank (Lynnville, Iowa) & Phil Ebert’s residence (weather permitting)
Registration at 8:30 a.m., Field day 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Field day topics: Dr. Leo Sharashkin will speak on top-bar hives. Andy Joseph will give his summer bee report. 2015 American Honey Queen, Gabrielle Hemesath will speak and a few surprises.
Field sessions: Weather permitting, field day afternoon activities will be at Phil Ebert’s, bring your bee suit. Roy Kraft will be talking on finding and marking queens. Phil Ebert will be showing his bottling facility.

Please bring a potluck dish to share, IHPA will be providing the chicken, tableware, bottled water and coffee.

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<th>NAME:</th>
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Registration:
- Single (member): $25.00 before June 25, 2015
  - Number of people: _______ x $25.00 = _______
- Walk-in on July 11, 2015 $35.00
  - Number of people: _______ x $35.00 = _______
- Single (non-member): $35.00 before June 25, 2015
  - Number of people: _______ x $35.00 = _______
- Walk-in on July 11, 2015 $45.00
  - Number of people: _______ x $45.00 = _______

**No refunds after June 25, 2015**

**TOTAL:** _______

Return this completed form together with your payment to:
Make checks payable to: IHPA (Rhonda Heston)
52735 187th Avenue
Chariton, IA 50049

Any questions about the Summer Field Day, please contact Roy Kraft at 515-293-2458 or at kroyster.rk@gmail.com
We need your help at the Iowa State Fair booth!

Dear Beekeepers,

I know it may be hard to start thinking about the State Fair, however Spring is here and the Iowa State Fair is fast approaching; August 13-23. For those members new to the Iowa Honey Producers Association (IHPA), we have a booth at the State Fair annually in the Ag building 2nd floor; selling honey products, honey lemonade, lotions, soaps, beeswax items, promotional merchandise, etc. This is our main fund raising event, which is needed to help support our various educational programs. We ask our members to help make this event a success, by volunteering their time assisting with cash register sales, bagging product, pricing, mixing and serving honey lemonade, offering honey samples, etc. Each volunteer will be provided with free honey lemonade if you get thirsty while working at the booth, also a FREE pass to get into the fair, plus you get to enjoy the great entertainment at the fair before/after your shift at the booth.

We had a successful 2014 thanks to all those who participated! Over the years we have had some wonderful people volunteer their time and would love to see you again. We encourage new members, friends, families and bee clubs to participate in this event too, because we need everyone’s support to make this event a success.

We have three shifts daily, 9am-1.30pm, 1.30pm-6pm and 6pm-9pm (11-14 people needed per shift). If you are able to volunteer for one or more shifts during August 13-23, we would like to hear from you. All you need to do is mail the completed tear off slip below, or email the same details to bhlove5@aol.com, or call my number below. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Heidi Love (IHPA Secretary)  18488 E Ave, Dawson, IA 50066.  Cell: 515-729-1761

1st person: ____________________________________________

2nd person: ____________________________________________

3rd person: ____________________________________________

Childs name & age: _________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________ State: ___________ Zip ___________

City: ___________________________ Phone no.: _______________ Email address: ____________________________

Please write below the date(s) you would like to work and circle shift that works best for you. (Fair dates August 13-23.)

We appreciate any help you can provide!

Date: 9.00-1.30pm 1.30pm-6.00pm 6.00pm-9.00pm

Date: 9.00-1.30pm 1.30pm-6.00pm 6.00pm-9.00pm

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Date: 9.00-1.30pm 1.30pm-6.00pm 6.00pm-9.00pm
Honey Bee Ware

Honey Bee Ware in Hortonville, WI recently purchased Lapp's Bee Supply. Now more inventory than ever before!

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Bee equipment supplier of woodenware, tools, suits, medications, and nutritional products from Dadant & Sons.

Owners: Susan Jones and George Jones

Our shop is located at
14535 NE 88th St., Maxwell, IA
Phone numbers 515-387-8707 and 515-450-8296, or online at our website www.cibees.com Email us for your bee supplies at cibees8707@gmail.com

Open: Thurs. 6-8 p.m.,
Saturday 10 a.m.-4 p.m., or call us.

We want to be your Central Iowa bee equipment supplier for your hives and all the supplies you need to get started in the wonderful world of honey bees!

Going Out of Business!

Come check out our shop 7 miles northeast of Elkhart, or 5 miles southwest of Maxwell. When you need a Super immediately for honey production - we are the ones to call. When you need medication immediately - we are the ones to come to. Cash, credit card, debit card, check. No more waiting on FEDEX to show up in a week. You come and look at what you want and walk out with it. No more shipping cost to worry about. If we don’t have it in stock, we will order it.
The Buzz Newsletter
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