

Buzzword



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>A New Season</i>	1
<i>Elections/Nominations</i>	1
<i>Basics of Apitherapy</i>	2
<i>Bee Mentor Program</i>	3
<i>Bees are No Bird-brains</i>	4
<i>Minutes of Last Mtg</i>	6

Next Meeting

Tuesday, April 20,
2004, 7:00 p.m.

Apitherapy

By Chanetta Ludwig

plus

Election of Officers

At Stedman's in
Silverdale

OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

- President:
— Open —
Vice President:
Stephen Augustine 360-779-1210
Secretary:
Tricia Sullivan 360-779-1210
Treasurer:
Joe Grubbs 360-871-5308

- Educational Materials:
Barbara Stedman 360-692-9453
Librarian:
Roy & Vickie Barton 360-613-0175
Newsletter Editor:
Stephen Augustine 360-779-1210

A New (2004) Beekeeping Season

Reprinted from April 2003. By Paul Hosticka, Past President

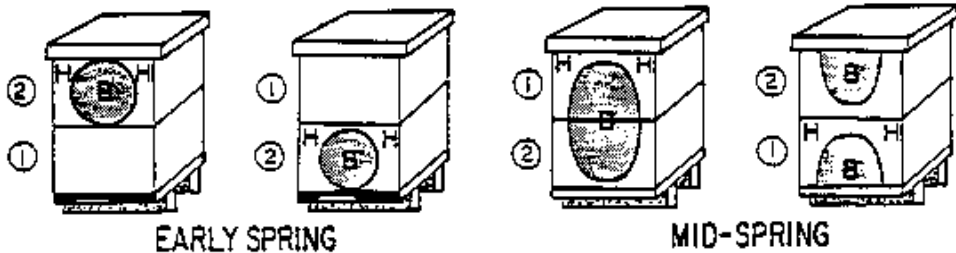
April must have been the inspiration for the "Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde" story. One day can be as sweet as weather gets, warm and sunny, plentiful blossoms, green greener than green, bees on the wing and colonies gaining weight with that coveted spring honey. The next day is as miserable as weather can get, cold drizzle, dark and gloomy, blossoms molding and getting blown down with bees and beekeepers cooped up and getting surly. What is a body to do? Revel in the great days and bear the awful ones. As much as

we wish for better, summer does not come to these parts until July and that is a long time yet.

By now your medication program should be done, the colonies should have been reversed or arranged with an empty frame in the top for the queen to expand into and supers can go on the big ones. It is a good time to equalize all the colonies, with brood going from the strong to the weak. We now shift into swarm season and all the challenges that go with it. There are many strategies for swarm control including splitting, re-queening, reversing and "Demaree"

manipulation and they all work, but for us the big uncontrollable is the weather. Two weeks of lousy weather around now and the girls will find no better way to fill their time than to start building queen cells. Once that has started it is not easy to change their little minds and you might as well split the colony using the frames with cells to build nucs. I believe we in the Northwest have the worst swarm control conditions of anywhere in the country so do the best you can and accept the fact that a few are going to heed the call to be fruitful and

(Continued on page 3)



Elections/Nominations for 2004-2005

Elections are this month for:
President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary

If we want our organization to continue in a vibrant way we really, really need members to step up to the plate. It's a minimal commitment and could be your small way of giving back to the well-being of our organization. Please come to the meeting.

Another good reason
to come to WSBA
meetings -

Door Prizes!

Congratulations to Bill Jones on winning a subscription to Bee Culture—the first in our series of door prizes.

There's a door prize every month but you have to attend to win.

"Burly, dozing humblebee,
Where thou art is clime for
me.

Let them sail for Porto
Rique,
Far-off heats through seas
to seek.

I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-
zone!"

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
The Humble-Bee

Pollination Services



**Do you need your fruit
trees pollinated?**

Contact Roy Barton at
360-613-0175 or
Rusty King at
360-697-1588

BASICS OF APITHERAPY

Adapted from the basic description at <http://www.medicomm.net>

Apitherapy, or bee therapy, is the use of products of the common honeybee for therapeutic purposes. Honeybee venom, bee pollen, raw honey, royal jelly, and propolis are the products generally considered to have medicinal effects. These products are said to be effective against a wide range of ailments, from arthritis and chronic pain to multiple sclerosis and cancer, although few scientific studies have as yet proved their benefits.

The history of apitherapy extends back to ancient Egypt, Greece, and China. Even Hippocrates, the Greek physician known as the "father of medicine," used bee venom to treat arthritis and other joint problems. Austrian physician Phillip Terc initiated the modern study of bee venom and intentional bee stings when he published his article "Report about a Peculiar Connection Between the Bee stings and Rheumatism" in 1888. The late beekeeper Charles Mraz of Middlebury, Vermont, is credited with popularizing bee venom therapy over the past 60 years in the United States. Today, thousands of medical professionals and lay practitioners use apitherapy throughout the world.

How Does It Work?

The five popular honeybee products work in different

ways to treat various ailments and conditions.

Bee venom is administered either by needle or by actual bee sting. Chemical studies show that venom contains a number of powerful anti-inflammatory substances, including adolapin and melittin. Said to be a hundred times more powerful than hydrocortisone, melittin stimulates the production of cortisol, a natural steroid that also acts as an anti-inflammatory. Not surprisingly, bee venom therapy (or BVT) is often used for conditions that involve inflammation, such as tendinitis, bursitis, and rheumatoid and osteoarthritis.

Bee pollen is typically marketed as an energy-boosting nutritional supplement. This bee product contains vitamins, minerals, and protein, but no more so than many ordinary foods. Some advocates believe that bee pollen is a beneficial treatment for seasonal allergies, because ingesting small amounts builds up resistance to pollen. Claims that bee pollen helps athletes improve performance or that it slows the aging process are not backed up by any scientific evidence, however.

Raw honey is a quick source of energy (like sugar) and a natural storehouse of B vitamins and various minerals. It has mild antibacterial and

antibiotic properties, and it can help soothe sore throats. Those who use it believe that raw honey, which has not been filtered, heat-treated, or processed in any way, is more healthful than processed honey. In some studies, raw honey has been used to suppress bacterial growth, particularly in open wounds.

Royal jelly is a milky white substance produced in the salivary glands of worker bees as a food source for the queen bee—and it may be what dramatically extends the queen's life and enhances her fertility. There have been numerous claims about royal jelly's beneficial effects on a variety of medical problems, including fatigue, infertility, asthma, and lack of appetite; these are mainly anecdotal and not substantiated in clinical testing. Interestingly, however, animal and human studies have shown that royal jelly contains ingredients capable of lowering cholesterol levels in the blood. Based on its effect on the queen bee, royal jelly occasionally appears as an ingredient in women's cosmetics, especially wrinkle creams. There is no evidence that royal jelly retards aging (or aging skin) in anyone except bees, however.

Propolis (sometimes called "bee glue") is a sticky resin that seeps from the buds of certain trees (the bees prefer poplar) and oozes from the bark of others (chiefly

(Continued on page 5)

...A New (2004) Beekeeping Season (contd. from page 1)

multiply. Just try to catch them before they move into your neighbors attic.

For those starting new packages remember to keep feed of 1 to 1 syrup on them at all times. It will take around 25 pounds of sugar made into about five gallons of syrup to get two deeps or three westerns of foundation drawn. The bees will not draw comb unless they need cells for either brood or storage so keep pushing them to get that comb drawn early. They do not have the size to depend on field workers to bring in sufficient nectar even if the weather is good. Drawn comb is a beekeepers most valuable asset.

April is also election month for our association. Our by-laws have term limits of three years for officers. I believe that change of officers is good for any organization. New ideas and new direction keep an organization vibrant. We need people willing to make the relatively small commitment of time and effort to keep the association going. No special skills are required, as I have so clearly demonstrated, and I know that many of you could do a fine

job. The president runs the meetings, keeps up with minimal correspondence, is liaison with other organizations and gets last crack at the refreshment table. The treasurer keeps the books (checking account) and gets first crack the membership roster current and gets first crack at the refreshment table. It ain't all that hard! For your efforts you get the gratitude of the membership and the satisfaction that you volunteered to help where help was needed. Most important you get to do it the way you think it should be done for your turn. All surely more precious than silver, more precious than gold.

So talk to our secretary Tricia Sullivan and throw your hat in the ring, we're looking for a few good people to lead us into a bright beekeeping future and you know in your heart that you can and should do it. The best way I know to get elected is to not show up so I'll see you Tuesday.

Editor's Note: We'll most likely not be seeing Paul on Tuesday but I sure hope to see the rest of you with nominations in hand!



BEE MENTOR PROGRAM

WSBA has an established mentor program. Following are the people who have signed up as volunteers to assist new beekeepers with advice and on site assistance. They will also respond to most calls for swarm capture. Please don't hesitate to call them.

South Kitsap:

George Purkett, (360)895-9116, purkettg@nwinet.com

Central Kitsap:

Mike Johnson, (360)830-0295, mlj@hurricane.net
Roy Barton, (360)613-0175, honeyhill@tscnet.com

North Kitsap:

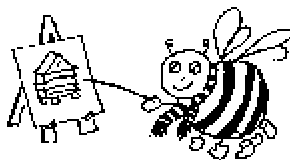
Bill Jones, (360)297-2134, wjones@tscnet.com
Paul Lundy, (360)297-6743, lundyknox@att.net

Bainbridge Island:

Jim Willmann, (206)842-5991, jwillm4622@aol.com

Poulsbo and environs:

Stephen Augustine, (360)779-1210, stephen@lalgudi.net



If you would like to be added to the mentor list please contact Stephen Augustine 360-779-1210

Refreshment Schedule

Apr: Joe Grubbs, Horst

May: Jay Miller,

Roy Barton

Jun: Betty & Walter
Schicker

Jul: George Purkett,
Mike Hoey

Aug: Summer Picnic

If you are unable to fulfill your commitment to provide refreshments for a meeting please notify Barbara Stedman by giving her a call at 360-692-9453 before the meeting date.

Organic Beekeeping Workshop Chestnut Ridge, NY

4/30/2004 - 5/1/2004

A workshop for active beekeepers as well as for beginners including a hands-on session. In this workshop we will look at the bee colony as an organism and what it needs in order to further its health and vitality. Lots of practical advice and demonstrations will give novices enough information to get started with their own hive, and encourage experienced beekeepers to adopt organic procedure.

Limited enrollment

Tuition: \$145 (not including meals)

Presenter: Gunther Hauk
(Director of Pfeiffer Center)

For More Information on this event send email to: beework@pfeiffercenter.org or call: 845-352-5020 ext 20

Bees are no bird-brains

Henry Nicholls on BioMedNet (bmn.com), 10 December 2003

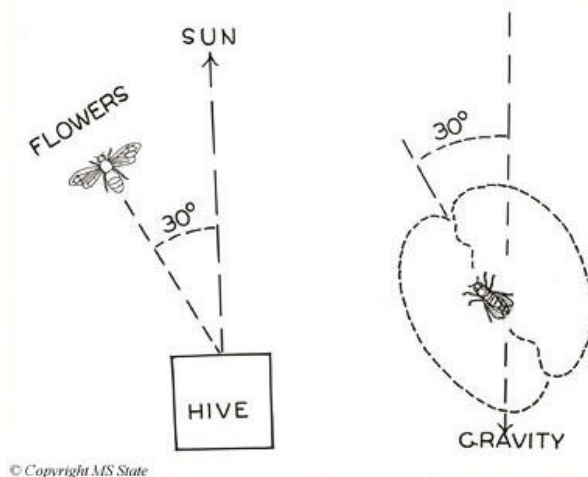
When it comes to judging cognitive ability, neuroscientists are guilty of prejudice against invertebrates, argues an expert in honeybee cognition. Bee brains are capable of much more than is assumed, he claims.

"We have this kind of prejudice that insects or invertebrates are essentially stupid," said Martin Giurfa, a neuroethologist at the Center for Research on Animal Cognition in Toulouse, France. Because of this, researchers are failing to ask the right questions of invertebrates, he says. But the cognitive abilities of the honeybee, one of the best studied insects, are showing that insects and possibly other invertebrates can perform some quite advanced mental tasks.

The current cognitive champion of the invertebrate world is the honeybee, says Giurfa. With fewer than a million neurons and a volume of just 1 mm³, the honeybee brain has "well developed learning and memory capabilities, whose essential mechanisms do not differ drastically from those of vertebrates," he notes in a special issue of *Current Opinion in Neurobiology*.

For example, a complex odor comprised of several compounds triggers neural correlates of each of the separate elements that make up the smell, says Giurfa. But there is also "a special kind of signature for this and only this mixture that could tell the brain that there is something more than just the

elements," he said. "It is clear that something is going on in the mini brain of the honeybee that is more than just a sum of the stimuli."



A common explanation for the advanced nature of the honeybee brain is that selection imposed by the need to be social has driven the evolution of the insect's nervous system.

But Giurfa says that the level of cognition found in the honeybee need not be restricted to social insects. "I think that it's not that invertebrates are stupid or the honey bee brain is unique, it's that we haven't raised these kinds of questions yet in other kinds of invertebrate models."

For instance, he says, although *Drosophila* have traditionally been considered "stupid," not only is the fruit fly capable of contextual learning, attributing a different meaning to the same stimulus if

encountered in a different context, it can also show selective attention, picking which of several stimuli it wants to respond to. This, in particular, is assumed to be a property found only in highly developed vertebrates, he says.

Recently, Bruno van Swinderen and Ralph Greenspan, behavioral geneticists at the Neurosciences Institute in San Diego, California, carried out selective attention experiments on *Drosophila*. "A fly sitting on your tablecloth is not just a bag of reflexes waiting for something to happen," explained van Swinderen. "It's actively looking at you, then the wineglass, then the fork, then you again."

This, he says, is fundamental to how a fly learns and to how it builds a salience map, a two-dimensional, topographically organized map that reflects the distinctiveness of objects around it. "As such, that's probably not so different from the way our brains work, except that the complexity of salience maps is probably much smaller," van Swinderen told BioMedNet News. This suggests that even *Drosophila* have a mind of sorts, he concludes.

Greenspan, who worked with van Swinderen on the study, agrees. "The traditional reluctance to attribute such faculties to insects derives, to a large extent, from the failure to ask them the right questions," he said.



Recipe Corner: *Custom Lip Balm* (thanks Martha!)

3 teaspoons grated unbleached beeswax
5 teaspoons of a carrier oil (sunflower, jojoba or castor)
6-7 drops essential oil
1 teaspoon honey (for flavor)

Melt the beeswax and carrier oil together in the top of a double boiler, stirring to combine. Remove from heat and add the honey and essential oil. Mix thoroughly so the honey doesn't clump. To add a drop of color, stir in a tiny dab of lipstick with a coffee stirrer. Pour into containers; let sit 20 minutes before covering or moving. For glossier lip balm, use 2 teaspoons of wax and 8 teaspoons of carrier oil.

...Basics of Apitherapy (contd. from page 2)

conifers). Worker bees collect it, add their salivary secretions to it, and use it to coat the inside of the hive.

Propolis has been shown to contain antibacterial compounds and can be effective as a salve for cuts and bruises. It is also a source of flavonoids, potent antioxidants that can help prevent cell damage caused by free radicals.

What You Can Expect

Bee venom therapy is the most complex of the different types of apitherapy. Always have an allergy test before beginning a course of treatment and always consult a trained practitioner for the treatments. Because honeybee venom is not closely related to wasp or yellow jacket venom, an allergy to those insects does not necessarily rule out being able to have honeybee venom therapy. Nevertheless, careful testing and supervision is a must in all situations. (Eventually, you can learn to administer the treatments at home, either by yourself or with the help of a partner.)

In BVT, the venom is administered by injection, either by needle or by bee sting. Although some practitioners inject the venom with a hypodermic needle, your practitioner may place the bees, one at a time, directly on your skin with a pair of long tweezers and allow them to sting. The bees are typically placed close to the joint, muscle, or other body part that needs treatment.

Obviously, the bee sting can be a bit painful, but it's nothing to be anxious about. In fact, honeybee stings are much less painful than wasp or hornet stings. The degree of discomfort is basically in proportion to how you respond to pain. The first sting is always the worst because you don't know what to expect. Once you know what it feels like, the experience definitely gets easier.

Whether you receive BVT treatment by injection or sting, you can expect to feel some local discomfort--inflammation, stiffness, soreness, or itching--but the practitioner will usually place an ice pack on the affected area to reduce these symptoms as quickly as possible. If the practitioner is working with actual bees, the stingers will be removed immediately or within a few minutes.

For a relatively simple condition, such as tendonitis, just two or three sessions may be required, with two to ten stings per session. For a complex condition, such as multiple sclerosis, you may require up to three sessions per week (with two to three stings per session) for six months or more.

You do not need to consult a practitioner to try the other types of apitherapy. Bee pollen and royal jelly are available over-the-counter in capsules, powders, creams, and lotions for oral or topical use. Raw honey and propolis are available in health-food stores. Because an allergic reaction is always a possibility with bee products, you should proceed with care if you don't know whether or not you're sensitive.

Health Benefits

There have been few controlled scientific studies proving the value of bee venom, bee pollen, raw honey, royal jelly, or propolis, but there are many anecdotal reports about their health benefits. (One difficulty with controlled studies of bee venom is that a proper placebo is impossible to create; if you're stung by a bee, you know it.)

Because of its anti-inflammatory properties, bee venom is commonly used to treat diseases such as arthritis, bursitis, and tendonitis. It is also used to relieve chronic back and neck pain. Some apitherapists report that bee venom can also help break down and soften scar tissue, flattening scars and lightening them. This idea is supported by the fact that bee venom contains

powerful enzymes that can break through scar tissue.

Bee venom therapy is additionally reported to decrease spasms and fatigue in multiple sclerosis patients and to increase the patients' stability. The National Multiple Sclerosis Association funded research at Allegheny University in Philadelphia to explore the possible benefits of apitherapy. The preliminary results of experiments conducted with laboratory mice, reported in 1998, found no beneficial effect against the course of an MS-like disease. Research is ongoing, however.

How To Choose a Practitioner

There are no licensing or credentialing organizations for apitherapists (apitherapy practitioners). Some physicians perform bee venom therapy themselves; others work with beekeepers who provide the bees and administer the stings under supervision. As in any type of treatment, getting a referral from a trusted health-care practitioner, friend, or relative is the best way to find an apitherapist.

Cautions

Advocates say that most of the allergic reactions attributed to honeybee venom are actually to yellow jacket or wasp venom. However, if you are allergic to bee venom, you should be very careful when using this therapy, and get professional supervision. Furthermore, in case you have an undetected allergy, be sure to keep a bee-venom allergy kit (including a syringe and epinephrine) on hand.

If you have heart disease, hypertension, tuberculosis, or diabetes, avoid apitherapy. Recommended dosage levels have not yet been established for bee products. Therefore, exercise caution when using any of them.



MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

MARCH 16, 2004 AT STEDMAN'S BEE SUPPLIES

Treasurer's Report:

- * Joe Grubbs presented a treasurer's report. We have 40 paid members as on March 16th. Dues are \$24 per year, please pay them to Joe now.

Announcements:

- * Stedman's will have packages of bees and queens arriving on April 10th for about \$40. Call Barbara to order now.

Old/New Business:

- * Nominations are open for the officers' positions. Elections will be held at the April meeting. Please submit names to Secretary, Tricia Sullivan.
- * Ideas for future programs are: Steve Shepherd may be willing to talk about sugar esters. Al Stedman will contact him.
- * A question was raised about having a display at the Kitsap County Fair. Concerns were that the fair is too long to provide enough folks to staff a table the whole time. No one showed interest in organizing the effort.
- * We had our first door prize drawing. Bill Jones won a subscription to Bee Culture.

Program:

- * George Purkett gave an informative program on Observation Hives. He also suggested to the Association that we consider sponsoring an observation hive in a public place like a nursery.

Submitted by Tricia Sullivan, Secretary, April 08, 2004



West Sound Beekeepers Association
3763 NW Anderson Hill Road
Silverdale, WA 98383
<http://www.WestSoundBees.org>

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 20
Apitherapy & Election of Officers
7 p.m. at Stedman's in Silverdale