



# The Bee Line

2007—Issue 11

December 2007

## 2007 Club Officers

President: Bob Rollins

(916) 965-3875

Vice President: David Ogden

(916) 687-6977

Secretary: Ron Melluish

(916) 743-2703

Treasurer: Richard Cuny

(916) 971-1752

## Other Committee Contacts:

Finance: Dennis Larson

Hospitality: Mil Sutter

Mentors: George Bleekman

Newsletter & Library:

Georgianna Pfost

Donations: Nancy Stewart

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**Mission:** To promote interest in, and awareness of, the vital importance of the honeybee and beekeeping to agriculture, commerce, and the public at large.



## Tips for the Month

Check your hives to be sure hive tops are secure and that the hive entrances are unobstructed; clean and repair equipment and tools; and plant bulbs and seed for early spring blooms and nectar.

## Coming Events!

**Tues., Dec. 18 - SABA Meeting, Holiday Potluck, Gadget Night, and Election** of 2008 officers, 7:30 p.m. Bring a dish to share and a favorite beekeeping gadget (or photo of it if it's too large to haul). Club will provide plates, cups, utensils and dessert. If you can attend, RSVP with number attending and dish you're bringing to David (916) 687-6977.

**Sat. Dec. 29 and/or Jan. 5- Conference-packet-stuffing party!** We have received many items for the participant bags for the beekeeping conference Jan. 8 - 12th. There is so much (and lots of samples of goods) that it is all now stored at our warehouse! We are going to arrange a space there to do the assembling on these Saturdays, and will need lots of help. We may also need volunteers to help transport the 700 or more filled bags to the conference hotel on Monday, January 7<sup>th</sup>. If you haven't already signed up, please call me ASAP if you can help. This is a big task but well worth the donation ABF will make to the club. - Nancy Stewart (916) 451-2337.

**Jan. 8—12 - 1st National Beekeeping Conference**—at Doubletree Hotel in Sacramento. For schedule and registration form go to [www.abfnet.org](http://www.abfnet.org) or [www.americanhoneyproducers.org](http://www.americanhoneyproducers.org) or call (912)427-4233. This conference encompasses the 2008 conventions of the American Beekeeping Federation, American Honey Producers Association, American Association of Professional Apiculturists, the American Bee Research Conference, National Honey Packers & Dealers Association, and Apiary Inspectors of America! There will be presentations

and activities by many nationally-known experts in beekeeping and presentations on such topics as CCD and beekeeping politics.

**Sat., Jan. 12**—"Buzz About Bees" activity program for children, **12:30—2:00** p.m. at Clunie Community Center, 601 Alhambra Blvd, Sacramento. This is presented by Kim Lehman, of Bee Lady Programs, in conjunction with the conference. If you are interested in helping with the various educational activities (e.g., making beeswax candles, pollination games, bee experiments, etc.) please call Nancy at (916) 451-2337.

**Jan. 15?**- Installation dinner. Date and location TBD. Watch for more info.

**Tues., Feb. 19** -SABA Meeting. Program TBD. Suggestions? Call David Ogden.

**Sat., Mar. 21, etc.** - tentative dates for Beginning and Intermediate Beekeeping **classes** in Sacramento. Watch for details.

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!

\* \* \* \* \*

**New Members**—Please add the following new members to your phone list:

Claudia Greco—Davis—(530) 758-5432  
Bill Sheldon—(530) 574-0477

**Dues**—2008 Membership dues are due in January. Please write your check for \$15 to SABA, and mail it to: SABA Treasurer, c/o Sacramento Beekeeping Supplies, 2110 X Street, Sacramento, CA 95818. Thanks!

## November Minutes & Program Notes



The **meeting** of the Sacramento Area Beekeepers Association was called to order by President Robert L. Rollins at 7:35 p.m. on November 20, 2007, at the Belle Cooledge Community Center. A brief discussion of business items began, and then at about 8:00 Bob introduced our **program** speaker, Sue Cobey, from the UCD Bee Lab. Sue Cobey spoke and fielded questions for over an hour on current research at the lab, her long-time research on Carniolan bees, and findings on bee genetics. Some of the interesting notes were that bees are hard to breed selectively because of their open mating and natural objective to select for diversity, but researchers work on identifying and maintaining traits beneficial to the bees and to pollination or honey production. In the U.S., the bee gene pool is small because honeybees are imported, not native. She recommends cycling out all frames every three to five years to eliminate toxins, fungi and other things that may have accumulated in the comb and to allow the bees to build fresh, larger cells again. She noted, too, that the lab will have classes on queen-rearing.

After the presentation, there were snacks and then the **business meeting** started at 9:35 p.m. Officer **elections** for 2008 will be held at the December meeting. The current candidates are: Bob Rollins or Ernie Buda for President, David Ogden for Vice President, Ron Melluish for Secretary, and Dennis Larson for Treasurer. [More nominations may be made from the floor at the election meeting so if you're interested in serving, please be there to volunteer or call current president Bob Rollins to let him know of your interest.]

It's anticipated that sometime at the end of December the club will be asked to help pack **conference** bags for the January bee conference in Sacramento. [See details on front page calendar.]

George Bleekman has a number of signs with **beekeeping information** that he's collected from CalExpo's beekeeping booth, and other bee exhibitions when the signs are no longer needed. He thinks it is time for some really good professionally-made sign material for county fairs and stuff. Howard Mann and George are requesting that the club pay for some nice signs that could be used at various fairs and events the club will participate in. George was asked to create a more specific request regarding how many, how large, and what the signs will display, and to get a quote from the sign shop that could produce these.

The details for beekeeping **classes** at the Agricultural Extension County Building are still being worked out. The Master Gardeners and Master Food Preservers took part of February and March, and all of April. We currently are signed up for the day before March 21 and May 3, 2008.

The meeting concluded at about 10:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, *Richard Cuny*, Treasurer.

## Hive Beetles?

Have you found hive beetles in your hives this fall? Mentor Bob Sugar noted that some local beekeepers have been finding the beetles and trying new ways to control them. The primary pesticide used against them requires an applicator permit in California (from the Department of Pesticide Regulation) even for use on just a single hive. Some alternative ideas for physical controls include: placing a clump of mesh in the upper corner of a hive (where beetles tend to gather) as they'll hide in the mesh and can then be more easily removed from the hive; trapping them with an insect collector device; and/or placing a tray of vegetable oil in front of the hive so that when the larva crawl out of the hive and head for the dirt to burrow and pupate they'll be trapped in the oil. If you've found other means of controlling these potential hive pests, please send them along to share with other beekeepers.

## SABA Library

It's the end of the year and time to clean-up and re-inventory the SABA library. So... if you have any books or videos checked out, please return them to the start of the December meeting (I'll be there at 7:15 to collect items) or if you can't make the meeting drop them at the Sac. beekeeping supply store in an envelope labeled "return to SABA library") and let me know when they're there. And if you have any bee-related books, pamphlets, videos or DVDs you'd like to donate to the library, please also bring them to the start of the December meeting or leave at the bee store with a note "for SABA library" and I'll add them to our supply.



Looking for a good winter's read or "view"? Take a look at the library inventory included in the April 2007 newsletter (or subsequent one for newer members) and email or call me with your request. I can deliver it to the December meeting or, with prior arrangement, probably leave at the store for you to pick up. Just let me know. We have a pretty good collection and it's all for members' use!

- *Georgianna Pfof, dugongs@sbcglobal.net*

## Bees in the News



Bees have made the news frequently in recent months as beekeepers, researchers and the general public seek to learn the reasons for recent bee die-offs and the broader environmental implications for sustaining pollinators and food supplies. A sampling of information from recent articles follows.

**“The case of the disappearing bees” by Christine Souza, Ag Alert, 11/7/07, pp. 3 & 11.**

The author recaps Dr. Eric Mussen’s recent lecture in Davis on the causes and effects of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Mussen indicates that the recent “CCD” differs from prior years’ bee die-offs because it’s been more widespread and affected more beekeepers across the U.S.. Suspected contributing causes include: drought across much of the U.S. in 2006 resulting in bees weakened by malnourishment, chronic infestations of *varroa* mites, new infectious *nosema* microbes and fungal diseases, increased use of *neonicotinoid* pesticides (the synthetic nicotine may affect bees navigational memory), pollen from genetically-modified plants, and a new (to the U.S.) virus known as “Israeli acute paralysis virus.” Mussen notes that bees weakened by malnourishment are more susceptible to pathogens and parasites.

The article also discusses effects of CCD such as fewer bees for pollination resulting in higher pollination fees (close to an average of \$150 per hive in 2007) and in reduced crop yields and a big hit to the economy (especially California with its billions of dollars from fruits and vegetables) when sufficient pollinators are unavailable.

**“You’re going to miss the bees” by Kel Munger, Sacramento News and Review, 11/15/07, pp. 17-18.**

The article begins with notes from an interview with local commercial beekeeper Rick Schubert and goes into a discussion of the extensive use of bees for pollination (rather than simply honey-production, as many people assumed prior to all the recent news about CCD). The article includes material from UCD’s Dr. Eric Mussen from a lecture he gave in Davis in October. After discussing the effect of CCD on bees and human’s food supplies, Mussen described some of the potential causes of bee die-offs [see item above].

**“Interview with May Berenbaum, Entomologist” by David Zax, in Smithsonian, June 2007, p. 29.**

The interviewee, an entomologist at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, notes many hypotheses on the causes of CCD and adds a bit of humor to the discussion. In answer to the question “Aren’t bees a little scary?” she states “They’re scary in that they have no business being so smart. They’re organized and capable of unbelievable feats, such as communicating exact locations to their nest mates by orienting to polarized light and the sun, ... air-condition[ing] their homes, know[ing] when more foragers are needed, ...when more nurses are needed. .... I like the theory that visitors from another planet have decided they were going to abduct the smartest organisms on the planet, and they’ve picked the honeybees.”

**“Progress on Collapsing Beehives” by Moises Velasquez-Manoff, The Christian Science Monitor, 11/8/07, pp. 13 & 16.**

The article reports on progress in researching the possible causes of CCD and the recent appropriations for bee research included in the 2007 Farm Bill. Specifically, in July, the House included \$86.5M for research on CCD and honeybee health over a five-year period, and the Senate subsequently increased the amount to \$100M. The article also discusses how the CCD has raised awareness of the loss of native pollinators and includes a side-bar with tips on making land more “pollinator-friendly” such as: tolerating weeds around fields [and yards] to “provide food and habitat for pollinators,” planting strips or “islands” of flowers that bloom in succession to provide insect forage year-round, growing hedgerows around fields (for habitat as well as erosion control), and leaving some land untilled to protect ground-nesting native bees.

**“Native Pollinator- Lost and Found” in National Wildlife, Oct/Nov 2007, p. 10**

After 13 years of hand-pollinating rare orchids in the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologist recently discovered some of the orchids had been naturally-pollinated and it appears to be by a native carpenter bee. It’s surmised that such bees might have been the original pollinators of these flowers but had disappeared due to pesticides from nearby agricultural areas, and hopefully are now reestablishing in the area.

- Thanks to Bob Sugar and others who shared articles.

## More “you know you’re a beekeeper when... “

- You are keenly aware of the first and last freezes of each winter.
- Your family and friends know exactly what they’re going to get for Christmas.



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# Honey Recipe of the Month

## Whole Wheat Batter Bread



6 c. whole wheat flour                      2 packages or 2 T. dry yeast  
1/2 c. honey                                      3 c. hot water (120—130°) or a bit more if needed  
1 tsp salt

In a large mixing bowl, mix flour, salt and yeast. Melt the honey in the hot water. Slowly add honey water to flour. Mix well until it is all soft batter. Do not knead. Spoon batter into two large (9 x 5") loaf pans greased or sprayed with Pam. With wet fingers, press dough into corners and smooth top. Cover the pans and put in a warm place (80-85 degrees) until dough doubles--no more (about 30 minutes). Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400° (375 if using glass pans). Bake loaves for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees, and bake about 30 minutes more. Test a loaf in center (e.g., with toothpick) to see if done. Remove bread from pan and cool on metal rack. Enjoy the moist chewy texture and unique taste! Note recipe can be doubled to make 4 loaves at once.

by Karen & Emery Dann, winners of the Sonoma Beekeepers' Association "Gourmet Pot Luck" prize, and reprinted from the club's *The Monthly Extractor*, December 2007 issue.

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## Bee Classifieds

**FOR SALE:** Single-Axel Trailer / Built to haul bee hives / Capacity 28-56. Call Bob Pflieger at (530) 677-2185.

**FOR SALE:** New high quality Carl Fritz 12-20 radial **extractor**. Holds 15 medium frames radially or 3 deep tangentially. Powerful manual freewheeling drive. Stainless steel body and easy-to-remove basket. \$800. Call Laura at (530) 666-0713 or email Shlien@msn.com

**WANTED:** Your contributions of bee-related articles, experiences, trivia, recipes, and book or website reviews for future newsletters. Email them to the editor at dugongs@sbcglobal.net or mail to 3517 57th St., Sacramento, 95820.

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## SACRAMENTO AREA BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

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E-mail (newsletter editor): dugongs@sbcglobal.net

Address Correction Requested

—The Bee Line—  
December 2007



Potluck Meeting!

Tues. Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m.