

# THE BEEHIVE

Northwest Ohio Beekeepers

KEEPING LOCAL BEEKEEPERS INFORMED

April 2004

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## Swarm Control



Spring is here and this past weekends summer like temperatures remind us that swarm season is just around the corner. Swarming is a natural process normally occurring in strong populous colonies. Often it was encouraged by beekeepers when bees were kept in skeps as a method of increasing the number of hives. However, with modern beekeeping it's undesirable because it has a detrimental effect on honey production. Preventing swarms before they start is the best cure.

There are three major factors connected with swarming. They are the amount of brood and bees relative to the space in the hive, the amount and distribution of available queen substance (as produced by the queen), and the environment of the hive itself. Swarms can be prevented in many cases by the following:

- Provide plenty of room for the queen's egg laying in the brood nest. This may involve reversing brood chambers every 8-10 days or moving new empty comb into the brood nest to give the queen more room to lay. This may give the beekeeper an opportunity to use frames of brood from a strong colony to strengthen weak colonies or to make splits.
- Providing sufficient nectar storage space. Some super space should be available from late April to mid-August. Foundation should not be added until they honey flow is over or later in the season when the swarming season is over.



## Presidents Corner

Spring is here! What a beautiful day! The blossoms are everywhere! I'm sure everyone's bees are busy gathering nectar and pollen.

Our next club meeting will be held April 27th, 7:30, at the new Pandora school. The discussion this month will be concerning bee diseases and other very interesting topics.

I hope that all of you have been busy doing spring maintenance. It is a good time to reverse the hives and check for queen cells.

Enjoy your bee keeping!

Dwight

## Hostesses

The hostesses who have signed up to bring the refreshments for this years upcoming meetings are:

April: John Hattery

May: Tim Arbeit

- Protection from the sun when temperatures are warm is helpful in temperature regulation.
- Sufficient ventilation should be provided
- Requeening. Young queens typically swarm less (or not at all) the first year. Likely this has to do with stronger production of queen substance.
- Removal of queen cells as they are started. This can be a very tedious task as a full inspection is required every 5-7 days. If the queen cells are advanced or completed, removal will only postpone swarming. If the colony is just starting queen cells it may be stopped by removing all cells and providing more room and/or adjusting the hive's environment. A second check should be made a week later.

One excellent method of addressing several of the prevention methods that I've seen used successfully is to take several frames of brood and bees from a hive and place them in a 5-frame nuc next to the parent hive. The older bees will return to the parent hive but the nurse bees on the frames will remain in the nuc to raise a new queen. After several weeks and the new queen is laying well (and hopefully after swarm season has passed) the old queen is removed from the parent hive then the nuc is recombined with the parent hive. This results in requeening every year and making extra space for the parent queen to lay reducing swarming. It is a great method to use when you don't want to increase the number of hives you have.



*A 5-Frame Nuc used for queen rearing or starting new colonies.*

Still, no matter what you do, a hive may begin swarming anyways. If queen cells are discovered that are advanced, then more drastic measures must be taken to prevent swarming.

- Removal of the Queen. The queen is removed and all queen cells are destroyed, then the colony is left for a week to 9 days. After this time any additional queen cells are removed and the queen is reintroduced (or a new queen is introduced) in a queen cage.
- Removal of brood. 3-5 frames are removed with clinging bees, placed in a nuc and are allowed to raise their own queen, or one queen cell from the parent colony is included in the nuc. All queen cells remaining in the parent colony are destroyed.
- Separation of the Queen from the Brood. (Demareeing). This is often the most successful method to control swarming. It involves placing the queen with 1 or 2 frames of sealed brood in a hive body with empty comb or foundation on the bottom board. A queen excluder is placed over this box, followed by one or two supers. The remainder of the brood is placed above the supers. All queen cells are to be destroyed.

**Honey may have sweet health benefits**, according to researchers who conducted what is believed to be the first study of chronic honey consumption in humans. Biochemist Heidrun Gross and colleagues fed 25 study participants about four tablespoons each of buckwheat honey daily for 29 days in addition to their regular diets.

The volunteers were divided into two groups receiving honey that provided different amounts of polyphenols - compounds found in fruits, vegetables and seeds that have been linked with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and cancer.

The researchers drew blood samples from the participants at given intervals following honey consumption. They found that there was a direct link between the honey consumption and the level of polyphenolic antioxidants in the plasma. These findings further strengthen existing evidence that suggests that honey in the diet can provide people with protective antioxidant compounds.

# Recipe Of The Month

Courtesy Ray Moeller

## Honey Iced Tea

Fill a small saucepan with water and bring to a boil. Turn off and seep 4 tea bags with the lid on. Let stand at least 15 minutes. Remove tea bags. Add a small amount of water to a 2-quart pitcher and add the tea from the saucepan. The idea is to have warm tea and water mixture to dissolve the honey, not HOT (when this is too hot it affects the flavor).

Dissolve ¼ to 1/3-cup honey into this mixture and fill pitcher with water. Serve over ice and enjoy.

## Substituting Honey in Recipes

- Because of its high fructose content, honey tastes twice as sweet as sugar. To produce the same sweetness as sugar, use only half as much honey as you would sugar. Sweetness is a very individual taste, so you may want to experiment a bit with the amount of honey you use as a sugar substitute.
- Reduce the amount of liquid in the recipe by 1/4 cup for each cup of honey used in baked goods.
- Reduce oven temperature by 25-F degrees to prevent over-browning of baked goods.

- Of course, for the best results, use recipes developed for using honey. Honey adds a sweet, smooth and distinctive taste to food. Honey also absorbs and retains moisture. These qualities help keep



## A Spoonful Of Honey Helps

For relief of the irritating symptoms of sore throats caused by viruses, try a spoonful of honey to soothe and coat the throat. In between, keep up liquids with a steaming cup of tea sweetened with honey.

(Photo courtesy of the National Honey Board.)

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Membership is open to anyone interested in bee culture. Dues are \$6 per calendar year. This is a family membership. Everyone is welcome to attend meetings. Members are encouraged to submit articles to the editor for publishing.

Meetings are held the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Pandora School, Pandora, Ohio. Time 7:30 p.m. Field trips and or picnic in June, July and August as announced in "The Beehive". No Meeting in December

The Associations' book and video library is free to be used by all members. Materials may be withdrawn from the librarian at the meeting and are to be returned at the next meeting.

"The Beehive", serving Northwest Ohio, is the official publication of the Northwest Ohio Beekeepers Association.

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