



BUZZWORD



WEST SOUND BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

<http://www.westsoundbees.org>

Proudly serving bees, their keepers, and the public in Kitsap County, WA and beyond!

APRIL 2014

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WSBA Apiary Remodel - 2014

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEST SOUND BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION APIARY ACTIVITIES

Date: **Tuesday, 4/15/2014**
 Time: 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm
 Location: Stedman's Bee Supplies
 3763 NW Anderson Hill Rd
 Silverdale, WA

WEST SOUND BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Date: **Tuesday, 4/15/2014**
 Time: 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm
 Location: Stedman's Bee Supplies
 3763 NW Anderson Hill Rd
 Silverdale, WA
 Topic: First Year in Beekeeping/Over-wintered Hives – Now What?

PACKAGE BEE DAY – SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 2014

WEST SOUND BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION HANDS-ON CLASSES

Date: **Saturdays, 4/12/2014, 4/26/2014 & 5/3/2014**
 Time: 8:00 am to 10:00 am, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm
 Location: Stedman's Bee Supplies
 3763 NW Anderson Hill Rd
 Silverdale, WA

TREASURER'S REPORT

April 2014

(Bank statement dated 3/31/2014)

Money Market Reserve account: \$4,505.87
Savings account: \$3,888.88
Checking account: \$9,317.83

Total membership Dues paid for 2014 = 111
New members =

Elizabeth Bianchi
WSBA Treasurer

REQUEST FOR BUZZWORD CONTRIBUTIONS

Whether you are new to West Sound Beekeepers Association, new to beekeeping or have been at it for many a year, we are always interested in observations and input from our members. Maybe you have an interesting story, a question you'd like to get out to the members or a photo or two you'd like to share? Your contributions to the Buzzword are always welcome!! Please send your contributions to biz@kimredmond.com. If you want to share your photos please be sure to include your comments and/or descriptions.

And, let's see those hives!! We know you've had fun painting your new equipment – so share your photos!

SPLITS/INCREASES

Jason Deal

So you are looking for some tools in the bee bag to help with making increases. There are many ways and reasons to performing splits. Not all splits will yield increase if used for particular situations. These are usually performed for disease and pest management and you will lose part of the split resulting in decrease.

Let's cover some reasons for performing splits. They are utilized for Queen rearing, Queen mating, honey production, swarm prevention, cover/make-up for winter losses, increasing the number of colonies to keep, nuc sales, and pest/disease management. For this article we will cover a swarm prevention increase split for current or soon to be strong colonies. This particular method serves two purposes; first and foremost to prevent swarms and the by-product being another addition to the bee yard.

SPLIT/INCREASES ~ Jason Deal (continued)

Your colony right now is one to two deep boxes full of bees and you have worries of an early swarm. The end result of an early swarm at this time of year is most likely an unmated queen if left alone and a loss of the entire colony. Here are some steps to make a split and prevent the swarm. This procedure is for deep equipment and adjustments need to be made for western boxes.

Step 1: Have a new queen on order to arrive when you are ready to perform the split. Since the split process is 10 days long adjust your order arrival date accordingly.

Step 2: (Day 1) (new queen arrives in 10 days) Add a new deep box on top. Put your queen in the upper box with a frame of eggs and adhering bees. Install a frame in the lower box to make up for the removed frame. Install the queen excluder between the two deep boxes. Feed your bees consistently.

Step 3: (Day 10) Remove your lower box and put on a new stand. Install your new queen. Keep your upper box at the original location. Here is what happens and why:

Your original queen will lay a lot of eggs in the upper box due to heat rising from the brood nest below.

New wax can be easily drawn using this method if new frames are used in the upper box. The bees need space for the queen to lay eggs thus the new frames will be drawn quickly.

Once split, your original queen accepts the entire field force. Your new queen can be easily introduced due to the very young population of bees left in the lower box. Any drift back to the original colony is minimal and will not impact the remaining brood due to the ten days of allowing brood to emerge.

Now you have made your increase determine your colony strength and whether honey supers need to be added. This split should keep the bees satisfied for quite some time.

I performed this split on ten colonies a couple of years ago a week prior to Memorial Day. Not a single colony wanted to split for the rest of the season and honey production was very nice.

NEW OBSERVATION HIVE AT STEDMAN'S

~ George Purkett

The next time you are in Stedman's Bee Supply check out the new observation hive. The old observation hive has been replaced with a newer better shinier one.

You may have noticed that each year the single width observation hive gets populated with a package, thrives until summer, sometimes swarms, and then dwindles in the fall and fails in the winter. Usually the last few workers and the queen make it to early January. This is common for most observation hives as the ideal shape for viewing is not the ideal shape for maintaining a cluster over the fall and winter. Hopefully, this pattern will not repeat with the new observation hive design.



The new observation hive was made by, donated to Stedman's by, and installed by Darren Gordon, House of Bees founder and the Honeybee Ambassador to the World from West Sound Beekeepers Association. Darren has recently gone touring Europe in the hopes of meeting European beekeepers and learning about the various beekeeping practices they follow. You can check his progress at: <http://houseofbees.com/the-sabbatical>

If you are familiar with Darren's work, you would not expect it to be just a simple pine box with bees and you would be correct in your expectation. The observation hive is constructed mostly of Cherry, Maple and Pine and looks like a very expensive wall cabinet. There is a main viewing window in front and two side windows all covered with hinged cherry doors. The back mounts firmly on the wall with a simple wooden French cleat.

The entrance for the bees is through a tube that exits through the wall near the bottom in the back. You will not find a Langstroth frame or any plastic foundation in this hive. This hive is based on Warre' dimensions using top bars. There are 4 top bars in the top of this hive. The bees may create 4 free hanging combs 12 inches wide hanging down the full 2 1/2 feet, each hanging perfectly from a single top bar. Alternatively, the bees may fill the cavity more free form as they go creating a tangled twisted mass of comb attaching to the back and the viewing windows wherever it is convenient. It should be interesting to watch them expand to fill the space and watch their plan take shape.

The volume of this hive is close to the volume of a Langstroth deep hive which is also close to the ideal volume swarming bees search for when looking for potential cavities to move into.

NEW OBSERVATION HIVE AT STEDMAN'S (continued)

Darren had a prototype similar to this in his garage for a couple years and had time to think about what would make the prototype easier to maintain. This hive has all (or most) of the features he thought about. There is a removable latched top to access the top bars from the top. Between the cover and the top bars there is a burlap cover cloth that sits on top of the top bars to keep the removable cover from being stuck down. There is also a close-able screened port in the removable cover so a hive top jar feeder can be used.

The bottom of the hive is more complicated but looks simple until you look closely. There is a slide in solid bottom that covers an internal latched screened bottom. The screened bottom is visible by looking in the front window. The purpose of the solid bottom is to isolate the hive from warm air coming into the hive and to hide the workings of the screened bottom from being inadvertently being removed by curious little fingers, and contain the droppings falling through the screened bottom. The screen may help mites fall out of bee access, but having the bottom open-able is mostly useful if the hive needs to be taken out and have some bees removed to reduce overcrowding. I also know that once the hive is removed from the wall and outside for maintenance, a large portion of the back is removable, at least until the bees attach comb to it. This is really the access to clean it up if a colony does not survive a winter.



Another hidden feature is some sliding panels to close the exit on the wall and the exit on the hive if it is taken outside to add or remove bees or comb. Anybody that has had an observation hive in their living room would appreciate this feature. The sliding panels also have a safety latch so it doesn't inadvertently get bumped open when moving the hive full of bees.

There are five main features that should make this observation hive more suitable for the bees over the old one. First, the size and shape allows for 3 times the volume for the hive and having 4 combs wide will allow for better fall and winter clustering. Second, the natural comb will allow the colony to better manage their population dynamics to suit their own needs which may end up with more drones and possibly smaller workers. Third, the access through the wall is much simpler and less likely to get plugged and cause ventilation problems. Fourth, the feeder location will be in a location where the bees can more easily find it. And fifth, it will be easier to take in and out for maintenance so it may get done whenever necessary.



I am hoping Darren and Pam have a safe and fun filled trip and have time to keep posting to their travel log to keep us updated. I can't wait to see what types of hive designs Darren will come up with upon his return.

BEGINNER BEEKEEPING CLASS RESULTS FOR 2014

The association made a big change with the Beginner Beekeeping Class this year. The board decided to have it at the Silverdale Community Center to give us enough space to fit all the students, and they changed it to 2 hour sessions. We also put together a set of slide presentations to keep us on track. I am happy to report that the changes were an overwhelming success. Each of our major problem areas were improved.



We eliminated the disruption caused by the end of class and the beginning of the meeting transitions. Students maintained interest by coming to all of the classes.

The added space allowed everyone to sit down and walk around when they wanted. There were far fewer parking issues. We eliminated the back and forth efforts of completing the tests that has resulted in 56 students passing all of the apprentice tests. We had about 65 present at each classes but not all of them were taking the tests.

Several additions were made including: having slides for each presentation, giving demonstrations where possible, adding in 'Natural Beekeeping' alternatives, having multiple speakers for each class, and maintaining control of the tests were all great improvements. Also having Elizabeth and Kim for managing Registration and testing worked well. Having several instructors gave students more of an opportunity to get questions asked and answered. We made seating adjustments each class and finally got the best arrangement on the last session.

We still need to make some improvements to the training for next year. One shortcoming was the lack of time to take the tests. Another shortcoming is the test does not necessarily cover the important information so the presentations try to cover the test material in addition to the important information. More appropriate test questions could allow a tightening of the presentations. Jean is going to work on getting changes to the test questions.

We also found that about 1/3 of the students missed 1 of the 5 classes so there was a lot of catch up of tests being done during the presentations which may have been more distracting.

BEGINNER BEEKEEPING CLASS RESULTS FOR 2014 (continued)

We also had some unnecessary overlap which can be good if we overlap by repeating the important information. We also do not have handouts of information in the presentations. It may be beneficial to capture some of the information and make it available.

One big difference was that there was a lot of effort to collect and transport all of the equipment for demonstrations and display, set up the room, clean up the room, and put the stuff back away. There were no fewer than 8 people setting up and even more cleaning up. Having the students help clean up was wonderful.

Another thing to check on for next year is to make sure presenters will be available before picking the day of the week to have the class on. It worked out by it would have been nicer to incorporate even more speakers.

I would also like to thank all of our new beekeepers for taking the time and attending the beginner class. Welcome to the West Sound Beekeepers Association.

I hope we have provided you with enough useful information for you to get a good start in beekeeping. As you turn this information into knowledge, we hope your bees will benefit and you will be rewarded with everlasting honey.

George.





STEDMAN'S!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Now is the time to send in your 2014 dues. Member dues support the Association's goals of promoting better understanding and appreciation for honey bees and beekeeping by providing community awareness of the positive effects of beekeeping and topnotch educational beekeeping classes for all experience levels.

Being a paid member of West Sound Beekeepers Association also puts the Association's extensive library at your disposal, allows you the use of the Association's extractor, gives you the opportunity to have input on the direction the Association takes, makes you eligible to be an officer of the Association and puts you in touch with a lot of fun beekeepers! For only \$24, every member of your household becomes a member – what a great deal!

To join or renew your membership simply fill out the following form and bring it, along with your payment, to the next monthly meeting. Or you can mail the form with your payment to the WSBA Treasurer (address below.)

****PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO WSBA****

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PHONE & EMAIL: _____

Mail this form along with your check to: Elizabeth Bianchi, WSBA Treasurer
15017 118th Ave NW
Gig Harbor, WA 98329