



The

BUZZWORD

westsoundbees.org

West Sound Beekeepers Association

July 2008 Vol.XI No.VIII

What's Inside:

Minutes.....2
 Message from the president...3
 Outbreeding Mites
 (continued).....4
 NorthWest Beekeeping Basics.6
 The Bee Manager.....7

Next meeting:

Tuesday 7 PM July 15

Bee-ginner class:

6 PM

Queen Rearing Group

Meets after regular meeting

Beekeeping Conventions

Find out what's new in beekeeping!

Attend a Beekeeping conference this fall!

**Joint Oregon/Washington State
Beekeepers Convention Oct. 16-18**
at the Red Lion Inn in **Vancouver, WA**

The **Western Apiculture Society of
North America** is holding its 2008
Annual Conference
Aug. 17-21 in Victoria, the capital
city of British Columbia, Canada.

President, Webmaster
George Purkett.360 895 9116

VP, Librarian
Roy Barton.....360 613 0175

Secretary
Judy Gunther...360 297 5075

Treasurer
Dennis Heeney.206 842 5545

Educational Materials
Barbara Stedman360 692 9453

Education Chairman
Paul Lundy.....360 297 6743

Newsletter Editor
Basil Gunther...360 297 5075

Queen Rearing Group Leader
David Mackojak..360 698 5228



OUTBREEDING MITES AND OVERWINTERING HONEYBEE NUCS

Successful Beekeeping the Natural Way

by Mel Disselkoe January 8, 2008

Over the past fifteen years, beekeeping has changed dramatically due to the introduction of the varroa and tracheal mites. When the mites were identified about fifteen years ago, the losses to northern, overwintered hives ran from 30-70%. Already, within the past ten years, the number of hives in the U.S. has decreased to just half of what it was. We now have a serious bee shortage and the need for action is immediate.

Even after all of this time and after the investment in and development of all kinds of sophisticated pharmaceuticals, losses are still as high as 70%. The scientific community has not yet been able to solve the mite problem. In fact, there is real concern now about drug contamination of our honeybee combs. This article is not intended to degrade or criticize anyone as I know all have done the very best under the circumstances and no one wants to see the industry suffer as it has in the last few years. But it is time for bee suppliers to get back on track and return to selling bee supplies again instead of becoming pharmaceutical outlets.

Doolittle's time-honored methods offer us a way around mites and pharmaceuticals

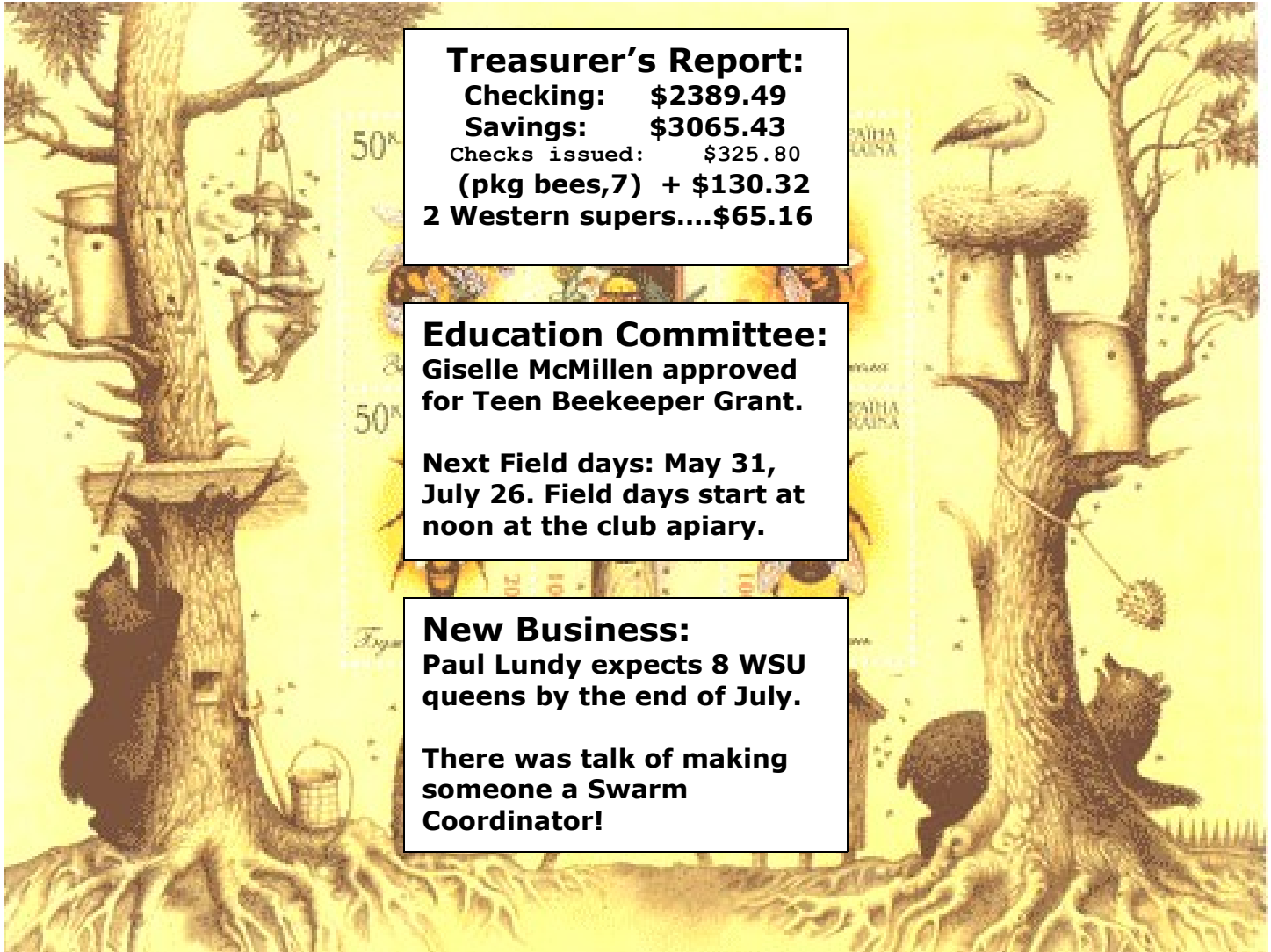
For ten years now, I have been studying and experimenting with G. M. Doolittle's well-documented beekeeping methods as found in his book entitled, A YEAR'S WORK IN AN OUT-APIARY, which was originally published in 1908. Doolittle's methods have stood the test of time. Following his lead has enabled me to recover my hives and increase my bee populations.

Overwinter honeybee nucs without drugs by outbreeding mites

It has become clear to me that rather than focusing on why 70% of the hives died in the fall and winter, it would be more useful to understand why 30% survived. Here is where Doolittle's work comes into play. *(continued on page 4)*

Minutes from the June 17, 2008 meeting

Submitted by Judy Gunther
George Purkett presided



Treasurer's Report:

Checking: \$2389.49
Savings: \$3065.43
Checks issued: \$325.80
(pkg bees,7) + \$130.32
2 Western supers....\$65.16

Education Committee:

Giselle McMillen approved
for Teen Beekeeper Grant.

Next Field days: May 31,
July 26. Field days start at
noon at the club apiary.

New Business:

Paul Lundy expects 8 WSU
queens by the end of July.

There was talk of making
someone a Swarm
Coordinator!

At The Meeting:

- Paul Lundy brought us up to date on the Apiary Advisory Committee.
- Amazing tales of Beekeeping and a Devastating Bear story were told!
- David Mackovjak gave a Queen Rearing Group update.
- The new door prizes and catalogs from Brushy Mountain Bee Supplies arrived!
- Andrejs Raize won a pollen trap and Karen Carpenter won a queen marking kit!

Notice: "I have about 50-15lb plastic pails of colored icing (frosting) very soft and easy to spread. Basically sugar and shortening and I have spread it on frames and the bees seem to take it-may be a good way to feed colonies in cool weather or anytime. I am asking \$6.00 a pail and have sold many to some pierce county bee keepers"

-Jerry Hominda goldenbee@juno.com 253-858-6372

Message From The President:

Yesterday, I went out to capture a swarm. It was in a Fir tree, about 25 feet up. I had an extension ladder but as the swarm was out on a branch, I could not lean the ladder against anything. I parked the pickup directly under the swarm, and standing on the wheel-well, I could reach part of the branch with a pole-pruner but could not reach the swarm. There was one branch under the swarm, so I used the ladder to prop it out of my way. I had a couple of 5 frame nuc boxes with me. My first idea was to try and jar the branch, dropping the cluster onto the two boxes, hopefully hitting them. The chance of getting the queen was slim, but not hopeless. In retrospect, I should have tried to draw on my experience and realized that a large swarm of bees falling 20 feet would hit hard, squashing many of the bees on the bottom and coating the bed of the pickup with wet and slippery nectar. It would be a much better outcome if I could put a hoop of berry wire on the pole-pruner to suspend an open garbage bag to catch them gently and lower them to an awaiting box. With the homeowner watching, one, two, three, I jarred the branch. Plop, buzz, buzz, buzz, the swarm partially hit the two boxes. Bees all over the pickup, all over in the air. It was a good thing I was not on a stepladder in the back of the pickup. Well, some bees were squashed, some stayed with the boxes, but the vast majority of bees were going back up in the tree. I jarred the branch, and again buzz, buzz. This was making no progress. Second idea, cut the branch they were clustering on. This seemed harder than it should have as I had to hook the branch, pull it down and hold with one hand while cutting with the pole-pruner in the other hand. After 5 attempts and 2 breaks, the branch came down. I now had a branch and lots of twigs in the truck and the cluster settled on another branch. This was a great success though as the new branch was a little lower and I could reach it with the pole-pruner. Darn, no berry wire, plyers, or garbage bag available. My third idea was a winner. I used a bungee cord to tie a drawn frame to the pole-pruner, and poked it into the cluster until enough bees were on it, then lowered it down, and gently jarred the bees into a box. I happened to have some queen cells in a nuc box with me, so I wondered if I could attract more bees with a queen cell. I put a queen cell in the box, and they started fanning more, and they appeared to stop leaving the box, but uncaptured bees swarm did not seem to be attracted. I had sealed brood on one frame and raised it up on the pole-pruner. I was surprised that I could not get any bees to light on it. I continued on with raising empty drawn comb and lowered more bees into the second swarm box. After many more times raising the comb on the pole pruner, jarring the bees, encouraging them onto the frame and lowering them, I had the vast majority of the swarm in two boxes. At some point I had to leave the remainder of bees in the tree. When I got them home, I added a queen cell to the nuc that did not have one. I do not know if a queen ended up in either box, but I am hoping the queen cell will keep the bees there.

Happy swarm hunting.

George

And a poem...

The Beekeeper's Delight

*Honey in the jar
Honey in the comb
Honey in the kitchen
Let's eat at home!
Honey sweet honey I spread on my bread
Pour it on cereal or crackers instead.
Like it in applesauce, hot tea or ice cream
Love it in coffee, it's really a dream.
Give me a spoonful, one more my dear
No need to be skimpy, we've enough for a year.
One cannot beat honey for flavor and health
For honey gives longevity, sweetness, and wealth!
Queen in the palace
King on the throne
Never lived better
Than with Honey at home*

By Ormond and Harry Aebi, "Mastering the Art of Beekeeping".



Successful Beekeeping the Natural Way *(continued from front page)*

He observed that when a hive feels that the queen is failing, the colony will supersede that queen. This usually occurs in July. A newly-mated queen at this time will perform as does a spring queen and lays eggs so rapidly that she quickly outbreeds the mite well into the fall. The outbreeding of the mite will occur even more rapidly if there is a week of broodlessness which breaks the mites' breeding cycle. Doolittle advocated fall requeening (meaning after the turn of days) and this is the way we can save our hives without any drugs at all. On page 49 of his book, Doolittle states, "I have made such with perfect success as late as September first, using six combs of brood and four of honey". These single hives were then overwintered in a cellar. It is important to remember that Doolittle lived near Syracuse, NY which is located on the 43rd parallel (the same parallel on which I reside and which has made it ideal for me to test his methods). In chapter 7, on page 75, and on July 24 he requeens failing queens or ones that he doesn't think will make the winter. Quote, "As this is the season of the year when the bees do most their superseding of queens (it seems so natural to them), my loss in using this plan will not average more than one queen cell out of twenty given." If you read between the lines here, Doolittle is implying that if you make a two brood frame split on July 24 and give them a cell she will be mated and laying on August 1. Then by September 1 she should be well on her way to six frames of brood. What they don't have is the four frames of honey needed for overwintering in the cellar. We would then have to give them the four frames of honey or feed them heavily throughout September (this is so they can process the syrup). You need 63 days or three brood cycles from August 1 through September 30 to have a population large enough to overwinter. Remember that a young, newly-mated queen will not slow down that late in the year but will act just like a spring and swarm queen. Therefore, she will outbreed the mite and you will go into winter with a hive of young, strong bees.

The solution is simple for overwintering nucs. As mentioned above, the honeybee can outbreed the mite. We see this every year when mite-infested, overwintered bees build up in the spring in response to the day length and the swarming season. But if left alone, the mites will eventually kill the colony, in some cases within the year. It is important to understand the biological relationship between the honeybee and the mite in order to understand why hives eventually fall to mites. Because the mite has a shorter gestational cycle of 13 days versus the gestational cycle of the honeybee of 21 days, the mites outbreed the honeybees and eventually overwhelm the colony. Also, a honeybee queen mated *before* the turn of days, or June 21, slows down her egg laying *after* the turn of the days (June 21) and at that point the mites quickly outbreed the bees. You can stimulate a queen by feeding the hive sugar syrup in the fall but not long enough or at the level to be able to outbreed the mite. The only way to outbreed the mite in the fall is to introduce a queen cell at the end of July as that queen will not slow down her egg laying but instead will act like a spring queen, as observed by Doolittle. I reasoned that if we can find a way to continually outbreed the mite we can overwinter our bees without drugs but it may require rethinking our procedures and management.

Aside from competing breeding rates, there is another aspect of the varroa-honeybee relationship that makes splitting especially effective for reducing mite populations. Since the ability of the varroa mite to reproduce is entirely dependent on the gestational pattern of the honeybee, there are two principles whereby we can control the reproduction of the varroa mite without chemicals. One is that the fertile mite must have a medium to lay her eggs and second she must have the stimulus to start reproducing. When you make a split you are breaking the normal breeding cycle of the mite because you are interrupting both the medium and the stimulus by creating a pause in the honeybee brood cycle when the old queen is removed and the new queen cell inserted.

On days 9-21 of the split, we have taken away the medium so there is no stimulus. On day 22, when a medium again becomes available, the mites will instinctively have the stimulus with the help of larval pheromones. Varroa mites are solitary and do not function as a colony. Each mite is an individual and will respond independently from any other mite to medium and stimulus. I reasoned that the first 200 larvae that become medium on day 22 will attract at least 4+ mites per larva. This is an unsustainable arrangement for the mites, as they are capped inside the cell with not enough haemolymph (larval blood) to feed them all, thereby killing the larvae and subsequently themselves. For that reason, after a fall split you will go into winter with a small mite population, thereby enabling the nuc to survive.

If a newly mated queen lays 1000 eggs per day, on day 22 the first 200 larvae will attract most of the mites. The larvae with 1 or 2 mites will survive. You may notice what appears to be foulbrood around day 30 because of the perforated cappings. This is normal as the bees are removing the dead larvae and

mites. You only have to overwinter 1 out of these 4 nucs to have a 100% survival rate since you had only 1 hive in July. We are already achieving 75% survival in some areas of the country. It is my goal to achieve 75% survival on the 43rd parallel.

You may think that if all the mites have emerged on day 21, why not just put on chemicals and kill the mites. The answer is that you may kill 95% of them and be able to overwinter but what you leave is 5% of resistant mites that will breed on causing future problems. Chemicals are not effective because you cannot control the temperature or the dosage. Also, since varroa mites and honeybees are both invertebrates, there is the risk of overdosing the honeybee simultaneously.

I have been a beekeeper for over 35 years and have operated 450 colonies that were part of a migratory operation which I sold so that the beekeeper could meet his pollination contracts. I now operate enough hives to continue my research and stay current in the industry. In years past, before the mites, it was normal to have a 10% winter loss. This was before we began to requeen our hives annually. Fifteen years ago, the honeybee had all the genetics to overwinter successfully. The mites have not caused the honeybee to lose its genetic ability to overwinter and never will. There is no reason to spend time and money chasing down or importing bees for their genetic ability to overwinter. I have nothing against different strains of bees but it is just not necessary. The best bee is the bee that can overwinter in your area and build up in the spring.

When I started to lose my hives to mites, it was a normal, logical assumption that the hives that overwintered successfully were genetically superior to the hives that did not. I started to raise queens from these successfully overwintered hives but to no avail, because they died just like the others. Thanks to Doolittle, I now know that hives overwinter successfully by superseding their queens in July, not by being genetically superior.

It is important to keep in mind that this is how the system works in theory and does not take into account mismating, weather, predators, or human error that can affect final results. By making splits and overwintering nucs to outbreed the mites and avoid expensive and harmful pharmaceuticals, we can easily double the hive count in this country within one year. We can also provide for our pollination and honey supply.

If you decide to read Doolittle's book as I suggested, you will find that G. M. Doolittle was a creationist and a naturalist as were the other "KINGS" of beekeeping, Rev. L. L. Langstroth and Dr. C. C. Miller. However, I have a very fundamental problem with Doolittle. If he was such a good naturalist then why did he overwinter his bees in a cellar? What is natural about that? I can only speculate on that question and this is the conclusion that I have made. Back in the 1880's through early 1900 most honey production took the form of comb honey and, in fact, Doolittle's book is about the 1905 section honey crop. All brood chambers were deep singles and they even went late into the fall to get the Buckwheat sections.

Therefore, the bees were in singles and not a lot of stores except from late fall flows. Even though Doolittle kept "reserve honeycombs" that he used in the spring to build up his overwintered hives, the use of the 2nd story honey super, which we now call a double deep food chamber, was not yet used. I think Doolittle was so intense on perfecting queen rearing and production of quality queens that he had not yet turned his expertise to that problem. I am quite sure that that would have been his next project because in the third chapter of his other book entitled, SCIENTIFIC QUEEN-REARING, he states, "But," says one, "You are always crying 'Nature! Nature!!' Don't you know that man's intelligence, by opposing Nature's laws at the right time, can get ahead of her ways, and thus secure better results?" No, I did not know any such thing: nor do I believe it. It is only as the intelligence of man moves along harmoniously with the laws of Nature that any improvement can be expected. Is this not true?" Successful, natural beekeeping methods are essential to the future of our bees and the beekeeping industry so we must bring forth all the creativity, intelligence, and spirit that we can muster in order to bring forth sustainable beekeeping innovations that are free to the world's beekeepers, just as the "Master Beekeepers" did when they shared the fruits of their discoveries with all.

NorthWest Beekeeping Basics

July marks the end of the major nectar flow here in the West Sound. You should make your plans to remove your capped frames of honey from your supers and ready them for extraction.

The Association has an extractor available for member's use. You might want to consider asking another beekeeper to extract for you and save you the mess. But, there is certainly nothing quite as wonderful as the first of the honey from your own bees flowing from the extractor.

You should examine the supers frequently but don't leave empty comb on colonies that are light in stores in the brood nest. The best way to take off full supers is to use the triangular queen escapes. If you are taking your colonies up to the mountains for fireweed place a couple of empty, drawn supers above the brood boxes, place an escape board above those and replace the full, capped supers above the escape. Within two days the supers with honey should be empty of all bees. If you are not taking your bees to the mountains remove all supers by the end of July so that the bees can pack the brood boxes with any remaining honey that they gather to use for winter stores.

Don't tempt robber bees with exposed honey. When you remove your honey supers from the hive, keep them covered as you collect them. Not only will it make keeping the yellow jackets at bay a little easier, but also help prevent robbing from getting started. Once bees start robbing, it is very difficult to stop them robbing from other hives.

During July examine each colony every 10 days for queen-rightness. Use a sugar shake test to check for mite load. As always, be vigilant for signs of American Foulbrood. If you are planning on making nucs for late summer or fall requeening, order queens for July delivery. Requeening is a good management tool for failing hives or hives that have come down with mites or disease or hives with really bad temperament. Having nucs on hand will allow you to successfully requeen colonies late into the year if warranted.

Make your plans for the county fair.

Advice from the late George Imerie: "Beekeepers destroy so much good honey each year by extracting UNCAPPED nectar, which causes the honey to be higher than 19.6 specific gravity and the honey ferments. Bees do NOT CAP their honey until they have removed most of its water content and have allowed the necessary time for the enzyme, invertase, which they have added to the nectar to convert the nectar sugar, sucrose, into two simpler sugars, glucose and fructose, a process often referred to as "curing" or "ripening". Only when the nectar is totally cured or ripened do the bees CAP the cell which preserves it for its intended purpose - winter stores. The bees never did plan it for YOU!

The task of curing honey is difficult for bees in our high humidity, so we can give the bees some help. Near the end of our nectar flow "shrink" the storage space in the supers by removing all slightly filled or zero filled frames, and move the UNCAPPED (but almost full) frames to the lowest super (the one next to the brood chamber), and leave everything quiet for a week or ten days until EXTRACTION TIME. The frames that you removed can be stored on another colony (like a swarm you caught) OVER the inner cover; and the bees of that colony will go through the inner cover hole, remove the nectar or honey and take it below for brood chamber feeding.

When the year's crop of honey for human consumption is over, all your frames are at least 90-95% fully capped, your extraction equipment is clean and you are ready to extract. Now all you have to do is get that honey off your colonies, and get it to the extractor while it is still WARM, because uncapping and extracting is so much easier with WARM honey.

All of my followers know that I much prefer FALL REQUEENING over "screwing-up" my early spring honey crop by trying to requeen in the spring. Further, fall bred queens are usually better mated because of more drones available; and the queen introduced in September is "rearing" to go laying lots of early spring eggs and she has not used up much of her queen PHEROMONE, that "glue" that holds a large population of adult worker bees together as a functioning unit rather than dividing by swarming.

YOUNG bees, just a few days old accept a new queen quite readily, whereas an OLD foraging age bee of 3-4 weeks of age doesn't care very much for this new STEPMOTHER. Hence, it is ALWAYS better to introduce a new queen among young bees in a nuc, get her accepted and laying, and then unite that small nuc with the larger QUEEN LESS colony. The important KEY here is YOUNG bees accept a new queen much better than OLD bees! 2) If there is just a small nectar flow on, or worse, a dearth of nectar, the bees are "mad at the world" and don't want the aggravation of "getting to know" a new STEPMOTHER. 1:1 sugar syrup is an artificial nectar and it should always be fed during any queen introduction procedure. This statement surely sound ANTHROPOMORPHIC, but it helps your thinking, I use it. A source of food makes the bees "happy", and being "happy" makes queen introduction much more successful.

The Bee Manager

By Jerry Hominda; Email: goldenbee@juno.com

*This is the law of the Yukon, that only the strong shall thrive;
That surely the weak shall perish, and only the fit survive,
Dissolute, damned and despairful, crippled and palsied and slain,
This is the Will of the Yukon---Lo, how she makes it plain!*

Robert William Service 1874-1958 "The Law of the Yukon"

Part II

Survival of the fittest in time will prevail with the honey bee, but it seems Mother Nature needs all the help she can get from the bee manager to assure there are bees surviving generation after generation to genetically cope with the many challenges of the last 25 years. *In the last 25 years three new serious players have entered the picture: tracheal mites in 1984, Varroa mites in 1988, and Nosema ceranae (apparently) sometime in the past decade* (Randy Oliver; American Bee Journal; Vol. 148 No. 7; July 2008). Not to mention all the viruses that have been detected with the refined use of DNA. There has been a lot of research performed on dead bees from Collapsed Colony Disorder (CCD) and the various research technicians are finding many viruses in the dead bee samples taken from dead outs in different locations throughout the US. With the different viruses that are being found-manufacturers of medication products advertise and claim their product can control the discovered viruses. These products can often be labor intensive, not effective in all environments, confusing, and overwhelming for the bee manager-discouraging the keeping of apiaries. All too often the researchers publishing their discoveries of a virus do not include all the information concerning their findings or what they did not find. The use of DNA research is relatively new and it has become a tool that can identify things in the bee's makeup that we could not identify in the past. This can be a good thing, but the bee manager must understand many of these viruses may have been in the bees for many years before their discovery (using DNA mapping). It is more than likely that the viruses did not affect a strong, healthy stress free colony of bees. Before 25 years ago if the bee manager kept plenty of food for the colony to eat, controlled foul brood, and performed general maintenance the colony stayed healthy for years. It was not until the bee colonies in the United States were exposed to mites that we saw a significant decline in bee populations. From a practical standpoint, it is moot whether the parasite actually kills a colony, or sets it up for a fatal blow from one or more viruses. Control the parasite, and the bees can generally keep viral infections to a low level on their own (Randy Oliver; American Bee Journal; Vol. 148 No. 7; July 2008).

In the last 25 years there have been hundreds of silver bullets, remedies, treatments, chemicals, oils, apparatuses, and cure alls advertised for the bee manager to buy and use to maintain (in many cases create) a healthy colony. Most of them are not natural or organic methods the feral colony would use on their own or without being introduced to them by humans. In the June 2008 issue of Bee Culture, Erik Osterlund (Erik Osterlund is the editor of the Swedish bee journal Bitidningen and runs 200 colonies) writes: We know *Varroa* is stimulating viruses to reproduce and attack our bees. We know pollen is essential for strong bees and good immune systems. We know plant protection chemicals kill and weaken insects, including bees. We know Apistan, CheckMite, Amatrax, and other chemicals poison the wax and life environment of the bees. We know we pour acids on the poor bees. We know cell size is bigger today than when wax foundation was first introduced by A.I. Root in 1876. We know we have decreased the genetic variation in our bee stocks through too much inbreeding and too few queen mothers in commercial queen rearing. We know the bees can stand a lot we do to them, but now we know it's become too much. When will we ever learn? When man didn't interfere with the bees they survived and managed well enough. Now we have to give the bees back more of their natural way of life, and reduce the stress factors we've given them:

1. Go back to five cells to the inch, at least, on wax foundation.
2. Really try to give your bees a good pollen and nectar supply.
3. Avoid all kinds of poisonous chemicals.
4. Be sure to avoid inbreeding, but focus on survivors.

These are some helpful ideas the bee manager should be performing this time of year to prepare their colonies for whatever kind of weather Mother Nature is going to subject the bees to this winter. Of course, in order for the bee manager to continue or begin using these helpful management techniques they must have a viable, productive, potentially healthy colony to work with. If you have been so fortunate to have survivor bees from last year, or packages from this year and they have managed to survive up to now, here are some helpful tips to create a healthy-viable colony to work with in the short amount of time we have before fall sets in. By the end of the July you should have a laying queen, disease-free brood, plenty of feed, plenty of room for the queen to lay, and workers to store nectar. Although, unless you move your bees to a yard at a higher elevation where there are alpine flowers the nectar flow will have probably stopped. You may be fortunate enough to have your bees near a pasture where there is an abundance of clovers or some nectar producing ground cover such as vetch, but probably not. Therefore you will need to start or continue feeding your colony so the queen will produce lots of new bees to winter over.

What should a bee manager be looking for to get the healthy colony necessary to prepare for the winter months? More than likely if your bees are survivors or packages purchased in spring and you fed them regularly, they grew in population and without a doubt swarmed. In the event they swarmed your laying queen flew the coop with the other workers chosen to disband and find a new home. In most cases before the colony decides to swarm the workers create swarm cells to replace the old queen who is about to abandon the colony. For these new queens to emerge and be successful many things need to happen or not happen. The cells created by the workers needed to be disease, mite, chemical free wax incubators with a good mixture of royal queen jelly and healthy eggs placed in them. If all this takes place and the new queen emerges, takes several flights, is fertilized you will have a complete viable colony approximately 30 days after the swarm vacated. If this scenario takes place, great, you are back in business as a bee manager sounds easy, but it is not. Often I have waited for these steps of mother nature to transpire in my colonies only later to discover no queen, no brood, no queen cells, no order, little foraging, lots of pollen coming in, and a decreasing population. If you discover a colony that has swarm cells and you decide to let nature take its course, here

Bee Manager *(continued)*

are some things that can happen without your knowledge or control affecting the queenless colony:

1. Damaging queen cells while working a colony.
2. Bad weather after the new queen emerges not allowing her to fly and get fertilized. A virgin has a small window of time necessary for her to be fertilized so she can be good layer.
3. The new queen leaves the colony and does not return-loses her way or is dinner for some predator?
4. Starts laying, but not fertilized by an acceptable amount of drones-poor drone pool in the apiary.
5. Bee manager kills the virgin or she flies off while the manager is dismantling the colony looking for a queen.
6. Worker bee is tired of waiting for queen and decides to take on the roll of queen-laying worker.

All of these conditions are fixable, but the bee manager has to take into consideration the season's time table when deciding what task to perform. If you introduce a virgin or queen cells your colony may have a repeat of the past or at least will be without a laying queen for a minimum of two weeks. If you introduce a fertilized queen the colony will be back in action in approximately 7 days. Unless you have a very strong colony you do not want to experiment with making new queens after July. Of course if you have other strong colonies with an abundance of brood frames you can add frames of brood to your queenless colony and that will help keep the population stabilized-until a queen begins to lay. If you discover a colony that has a laying worker (multiple eggs usually on the sides of the cell walls-her abdomen can not reach the bottom of the cell) your best option is to just combine them with another colony using newspaper dividing the two. The queen right colony will accept all the workers and set the laying worker straight. Here is one final note for the bee manager who finds a colony with an acceptable laying queen with swarm cells and does not want them to swarm. You take another bottom board set next to your established colony and separate the boxes. If you have three boxes I would take off the top two and set them on the new bottom, put a lid on it and let it sit for a week. After a week I check to see if the cells have been torn out or hatched-if so put the two boxes back on the original colony and you are good to go.

Bee a good manager and enjoy the wonderful experience of beekeeping.

West Sound Beekeepers Association

PO Box 245

Indianola WA 98342



Next Meeting:

7 PM July 15, 2008

At Stedman's

6 PM: Bee-ginner Beekeeping class

7 PM Regular Meeting

Queen Rearing Group Meets afterwards

Refreshments:

Drinks: Joel Jensen

Snacks: Lori Christie