Forsyth Beekeepers Club

THE BUZZ

www.forsythbeekeepersclub.org

FBC's NEXT MEETING: May 23rd, 2013, 6:30 PM

@ the Sawnee Mt. Preserve Visitor Center

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

GUEST SPEAKER

Make a list of everything that has baffled or confused you regarding beekeeping since you installed your NUCS. A panel of FBC members will do their best to answer all of your questions.

FORSYTH BEEKEEPERS CLUB BUSINESS

The FBC queen rearing class was Saturday, May 18th. We had about 30 people take the class. The virgin queens will be ready for pickup at the bee farm on **May 26th**. This class will produce more queens than are needed by the beekeepers who reared them. If you need a queen, make sure you mention it Thursday during the meeting.

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!

Forsyth Beekeepers Club Shirts are available and we are taking orders. Polo shirts with the club name and insignia are $20.00 each, and you may add another line of text for an additional $5.00. Suggestions for second line of text: Master Beekeeper, Certified Beekeeper, Husband of Beekeeper, or the office you hold in the club. At this meeting let Marc know ($20 upfront) or via phone (770-713-1807).

We still have a number of club shirts, mostly unusual sizes, that we will let go now for $15.

MAY - JUNE IN THE GEORGIA HIVE

Except for one nuc that ended up queenless, our nucs are doing fantastic. I hope everyone else's colonies have not swarmed, are queenright, increasing in size, and storing surplus honey for YOU!

Fill in the blanks*:

It only takes _____to _____ days for a queen to go from an egg to emerging. Hive inspections for new Queen Cells should be done every ___ days, because your colonies may still be preparing to swarm.

*Answer at the end of the letter.

Queen cups are larger than normal brood cells, and they are vertically oriented on the frame. Once they are capped they are queen *cells*,. Queen *cups* are not a problem, but if you find the cups are now queen cells you *may* want to do something about them. However, you need to

know why a queen is being reared by the colony in order to determine the proper reaction to a queen *cell.* One of two things is about to happen unless you intervene. Either the colony is about to swarm, or the queen is being replaced.

Supersedure Cells, start out as a queen cup, and will usually be drawn out on the face of the comb, in the middle of the brood frame, not on the bottom. The new queen will be planned for, and the worker bees will build cups specifically for the purpose of rearing a new queen. The original queen will actually lay the eggs in the cups. The worker bees will give the larva large amounts of royal jelly, and rear a large healthy queen to replace the failing one. The first new queen to emerge will eliminate the others. Once she has emerged, she will not fly for about 5 days, and co-exist with her mother in the colony. She will eventually go on her mating flight, and if all goes well she will return to the colony and take over the responsibility of laying eggs. The mother queen may be allowed to live out her days in the colony, but the nurse bees will not take care of her anymore.

Emergency Cells, do not start out as queen cups, but rather as normal worker bee brood cells. If the queen is abruptly lost, the workers will draw out more than one worker bee cell that already has an egg, and enlarge them into queen cells. Because of the situation, all we can say for sure is that the emergency cells will likely not be on the bottom, and they will be made from worker bee cells that had an egg, or larva in it, and may be located very close together. Queens created in an emergency situation are not as big as supersedure queens that the colony had time to adequately prepare for, but they are queens and should be able to sustain the colony. When the first queen emerges, she will destroy the other queens and then after a few days go on her mating flight.

If the queen cups/cells are for supersedure, or queen replacement, and you don't have a queen ready to install, let nature take its course. If you aren't happy with the queen your bees have reared, you can always requeen later.

Swarm Cells are usually near the bottom of a frame, and may even be built hanging from the bottom of a brood frame. It is common for there to be a lot of swarm cups/cells. Once the determination has been made that the cells are for swarming, you have a few options. You can destroy them. Simply take a hive tool or your finger and smash it. Another option, and preferred by me, would be to split the colony into two colonies before it swarms. This involves removing some brood frames, some honey and pollen frames, and one swarm cell. Put them in a nuc box, or a full sized colony, and you have created another colony. You could also send out an email to your fellow beekeepers and ask if anyone needs a queen, and maybe work out a trade of some sort.

Unless you have a colony that is weak, there should be no reason to feed at this time. *However*, you should always keep fresh water near your colonies at all times. Hopefully if you have fresh water nearby, they will not go after your neighbors hummingbird feeders, or swimming pools. Anything that will hold shallow water with rocks in it works well. The rocks are to allow the bees to get to the water without drowning.

The nectar sources right now are tulip poplar, blackberry, and clovers. Once these blooms are over, the next nectar flow isn't until mid June. It isn't too early to take honey either. If your bees have capped honey frames, it's safe to take it at this time. You would never leave them with no honey stores in the fall, but if you take the honey now, they have the time and stimulation to replenish their stores for winter.

Continue dusting the colonies with powdered sugar, and freezing drone comb to keep the varroa destructor at as low a level as you can. You can do a mite count by placing a "sticky board" under your screen bottom board. Leave it in place for 24 hours, and then count the number of

mites on the board. It is not acceptable to use chemicals during the honey flow, so non chemical options are the only available treatments until the fall.

The only way to determine the level of varoa infestation is to sample your colonies for mites. Some good ways to monitor mite levels are an overnight stickyboard check, ether roll, powdered sugar roll, alcohol or detergent wash, and lastly brood sampling. That being said, stickyboards are the most accurate method of determining varroa levels during normal broodrearing periods while brood is emerging. We are having a class in July that will cover all of the methods available to test for mites.

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, bustersbees@yahoo.com

If you need a queen be sure to bring it up at the meeting.

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.

BEEKEEPER EVENTS

May

- May 26th, queen pickup and installation.
- July: Hygienic Bee Testing.

2013 Forsyth Beekeepers Club Officers	
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*Answer: 15 to 17,days to emerge, and check for queen cells every 10 days.