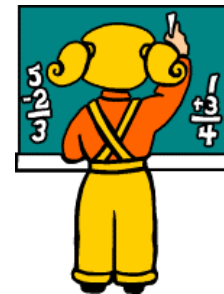


the Forager



September 2008

Newsletter of the Tidewater Beekeepers Association
www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net

Vol.5 No.9

**President: Joe Taylor, Vice President: Bob Montcalm, Treasurer: Rick Fisher, Recording Secretary: Vacant
Webmaster & Newsletter Editor: Pam Fisher. Deadline for the newsletter is the 25th of each month**

A Message from our President, Joe Taylor

Dear Fellow Beekeepers,



September is upon us and it's time to re-queen if you are going to do so. It is time to check your hives for mites and other unwanted things. We want to go into winter with our hives as healthy as possible. With healthy hives, we can hope for a better honey crop next year.

I want to thank Bob Montcalm and Pam Fisher for all their hard work in locating a meeting place on such short notice for the September meeting. The city of Chesapeake has put an occupancy limit of 50 people on the trailer. With our growth the last few months, we do not want to turn away anyone from our meetings. The September meeting will be held on the 11th in the Chesapeake main Library located in the same court complex that we have been using all these years. I know this is a change from our usual meeting night but this is the best that can be done on such short notice. Please be patient while we are going through these adjustments and hopefully things will be back on schedule in November. Thank you to everyone for your understanding and cooperation.

Remember our main purpose is education of the public and new beekeepers on the importance of the honeybee. Let's all be good stewards for the honeybee.

Sincerely,

Joe Taylor



Next Meeting: Thursday, September 11, 2008 at 7:00 PM

Location: Chesapeake Central Library, Room 1, 298 Cedar Road, Chesapeake, VA 23322

Program: Test Your Beekeeping Knowledge - A short multiple-choice beekeeping quiz followed by the answers and discussion.



New TBA Meeting Location

The agricultural trailer, where we have held our monthly meetings for years, now has a maximum occupancy of 50. In order to accommodate our growing membership, TBA has moved the meeting location to Towne Hall, a wing of Towne Bank, beginning in October 2008. Towne Hall is located near the intersection of Mt. Pleasant Rd. and Battlefield Blvd. in Chesapeake at 137 Mt. Pleasant Road.

The September meeting will be held on **Thursday**, September 11th at 7:00 PM in Room 1 of the Chesapeake Central Library. The library is located at 298 Cedar Road in the same municipal complex as the agricultural trailer.

The October meeting will be held at Towne Hall on **Thursday**, October 9th at 7:00 PM.

The November meeting will be on our regular schedule, the 2nd Monday of the month, November 10th at 7:00 PM in Towne Hall.

TIDEWATER BEEKEEPER "YARD NOTES"

For



September

- The hive population will begin to drop this month as the queen's egg laying slows and the drone numbers begin to decline.
- Since drone numbers are decreasing, Varroa mites will begin to reproduce on worker brood at higher rates. Varroa infestations prevent the proper development of winter bees, which impacts the likelihood of colony survival. Medicate as needed after removing all honey for human consumption.
- You may begin to see Small Hive Beetles inside the hive at this time of year. They survive the winter as adults within the bees' winter cluster. Traps are available commercially to reduce their numbers.
- The 'sour' smell of goldenrod & aster nectar being evaporated into honey may be apparent near hives and is not cause for alarm.
- Harvest your honey crop if you haven't done so already, but remember to leave between 40 and 60 lbs. for the bees. Feed sugar syrup if needed in a 2:1 ratio (5 lbs. sugar to 5 cups water) to ensure hives have adequate stores for the winter. Each gallon of syrup fed to the bees increases their reserves by about seven pounds. Remove any queen excluders between the colony and its winter stores.
- Only strong colonies should be overwintered. Combine weak colonies with strong colonies now to allow time for the bees to arrange their broodnest and honey stores before winter.
- Install a mouse guard on the hive entrance before cool weather if mice are a problem in your area.

August Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the August membership meeting are available to TBA members on our website at: http://www.tidewaterbeekeepers.net/members/meeting_minutes.html

TBA Membership\$ Past Due

If you haven't already paid your TBA dues, they are now past due. Dues are \$20.00 for an annual family membership that includes a joint \$10.00 Virginia State Beekeepers Association membership and access to the 'Members' section of the TBA website. Please pay the club treasurer, Rick Fisher, at a meeting or mail a check made payable to **TBA** to:

Tidewater Beekeepers Association
P.O. Box 7403
Chesapeake, VA 23324



STATE FAIR
OF VIRGINIA

If you plan to enter the Open Honey Competition at the State Fair of Virginia, the **deadline for entry forms is September 5th**. There are 16 classes of honey, other hive products, and gadgets with cash premiums for the top six competitors in each category. The on-line entry fee is only 20 cents per class. Rules and standards for the various hive products are on the SFVA website at http://www.statefair.com/competitions/pdf/2008_OpenHoney_CompGuide.pdf On-line entry and downloadable application forms are at:

<http://www.statefair.com/competitions/>.

Holiday Social

We did not vote on a location for TBA's annual Holiday Social last month, so we will need to make a decision at the September meeting. So far, the only suggestion has been the Grate Steak in Norfolk. For information on the restaurant, visit their web site:

<http://thegratesteak.com/index.html>

If you have another location you would like to suggest for our holiday party, please contact Steve Black at 255-4176. Plan on a discussion and vote at the next TBA membership meeting.



TBA Secretary Sought

TBA is still searching for a Recording Secretary. Bob Montcalm has agreed to assist until a volunteer is found, but he would appreciate someone to fill the position so that he can devote his time to TBA's educational programs. The Secretary records and files the minutes of each TBA membership meeting and also provides them to the Webmaster and Newsletter Editor for dissemination to the club's members. It is also the Secretary's responsibility to notify the public of upcoming meetings by contacting local newspapers. If you are interested in serving as Recording Secretary, please call Bob Montcalm at 487-2143.



VSBA Fall Meeting

November 1, 2008
Blue Ridge Community College
Weyers Cave, Virginia
www.viriniabeekeepers.org/

Honey & Pecans Wanted

Scott Reiter, the Extension Agent in Prince George County, Virginia received an inquiry from a local store about local honey and pecans. They would like to buy bulk quantities of pecans to repackage and sell in their store in Prince George. They will not likely repackage the honey but they want to buy more than a few jars at a time. If you know of any producers of pecans or honey please pass their contact information to Scott at:

Scott Reiter
Extension Agent, Crop and Soil Science
Prince George County Office
PO Box 68
Prince George, VA 23875
Office (804) 733-2686
Email: jreiter@vt.edu



Pesticide Records Lawsuit

From *Catch the Buzz*



The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) filed a lawsuit on August 18, 2008 to uncover critical information that the US government is withholding about the risks posed by pesticides to honeybees. NRDC legal experts and a leading bee researcher are convinced that the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has evidence of connections between pesticides and the mysterious honeybee die-offs reported across the country. The phenomenon has come to be called "colony collapse disorder," or CCD, and it is already proving to have disastrous consequences for American agriculture and the \$15 billion worth of crops pollinated by bees every year. EPA has failed to respond to NRDC's Freedom of Information Act request for agency records concerning the toxicity of pesticides to bees, forcing the legal action.

"Recently approved pesticides have been implicated in massive bee die-offs and are the focus of increasing scientific scrutiny," said NRDC Senior Attorney Aaron Colangelo. "EPA should be evaluating the risks to bees before approving new pesticides, but now refuses to tell the public what it knows. Pesticide restrictions might be at the heart of the solution to this growing crisis, so why hide the information they should be using to make those decisions?"

In 2003, EPA granted a registration to a new pesticide manufactured by Bayer CropScience under the condition that Bayer submit studies about its product's impact on bees. EPA has refused to disclose the results of these studies, or if the studies have even been submitted. The pesticide in question, clothianidin, recently was banned in Germany due to concerns about its impact on bees. A similar insecticide was banned in France for the same reason a couple of years before. Here in the United States, a group of North Dakota beekeepers has a lawsuit pending against Bayer over the 1995 die-off of their bees, which they blame on the spraying of rapeseed fields with imidacloprid. However, the U.S. government still allows the widespread use of neonicotinoids despite a growing consensus among bee specialists that pesticides, including clothianidin and its chemical cousins, may contribute to CCD.



Are Honeybees Thinking

From *The New York Times*



In the spring of 1983, scientists took part in a symposium on animal intelligence conducted by the Smithsonian Institution at the National Zoological Park in Washington. One question the participants pondered was whether animals react instinctively to stimuli or situations, or can animals reason?

Dr. Gould, a Princeton University ethologist, internationally known for his research on honeybee behavior observed bees as they flew to a food source he had carefully placed at increasingly distant sites from the hive. Each time he changed the site he moved the food source further from the hive by a factor of 1.25, or one-and-a-quarter times the distance of the previous move.

He discovered that the forager bees began to anticipate the location to which the food source would next be moved, and that when he arrived at his carefully plotted new site, he would find the bees circling the spot awaiting the arrival of their food.

At the Washington symposium he was asked if he could explain how these small insects could extrapolate, apparently arriving at a conclusion based on the unproved assumption that the distance to the next food site would conform to a pattern deduced from past experience. He replied, "I can't." And with a wry face he added, "I wish they'd never done it!"



Chesapeake Farm Days

Farm Days, a cooperative effort of the Virginia Dare Soil & Water Conservation District and the Chesapeake Agriculture Department, takes place this year on Friday, September 19, 2008 at Chesapeake City Park. During Farm Days, approximately 400 school children will visit agricultural exhibits with their teachers.

TBA club members are needed between 9:00 am and Noon on Friday, September 19th to explain the agricultural significance of honeybees to visiting school children. If you can help with the exhibit, please contact Pam Fisher at 545-5076 or bqrrl@cox.net



Cost-sharing for Colony Testing

Penn State, ABF and Project ApisM team up to help test your colonies.

From *Catch the Buzz*

Based on recent evidence of high pesticide levels in wax, pollen and brood, beekeepers have expressed an interest in having samples from their own colonies/apiaries tested for pesticides.

The USDA, National Science Lab in Gastonia NC is capable of screening all hive matrices for up to 171 pesticides at or near the ppb level. This lab is part of the USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service (AMS) and conducts a program to collect and analyze pesticide residue levels in agricultural commodities, including honey. These data are confidential and the property of the contractor.

Although the AMS cost of analysis is below commercial rates, the analysis of individual samples is costly. The cost of analysis for coumaphos (CheckMite+™) and fluvalinate (Apistan®) in wax is \$90 per sample. The cost of full pesticide screening (171 pesticides) in any hive matrix is \$205 per sample. They have received funding from the ABF Foundation for the Preservation of Honey Bees and Project Apis mellifera (PAM) to establish a program to help reduce the cost of these analyses. This funding allows them to pay half the cost of the analysis per sample. Beekeepers wishing to have samples analyzed will pay \$45 for miticides, or \$100 per sample for the full screen of 171 pesticides.

The information generated from individual samples will become part of a large centralized, and highly confidential data-base maintained at Penn State. In addition to the analytical results of your samples, they will also provide data on all samples analyzed up to that point in time (your levels compared to the average level and range in the entire data base).

If you are interested in participating in this program, please contact Maryann Frazier at the address below and she will provide you with information on submitting samples for analysis.

The group is particularly interested in encouraging the participation of organic and small beekeepers in this program.

Maryann Frazier, Senior Extension Associate, Department of Entomology
501 ASI Building, University Park, PA 16802
Phone: (814) 865-4621, Fax: (814) 865-3048
Email: mxt15@psu.edu



Harvest Fair Volunteers Needed

The Virginia Dare Soil and Water Conservation District and the Virginia Beach Department of Agriculture sponsor the Harvest Fair every October at the Farmer's Market on Dam Neck Road. This 3-day event features Farm Days on the first two days and the Harvest Fair on the third day. During Farm Days, approximately 800 children from different school tour various educational stations where they learn about the many facets of agriculture as well as the importance of the industry to the city and region. For many children, this may be their first opportunity to experience different aspects of agriculture.

For the Harvest Fair on Saturday, thousands of people attend the Farm Days exhibits, which open to the public. Families enjoy the agricultural tents and areas, play old-fashioned games, listen to entertainers in the center circle of the Farmers Market, and may even enjoy a horse-drawn hayride. It is a well-attended event and beekeepers have a chance to sell some of their honey, candles and soaps on Saturday.

Volunteers are needed for Farm Days to present beekeeping to the school children from 9:00 am to Noon on Thursday, October 16th and Friday, October 17th. Club members are also needed to staff the TBA booth on Saturday, October 18th from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Contact Carol Watkins at 757-563-2275 or beewaspflw@aol.com if you can help. Please let Carol know if you will be bringing any honey or hive products to sell so that she can ensure adequate space.



Pollination Request



Virginia Beach farmer, Roy Flanagan, is looking for a beekeeper who will place bees on his family's farm in Pungo. He is especially interested in having bees there for the strawberry season, but they can remain year-round. Roy would also like some hives for only the strawberry season on his crops near the Salem Road/Independence Blvd. area. If you have colonies for pollination, please give Roy a call at 641-1434.

Honeybee Book Releases

A Spring without Bees: How Colony Collapse Disorder Has Endangered Our Food Supply

by Michael Schacker

June 2008

ISBN-13: 9781599214320



The Buzz about Bees: Biology of a Superorganism

by Jürgen Tautz

July 2008

ISBN-13: 9783540787273

Fruitless Fall: The Collapse of the Honey Bee and the Coming Agricultural Crisis

by Rowan Jacobsen

September 2008

ISBN-13: 9781596915374



STIHL Lumberjack Championships



Get ready for flying wood chips, razor sharp axes and roaring chain saws as the STIHL Virginia Beach Lumberjack Championships arrive at Mount Trashmore Park on Saturday, September 20 from Noon to 4:00 pm! Free public admission and onsite parking available for this exciting and educational event.

TBA has been invited to set up a beekeeping exhibit and sell honey during the event. If you would like to coordinate the display for the club, please call Pam Fisher at 545-5076 or Email her at bgrrl@cox.net. Virginia Beach Parks & Rec must have a reply from TBA by September 15th in order to secure an exhibitor space.

