



The Bee Line

2006—Issue 10

November 2006

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Tips for the Month

Check your bees for honey and pollen stores to ensure they have enough for the winter months. If food appears inadequate, you can supplement with sugar syrup (at a ratio of 2 parts sugar to 1 part water).

Upcoming Activities

Nov. 14—16. California State Beekeepers Association 2006 Convention at South Lake Tahoe. Dr. James E. Ellis, PhD, from the Department of Entomology, Biological Sciences, University of Georgia, has accepted an invitation to be a keynote speaker and will be speaking about the Small Hive Beetle. Many other interesting talks and displays will be there. To learn more and/or register go to www.californiastatebeekeepers.com/events.htm

Tues., Nov. 21—7:30 p.m. Member George Bleekman will share a 30—45 minute talk and slide presentation on his recent trip to the Bee Museum outside Quebec City, the bee display at the Biodome in Montreal, Old Towne Quebec, and a beekeeper in Charlottetown, Cape Breton. Join us and learn more about beekeeping in Canada!

Tues., Dec. 19—Time TBD. SABA holiday potluck and election of 2007 club officers. Get out your best recipes (using honey if possible), and get out to vote!

Tues., Jan. 16- Officer installation dinner and/or possible program. Ideas? Call Bob Rollins.

SABA's **regular meetings** are held the third Tuesday of each month (except July and August) **at 7:30 p.m.** at the Belle Cooledge Community Center, 5699 South Land Park Drive (on the southeast corner of Fruitridge Road and South Land Park) in Sacramento. All are welcome!

Calling All Members!

There's still time to **volunteer** (before being called!) to serve as an officer or committee member for SABA next year. Please contact Nancy at (916) 451-2337 *right away* to find out how you can help. Examples of projects and committees that need volunteers are Spring Beekeeping Classes (set-up, take-down, refreshments); Sacramento County Fair (set up or staff the booth), California State Fair (meet with fair officials to give ideas for layout and displays in the booth, coordinate supplies for honey tasting, staff the booth); publicity for SABA (on classes and membership); SABA meetings (coffee & refreshments); website development and management. All volunteers welcome!

News from Sac. Beekeeping Supply

- No classes on candle making are scheduled this fall but if you have accumulated some beeswax from extracting and want to make a few candles for holiday gifts, the store has poly molds that work very well with beeswax, and they come in all sizes, so even if you have a small amount of wax, you can make a few. (There is a cute little skep that takes only ¼ of an ounce of wax and a large pinecone that takes a pound!) You can even roll candles out of your extra sheets of foundation which makes beautiful Thanksgiving table candles ... Tylan, the newest product for American Foul Brood that was developed at UCD, is still unavailable although it's listed in the catalogs. In the mean time, people continue to use Terramycin for prevention of AFB.
- Nancy Stewart

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October Minutes and Program Notes

The meeting of the Sacramento Area Beekeepers Association was called to order by President Howard Mann at 7:37 p.m. on October 17, 2006, at the Belle Cooledge Community Center. He welcomed guest Mary Scomona from Esparto. The minutes for September were approved. (Moved Ray Marler; 2d Dennis Larson) Treasurer's Report by Treasurer Richard Cuny stated a current balance of \$4,717.83. Treasurer Cuny reviewed recent expenses and income.

Old Business. Report was made on the **Elk Grove Harvest Festival** October 7-8: We had an excellent location this year for the health of the bees, the comfort of the members, and great traffic flow. Members working the booth had almost no break in the stream of people they spoke to about bees and beekeeping. For the first time ever, the County Health Department demanded that we get a health permit; Ron Melliush will investigate further as to any possible basis for the charge. Re: **Status of the Web Page:** Howard Mann will contact Barney Merrill and ask for a status report for next meeting.

New Business **Spring Beekeeping Classes:** Publicity—Fred Stewart will notify the State Beekeepers Assoc. at the November meeting and ask them to put the classes in their newsletter and on their website. The Secretary will get announcements in American Bee Journal & Bee Culture magazines, and send info to other associations for their newsletters/websites, and seek a place in the Natural Foods Coop newsletter. Price: The Executive Committee will review the price for the class and honoraria paid to the instructors and adjust this year if called for. Lists of Interested Parties: the Bee Store has some names and Howard Mann has a couple of people from the State Fair. The Secretary will contact Ruth Ann Rose to see if any more names were collected at the Fair, and get the flyers (some left over from the Elk Grove Festival, some new) to the Bee Store for mailing to everyone on the list. Dennis Larson volunteer for 2007 to be in charge of getting such a list kept throughout the State Fair. More on the **State Fair:** The sense of the group was that we would like to be back in the Counties Exhibit Hall as we were for years. The current location is loud and crowded. The Executive Committee will ask Ruth Ann Rose to lobby for a return to the old location when she meets with the State Fair officials for 2007. **Other Discussion Items:** The benefits of individual membership in the State Beekeeper's Association were highlighted;; an update on the legal proceedings re Paramount's efforts to suppress pre-existing beekeepers near their property; and the Nominating Committee (of one: Nancy Stewart) will have a slate of 2007 officers proposed for our next meeting. The business meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

The **Panel Discussion** members were introduced by Vice President Bob Rollins: Rob Parsons, Fred Stewart and Frank Lienert. Some of the points presented: Apistan and Checkmite are now of questionable utility; they feel most mites re resistant. ... Apiguard and ApiLife VAR are the treatments d'jour for Varroa. ... Using a sticky board (spraying with Pam will work,) and you get 20 mites in 24 hours, you should treat. ... Each hive should have 30-40 pounds of honey for the winter.... The Panelists have seen more pollen stored by the bees this year than every before. But if you don't have enough, give them pollen patties. Every year is different in beekeeping. Queen quality was poor this year. Frank has some colonies he has requeened four times. ... You want a new crop of bees if possible in every colony to help you overwinter. The program concluded at 9:25 p.m. There was no raffle.

Respectfully submitted, *Ron Melliush*, Secretary

Bee Trivia

Answer to last month's question: The main reason for honey's antibacterial activities is its hydrogen peroxide producing capacity. *New question:* What did milk and honey symbolize in its early ritual uses?

Bees in the News—*continued from page 3*

“Compared with other insects, the researchers found, honey bees have more genes devoted to sensing smells. But they have fewer genes for taste, perhaps because they tend to eat where fellow bees ate and therefore don't need as much sensitivity for detecting poisons, scientist theorized. ... The researchers also discovered that many bee genes have more in common with humans than with fruit flies, such as genes involved in regulating circadian rhythms and the chemical method used to regulate gene expression.

“Scientists use honey bees to study human health, including immunity, allergic reaction, antibiotic resistance, development, mental health, social behavior and longevity. “

Bees in the News

October saw more than the usual amount of bees in the news. In case you missed it, here are excerpts of articles in the Sacramento Bee and on National Public Radio's website. Thanks to those who sent them along to the editor.

“Crops at risk as pollinating species dwindle, study says,” by Juliet Eilperin, *Washington Post*, published in the *Sacramento Bee*, Oct. 19, 2006

“Birds, bees, bats and other species that pollinate North American plant life are losing population, according to a study released Wednesday by the National Research Council. This “demonstrably downward trend could damage dozens of commercially important crops, scientists warned, since three-quarters of all flowering plants depend on pollinators for fertilization. American honeybees, which pollinate more than 90 domestic commercial crops, have declined by 30 percent in the past 20 years. This poses a challenge to agricultural interests such as California almond farmers, who need about 1.4 million colonies of honeybees to pollinate 550,000 acres of trees. By 2012, the almond farmers are expected to need bees to pollinate 800,000 acres. Gene Robinson, an entomologist at University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and one of the 15 researchers who produced the report, said U.S. farmers had to import honeybees last year for the first time since 1922, underscoring the extent of the problem.’....

“A number of factors have cut pollinators’ numbers in recent decades, the researchers said. Pesticides and introduced parasites such as the varroa mite have hurt the honeybee population. ...The declines have been gradual and in some instances are hard to quantify, the committee concluded. But the panel’s chairwoman, entomologist May Berenbaum of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, said in a statement that there is already cause for alarm. ‘Despite its apparent lack of marquee appeal, a decline in pollinator populations is one form of global change that actually has credible potential to alter the shape and structure of terrestrial ecosystems,’ Berenbaum said. ... [Pollination] not only boosts plant production but increases species’ genetic diversity. Animal pollinators fertilize more than 187,500 flowering plants worldwide. Other pollinators include hummingbirds and butterflies, as well as wild bees.”

“Declining Bee Population Threatens Major Growers” by John Nielsen, National Public Radio *All Things Considered* program of Oct. 19, 2006 (excerpted from text on www.npr.org)

“The busy bee may be a cliché. But it turns out that bees are very busy on the world’s farms, pollinating many of the fruits, vegetables and nuts we eat. But a major report from the National Academies says bees and other important pollinators are losing out to development and disease. ... According to the new report, the vampire mite [varroa] helped wipe out the nation’s wild honeybees in the late 1990s. Then it started ravaging commercial colonies. ... Researchers say they [varroa] have helped reduce bee numbers by nearly 30 percent over the last 25 years. ... And some experts, like Eric Mussen of the University of California, Davis, worry that the vampire mites could be everywhere again this winter [and] That could further accelerate a long-term decline in the number of commercial beekeepers.

“Experts say it’s possible that other bee species could take the place of some of these commercial bees. Robbin Thorp, an emeritus professor at UC Davis, has been studying and collecting native bees for more than 40 years now. He shows off several thousand specimens lined up in the long glass drawers inside a compact museum at the university. ... ‘That’s Bob,’ Thorp says. ‘The blue orchard bee. It’s being used to pollinate apples and cherries.’ There are other wild bees that could pollinate crops, he says. Unfortunately, many of these kinds of bees may also be in decline, according to the new report. And, ironically, the farms that need bees the most are a big part of the problem. Giant weed-free farms that destroy habitat and use a lot of pesticides are the worst offenders, Thorp says., and have helped drive some bees to the edge of extinction. ... There are solutions to these problems. For instance, efforts to restore habitat that might support wild bees are now underway. And researchers also are looking for ways to kill the mites. The question now is whether those new programs will pay off in time to help avert a looming pollination crisis. It’s a crisis that might begin with the news that there are not enough commercial bees to pollinate California’s ever bigger almond orchards. when large numbers of commercial honeybees migrate into California for the mild winters..... it’s the biggest insect migration in the country.”

“Bee-Dazzled,” by Karen Kaplan, *L.A. Times*, published in the *Sacramento Bee*, Oct. 26, 2006

“Scientists have unraveled the DNA of the western honey bee, a feat that researchers say could help illuminate the genetic underpinnings of social behavior. An international team of nearly 200 scientists reported today that they have identified 10,157 genes. That’s fewer than contained in the genomes of the fruit fly, mosquito or silkworm but nonetheless sufficient to produce the only non-primate species capable of communicating through a symbolic language. The genome of *Apis mellifera* was published in the journal *Nature*, along with the series of article in *Science*, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* and other scholarly journals. ...



... continued at bottom of page 2

Honey Recipe of the Month



Honey Layer Cake

1/2 c. butter, softened	2 c. sifted flour
3/4 c. honey	2 tsp. baking powder
2 eggs	1/4 tsp. salt
1 tsp. vanilla extract	3/4 c. (scant) milk

Heat oven to 350°F. Cream butter and honey, beat in the eggs, and then stir in the vanilla. Alternate blending in dry ingredients and milk until have a smooth cake batter. Baked in two greased 8" round cake pans, or about 16 lined cupcake tins. Bake at 350' for about 25 minutes or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. (Cupcakes only will take 15—18 minutes.) When cooled, ice with chocolate or vanilla icing.

*I adapted this from a gold cake recipe in the Joy of Cooking, and it has a nice mild honey flavor.
- Georgianna Pfost*

Bee Classifieds

HELP! Anyone have 2 or 3 frames of brood that I can borrow or buy? After some setbacks, I've found a new queen but the colony may not survive without some imported brood. Thanks! Ron Melluish (916) 683-1785

FOR SALE: High quality Carl Fritz (Germany) 12-20 **radial extractor!** Holds 15 medium frames radially OR 3 deep frames tangentially. \$850, pick up in Woodland or at Bee Club meetings. Laura, (530) 666- 9713

WANTED: Your **contributions** of bee-related news, ideas, gadgets, questions, recipes, favorite bee websites, and bee book reviews for future newsletters. Please be-email them to the editor at dugongs@msn.com or snail mail to 3517 57th St, Sacramento, 95820. It's your newsletter so please share your ideas and experiences!

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Address Correction Requested



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Next Meeting & Program
Tues. Nov. 21, 7:30 p.m.