



www.forsythbeekeepersclub.org

FBC's NEXT MEETING: April 25th, 2013, 6:30 PM
@ the Sawnee Mt. Preserve Visitor Center
4075 Spot Road, Cumming, GA 30040 (770-781-2217)

GUEST SPEAKER

Our guest speaker for April is Keith Fielder who will be speaking about Genetic Diversity.

Keith fielder maintains around 30 colonies, from which he collects extracted, chunk and comb honey. Keith's wife, Rose Anne, then takes the honeybee products, including wax, and markets it locally.

Keith, a master beekeeper and Welsh Honey Judge, is a respected member of the beekeeper community and has lectured in Georgia, nationally, and internationally. Our club has been fortunate to have Keith as a guest speaker on several occasions, and It is always educational.

CLUB BUSINESS

April 27th - Certified beekeeper exam. Any questions should be directed to Howard Reagan, or any club officer.

The FBC queen rearing class is **May 18th**, from 8am - 4pm. and **May 26th**, for queen pickup and installation. This is one of the most unique classes offered by any beekeeping club in Georgia.

If you are not receiving your FBC Buzz via e-mail and would like to, please send your email address to me, Sue Conlyn, at insueciant@gmail.com. Please reference "The Buzz" in the subject line. Thanks!

We need volunteers to make sure our club's activities are posted on the many honeybee sites that exist in Georgia, including the Market Bulletin, and GBA's web site. We also need volunteers to be prepared to do presentations. Usually it's children's groups, and festivals, and it's more fun than stressful. Trust me! We have a teaching hive that helps a lot.

APRIL - MAY IN THE GEORGIA HIVE

I've only heard good things about the nucs that many of us purchased from Bob Binnie. If you haven't paid the fuel surcharge of 5\$ per nuc, please pay Hoyt . Our four nucs are going gangbusters and I have actually found the queen in two out of the four. Even If you just got your nucs the following information applies.

Check for population growth. The queen should have been laying eggs for about a month, so you should see a lot of juvenile bees. The brood pattern should be football shaped on each drawn out frame, with the brood in the football area, and the honey and pollen surrounding the brood.

It may be hard to believe, but even at the infant stage of our nucs they might be building queen cups/cells in preparation for swarming, supersedure, or in an emergency to replace a queen that was killed during hive manipulation. Both supersedure and "emergency" queen cups/cells will be

located in the center of the brood combs. Cells built in the emergency situation of being queenless will be curved, with part of it being horizontal in the brood comb and extending out and curving down. Supersedure queen cells will be vertical, straight, *completely* parallel to the brood comb, and they appear larger than emergency queen cells. There will usually be more than one queen cell, regardless of the reason it was created.

Queen cells that are created for the purpose of swarming will be located on the bottom of the brood frame, and will be more numerous than the other two types. Since the gestation of a queen from egg to hatched is only fifteen or sixteen days it is a very good idea for you to check for queen cells at least every 10 - 12 days. If you find queen cells that are for swarming, remove them, and consider adding another brood chamber or another honey super.

If you find queen cells that appear to be for supersedure or an emergency queen replacement, you may not want to remove them. You don't want to cause your colony to be queenless, and if they are trying to supersede the existing queen, they have a good reason. If you determine that your colony has gone queenless, try to get a replacement queen as quickly as you can. If your colony has to create an emergency queen, it takes about 30 days before it will begin laying eggs. In any case, you can always call a more experienced beekeeper if you have questions. Taking pictures of the situation is good too because you may be able to get an answer faster than waiting for someone to come visit.

Feed your Nucs a 1 - 1 simple sugar syrup, and consider adding a pollen supplement for extra protein for population growth. If you have an established colony you shouldn't need to feed them, but the nucs have a lot of juvenile bees, and it won't hurt to have sugar syrup available for them. They also need a source of water nearby. A bird bath with rocks in it works well. The nectar sources right now are tulip poplar, blackberry, clovers. Once that bloom is over, the next one isn't until mid June.

Varroa mites ***will*** wipe out your colony if you don't do something to keep their numbers down. Though Powdered sugar shakes do not kill the mites they are still considered to be a fine non chemical way to dislodge the mites from your bees. The most effective way to use the powdered sugar is to treat them every other month, by doing a shake four times, every three days.. In other words, sugar shake on May 1, 4, 7 and 10. Skip June, and repeat the sugar shake on July 1, 4, 7 and 10, then again in Sept. and November.

Another effective non chemical method used to trap and **kill** varroa destructor is freezing drone comb. This method also interrupts the breeding cycle of the mite. Varroa destructor prefers drone comb over worker comb because they can produce twice as many mites in a drone cell than they can in a worker cell. This is because of the longer gestation period for drones of 23 - 25 days vs +/- 21 days for workers.

You can order drone comb from any bee supply company, and get two for each colony. When one drone frame has the majority of the cells **capped** with drone pupae, take it out and replace it with another drone comb frame. Freeze the removed frame for *at least* 48 hours, and have it standing by ready to use again when the drone frame that you replaced it with has a lot of capped drone cells. Then repeat. *Since you are inviting the colony to produce more drones, you are also giving varroa destructor more places to reproduce and in higher numbers.* ***SO BE SURE YOU REMOVE THE CAPPED DRONE COMB BEFORE THE DRONES EMERGE WITH THE VARROA MITES.*** Don't use the drone combs if you are not going to be able to work your colonies for a while. When you replace a full drone comb with a frozen drone comb you really do not need to do anything to it in the way of cleaning out the dead pupae and mites, the worker bees will do that.

Did I mention that low varroa mite levels are critical to your hive's survival? If you take no action against varroa destructor you will be *extremely* lucky if your colony survives more than three years.

KEEPING IT LOCAL!

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

Buster's Bees Beekeeping supplies, nucs and queens www.bustersbees.com, [770-389-0721](tel:770-389-0721), bustersbees@yahoo.com

LETTERS FROM THE FIELD

This section of the Forsyth Beekeepers Club Buzz is dedicated to club members who would like to share personal experiences, or comments relating to beekeeping.

I am so jealous, that I am actually going to just admit it. A friend of mine at work that I mentored as a new beekeeper has already taken honey - this year - from his 7+ hives, in only his 2nd year of keeping bees. To add insult to injury, he is selling it at work! I on the other hand am again, starting practically from scratch. Hmmm.

Submitted by me! (Sue Conlyn)

BEEKEEPER EVENTS

April

- April 27th: Exam Administered by FBC for beekeeper certification.

May

- May 9 - 11, **22nd Annual Young Harris Beekeeping Institute**: .Registration opened March 4th, 2013, and it is sold out.
- May 18th, **Forsyth Beekeepers Club's Queen Rearing Class**. Register at this month's meeting, or call Hoyt (770-479-1731). There is a fee for this class.
- May 26th, queen pickup and installation.

2013 Forsyth Beekeepers Club Officers	
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