



www.forsythbeekeepersclub.org

FBC's NEXT MEETING: 23 JUL 2015 @ 6:30 PM.

Sawnee Mt. Preserve Visitor Center

4075 Spot Road, Cumming GA, 30040 (770-781-2217)

GUEST SPEAKER

Our guest speaker will be Master Beekeeper Julia Mahood and her topic will be good preparation for our own Honey Show in SEP. She will be discussing 'The Making and the Use of Secondary Honey Bee Products'. She has won awards for her products associated with the Honey Bee.



Growing up in a house full of girls Julia did not become interested in the world of insects until introduced by her two sons. She keeps honey bees at her home, at community gardens in Atlanta and in the north Georgia mountains.

Julia is on the board of directors of the Metro Atlanta Beekeepers Association. She has included seeking local beekeepers during her travels throughout the world.

CLUB BUSINESS

The club's annual 'Honey Show' is about two months away (SEP). At this JUL meeting, we will be taking orders for the 1 LB jars, and they will be distributed at the AUG meeting. Remember you need 3 for each extracted honey category you enter – light, amber and dark.

Rumor has it that this year we may have **2** Certified Welsh Honey Judges. So let's make them re-earn their certifications by having numerous competitors in each of the 13 competitive categories. Our Honey Show categories and rules are on the club website and will be distributed at the JUL meeting.

Honey Bee Disorder Class

Saturday, 18 JUL, we conducted our annual 'Honey Bee Disorder Class' as part of our yearlong Beginners Beekeeping School. It was sunny and got to about 90 degrees. However, the class was conducted in the shade of the Oak and Gum trees on the Dunn Family Farm and was actually not unpleasant.

Nosema



microscopic view of nosema spores

Initially Nick discussed the 'Nosema' spores which live as a fungus in the bees 'gut'. The spores reproduce inside the bee and are passed with the bee's waste. The only real symptom present will be brown spotting on the outside of the hive from expelled bee waste. Nosema will cause rapid colony decline. Treatment is effective and can be done with Fumagilin – an antibiotic which prevents the parasite from attaching to the bee's interior so that it cannot reproduce.

Varroa Mite



Varroa mites can be a major problem (one of the causes of CCD?). Also called the 'Varroa Destructor' they are small reddish-brown tick like pests which feed on the blood of the honey bee. For Varroa mite reproduction, the female mite enters an uncapped brood cell to lay numerous eggs. The first of which is a male and all the remaining are female. The mites will feed on the pupating stage of the bee and then exit the cell with the fully developed bee, meanwhile they are infecting the bee with viruses and open sores. Essentially the brood is damaged by this parasitic mite.

Effects of this damage include shortened life span, changes in behavior, increased disease susceptibility, shrunken wings, and shortened abdomen.



The easiest treatment for Varroa Mites is the powdered sugar shake. Other naturally occurring chemical treatments are Formic acid and Oxalic acid. Because Varroa Mites prefer the elongated birthing cycle of the drone an effective way to minimize the varroa population is to every 3 weeks place the green drone frame into the freezer for 48 hours before replacing into the hive (hopefully it will be at least partially capped).

Eddie Stowers, inventor and former club president, had with him 2 of his new '7 dollar' inventions. AC and DC Oxalic Vaporizers (shown below). As we all know the GA state government hasn't caught up to us yet in the use of Oxalic Acid.



Even though it may not yet be 'legal' in our state, it is easily obtained – over the counter Savogran Wood Bleach is 99.7% Oxalic acid. It is a very effective way of treating our honey bees for the horrible Varroa Mite. With Eddie's inventions each hive can inexpensively be treated daily for one complete drone birthing cycle – 23 days. It does involve vaporizing the Oxalic acid – so wear gloves, stay up-wind and be careful!

Amazingly, the Disorder Class's investigation of one of the remote hives on the Dunn Family Farm revealed that the queen had a very poor pattern for laying eggs, the hive had done poorly on the cleanliness test – failed to clean dead brood from 3 inch

circular area that 24 hours earlier had been drenched in liquid nitrogen, and the hive had produced no honey so far this summer. In further examination it looked as if the previously good queen was only laying drone eggs! How can that be? I had never heard of such a thing. Because there were no 'female' or worker cells the workers were unable to find a potential replacement queen. A learning experience for the class – we all agreed that re-queening needed to be done. So we decided to see if we could determine the queen's problem by examining her under a microscope. Under the microscope we could clearly see the Spermatheca but could not determine if her problem was within. For 'educational' purposes we had needed to 'kill' this queen, fortunately Bill had 5 proven queens in NUCs ready to fill the roll.

Things I had never heard before this Disorder Class:

A Drone Laying Queen: Because of old age she had either just run out of sperm, or her incomplete/ improper mating was beginning to show.

A different explanation of the 'queen's mating flight: Because she is very young and does not know her way around yet, some believe she is escorted by a group of 'older' experienced bees for protection and direction to the DCA (Drone Congregation Area) for which she could not conceivably have known the location.

IN THE GEORGIA HIVE

As we know honey is not the honey bee's primary source of food. Yet I've always considered sugar water as the easy way to help the bees survive. Oh sure I've done my share of pollen patties, but sugar water is so much easier.

I had the opportunity last week to spend time in the 'bee yard' of an experienced beekeeper. I always learn something. During this visit I noticed hundreds of bees flying in the vicinity of a white bucket. Closer scrutiny revealed the bucket had about 2 cups of a golden powder. The 'experienced beekeeper' told me it was 'pollen substitute' (32% actual pollen) and could be fed to the bees in patty form or, as he does, outside the hive in the dry form taken directly from the package in which it is shipped (easy!!). Feeding them with a crude form of protein is much healthier than the sugar water. The sugar water provides instant energy, but the pollen supplement provides 'life saving' protein and can also be stored in the comb cells for needed consumption at later dates.

Regarding the court case involving our neighboring Gwinnett County beekeepers I have heard the following: The court system has ruled in favor of beekeepers. Even the smallest lot of land can have as many as (essentially) four hives.

BEEKEEPING RESPONSIBILITIES FOR AUGUST

Even though the hive activity slows a bit this time of year the queen should still be laying eggs. The eggs she lays in the next few weeks will get her and the hive through the winter. It is also important to ensure at this time the hive is filled with lots of nutrition – pollen and nectar.

On the other hand, even though some plants are still blooming and producing both nectar and pollen, August is the time when the nectar flow decreases and the hive population reaches its maximum. Despite the lessened flow late August is the time when a hive may become 'honey bound' – that is too many honey capped cells and no empty ones in which new nectar and pollen could be stored and some in which the queen could lay eggs. Laying is still important for her to do, so there will be the necessary blanket of bees surrounding the queen to ensure she survives the winter.

If the hive is 'honey bound' completely capped frames can be extracted and put back in the hive or replaced by empty ones with drawn out comb. These empty frames should be replaced and positioned for two important purposes. First to a position where the queen can continue laying eggs - center of chamber where she is, and second to the center of one of the top boxes for new nectar and pollen deposits.

Usually mite treatments are started the last week in August. The treatment lasts less than a month. No supplemental feeding (sugar water or pollen substitutes) should be *inside* the hive if mite treatments are going on. However extra pollen patties or substitutes are recommended *after* the treatment to help boost the health of the hive.

KEEPING IT LOCAL!

Any club members who have a bee related product to sell, may list their items here.

Swarm Removal: Mark Hughes, 770-356-7025

Honey and Honey bee products – Bill Dunn, 770-630-2742

Honey Bees and Hives – Ernest Quinn 85 retiring from 50 years of beekeeping

Decatur - 770-491-8726

- 7 established hives – bees, one brood chamber, (no supers) top & bottom boards, inner covers, \$250 each
- 2 established hives – bees, one brood box, one honey super, top and bottom boards, inner covers, \$300 each
- 2 NUCS with bees - \$140 each

????Maybe Mr Quinn will accept offers????

2015 BEEKEEPER EVENTS CALENDAR

JULY

- **18 JUL, Honey Bee Disorders School* (rain day 25 JUL)**
- 23 JUL, Club meeting – Julia Mahood – ‘The Making and Use of Secondary Honey Bee Products’.

AUGUST

- 27 AUG, Club meeting, Guest Speaker – Keith Fielder – ‘Fall Splits’.

SEPTEMBER

- 12 SEP, (?) Honey Bee Festival, Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center*
- 18-19 SEP, Ga Beekeepers Association Fall Meeting and Honey Show, Georgia College, 231 Oconee River Greenway, Milledgeville GA 31061
- 24 SEP, Club meeting, FBC’s Annual Honey Show

OCTOBER

- 1 – 12, Cumming Country Fair and Festival*
- 22 OCT, Club meeting

NOVEMBER

- 6 – 8 Nov, Hemlock Festival*
- 19 Nov, Holiday Dinner, installation of officers.*

2015 Forsyth Beekeepers Club Officers	
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