



EJ'S NEWS

EJ is East Jefferson Beekeepers Association's Mascot.

Volume 10

Gloria Neal, Editor

May 2021

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East Jefferson Beekeepers'
 Saturday, June 5th Meeting
 Wild Olympic Salmon shelter
 at

HJ Carroll Park
 in Chimacum:

Highway 19,
 between Chimacum School
 and Ness Corner Road.

Please bring your own chair.

Board Meeting 9:30 a.m.

New beekeepers Q & A 10 a.m.

Club meeting 10:30 a.m.

THE PREZ SEZ

Dear Fellow Beekeepers,

As will be elaborated elsewhere in our Newsletter, in lieu of the Jefferson County Fair that is cancelled for the second year in a row, EJBA will have a picnic/educational opportunity at Fort Worden on August 14th. Stand by for details that will be firmed up at our June 5th monthly meeting. It should be a fun day for us all to compare notes and renew acquaintances.

I had an inquiry from Sandra Wurtsmith who owns 5 acres on Hastings Way. Sandra is looking for someone to locate a colony or two on her property. Anyone interested please contact Sandra directly at: its_sandy02@olypen.com.

Although I haven't heard of possums being pests to honeybees in our state, they evidently have been in other areas. We do have them in our region. I find it fascinating that possums eat ticks and are not affected by poisonous snake venom, and in fact eat rattlesnakes and copper heads. They also eat aged roadkill without deleterious impacts.

Sincerely,
 David Morris

JUNE 5TH MEETING AGENDA

Presentation of bait hives.

Demonstration of a solar beeswax melter—
 how to construct one using recycled materials and how to use it
 to produce clean beeswax.

How to wash pollen-bound frames to be used again
 by the bees as brood frames.

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NEWSLETTER

Gloria Neal

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

EJ Beekeepers...

Swarm season is upon us. Hope your “girls” are staying on task at home!

It has been so great seeing many of you at our open-air club meetings. June’s club meeting will be another one packed with lots of beekeeping information. We are looking forward to Grant Simpson’s bait hive presentation. He has been very successful in luring swarms to his bait hives. Learn his techniques for enticing swarms to a bait box, including his list for outfitting the bait box with all of a swarm’s needs.

Rich will be sharing his solar melter made of recycled materials. If you’ve ever priced solar melters, this is a welcome substitute that can do the job for you.

June brings with it a week or two of little or no nectar flows, which can bring on robbing. If you have small colonies just starting, they are vulnerable to larger colonies robbing their honey stores during a nectar dearth. Always keep your entrances small until your colony has built up to 2 brood boxes and has enough guard bees to defend their colony. Using entrance reducers can give your small colony an advantage against these robbers. Also, robber screens are very useful in diverting the robbers away from the front entrance and protecting your bees from mauraunders.

A robbing frenzy is a horrible sight, and being proactive in keeping your small colonies protected can prevent losses of your valuable honey bee workforce.

That’s the buzz for June.

Gloria eastjeffbees@gmail.com
or gloria@tarboovalleywoodenware.com

BEEZWAX



By John Martin

TM & © 2021 John Martin Features

beekeeping.wisato.com/beezwax

TIPS & TRICKS

May 2021: a monthly offering of useful hints for beekeepers

- Jot down your notes on the metal hive top or on masking tape immediately after you finish inspection; transfer later to your permanent record book.
- Use a thin serrated knife to sculpt irregular honey comb.
- During inspections, use an empty nuc to hold frames with the queen or queen cells.

If you would like to submit your own tip or trick for possible future inclusion, please send it to

richandsusi@cablespeed.com.

East Jefferson Beekeepers' Association



GREEN BEES?



Not all bees are yellow and black striped, and a bit on the fuzzy side.

In our area, we see several species of exquisite, small, shiny **green** halictid bees in the genus *Agapostemon*, and they are always delightful jewels to find in our pollinator-friendly garden.

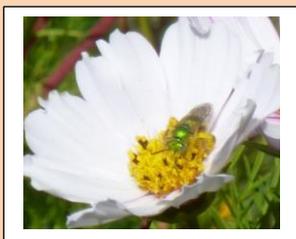
These are ground-nesting, solitary bees. Even though several females sometimes share a single entrance, each has her own separate nest chamber underground, and the aggregation of nests can be dense in an area of sandy or relatively light soil.

The various local halictids we observe typically have a metallic green head and thorax, and females often continue that coloration to the abdomen, as well, whereas males have a darker abdomen with alternating yellow and green-to-black stripes.

Like honey bees, these natives are excellent pollinators of a variety of plants, both indigenous and introduced. Take a look at the green halictids in the accompanying photos on cosmo, California poppy, aster...and a tiny, less than 1/4-inch long gem on Rich's hand!

These bees are part of the family commonly called "sweat bees" because they are attracted to salt as a nutrient.

----- Susi



SOS for SSS (*Spring-Summer Supersedure*)



Attempted supersedure in April, May and even June can be a real problem in our region because of prevailing temperatures. Drones need a temperature of about 65°F to establish good drone congregation areas in which the virgin queens can be successfully mated; however, these temperatures usually don't arrive in Port Townsend until mid-July. Other areas, such as Quilcene and Sequim, can be warmer.

If your bees are trying to supersede the overwintered queen and you are finding queen cells (built usually in the middle of frames), you can intervene by requeening with a purchased queen, or else combine the colony with one that is queenright. If you allow the colony to go for too long without a queen (usually defined as about a month), you run the risk of having a laying-worker colony. And *that* is a BIG problem.

----- Rich

Bee Biology: When Workers Roar

When the queen is removed from part of a colony during a hive inspection, it does not take long before the bees become aware of her absence. Usually within a few minutes, a noticeable buzz begins to develop inside the hive. That buzz continues as long as the queen remains isolated. Experienced beekeepers are sensitive to this sound and sometimes can successfully identify a queenless hive just by the unique, colony-wide outcry. Many beekeepers call this the "Queenless Roar."

How can the honey bees know so quickly that the queen is gone? Each healthy queen bee produces a blend of substances called "queen pheromone" that enables the workers to sense her presence inside the colony. When the pheromone disappears, or when an old and weak queen stops producing it sufficiently, the bees take notice. Without this calming and regulating substance in the hive, the bees become distressed, and within hours or days, they will begin constructing emergency queen cells with young larvae to raise a new replacement queen.

[Adapted from an excerpt of *Wildflower Meadows*, 2016.]Rich and Susi Thomas



rrrrzzzzrrrrrrzzzzzzzzzz!



Queen

Borage is a hardy herb with blue flowers. It self-seeds and blooms late spring through summer. It has been called a “bee magnet.” The leaves, when harvested young, can be used in cooking. The flowers have a cucumber taste and are great in salads.

WHAT IS A SUMMER DEARTH?

A summer dearth can destroy your colonies faster than winter.

<https://www.honeybeesuite.com/what-is-a-summer-nectar-dearth/>

Thanks to Greg for finding this article published in 2020. My main takeaway is that in nonisolated areas (which means practically everywhere), robbing screens used year-round could make a difference in varroa mite loads.

Rich

Notes: Receiver colony Varroa population growth was associated with visitation by non-natal bees, but not just bees with high mite loads. Colonies lacking robbing screens experienced faster Varroa population growth than did their screened neighbors. Results indicate that visiting non-natal bees may vector mites to receiver colonies.

It was also recently demonstrated that bees infected with a Varroa vectored virus were more likely to remove themselves from their natal colony, and were more frequently admitted to non-natal colonies.

It is possible that by breeding gentler bees, beekeepers have inadvertently made colonies more permissive to visits, and thus more susceptible to mite immigration.

Geffre, A. C. et al. Honey bee virus causes context-dependent changes in host social behavior. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 117(19), 10406–10413 (2020).

HOW TO KEEP SWARMS IN YOUR BOXES

Kamon Reynolds

<https://youtu.be/DoCohH9NfIk>

Mini cascara flowers are now in bloom

[honeybeesuite.com](https://www.honeybeesuite.com)

Trees For The Bees

(Look up!)

My default is to look down as I walk, mindful of the western red toad, northern lizard, or exposed root that loves to catch the tip of my boot and send me earthward. But today I am in the woods listening to honey bees enjoy cascara blooms that are too far up for me to see with the naked eye. Head tipped back, I see their movement among what must be cascara's white clusters.



Earlier in the week I gasped at the array of pollen coming into the hives on the back legs of bees. Everything from a silvery pale green (raspberry I think) to a bluish red-orange (wild cherry or possibly scabiosa). Which of these colors belongs to the cascara? There are dozens of charts on the internet but so far I am unable to find out. And since I do not have a ladder under my arm I will file that question away for a later date. For now I will enjoy the knowledge that the bees are enjoying a pollen cornucopia, and at the same time wonder if they have an innate knowledge that a dearth lies just around the corner. To get while the gettin' is good, so to speak.

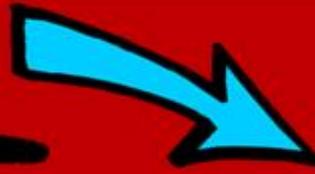
So while your bees are busy bringing in pollen and you are perhaps taking a break from monitoring and/or splitting your hives against swarms, maybe even taking a stroll around your neighborhood looking for inspiration for garden additions, consider adding cascara to your plot.

Cascara (*Frangula purshiana* aka *Rhamnus purshiana*) and known in Chinook Jargon as chittem stick and chitticum stick, grows to a height and width of 30 by 15 feet in a medium slowish manner. The clusters (umbels) of flowers will morph into black drupes and provide fall feeding for birds. The oblong leaves are about six inches in length, dark green on the top and a lighter green on the underside. Leaves turn an intense yellow in the fall, and with a bit of sunlight even orange or red. What's not to love?

--Catherine Slaton



BUZZING WITH



Blake

Bee-lieve me. It's a fact!

BEEKEEPERS!

Honey bees like simple flowers, not double petals that make it difficult for the bees to get to the nectar and pollen.

Blake



KEEP BUZZING WITH BLAKE

Oxalic Acid treatments for your bees....I am setting up appointments to treat your colonies.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SCHEDULE A TREATMENT
OR

LIKE HELP WORKING WITH YOUR HONEY BEES...
PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL ME...

Thanks, BLAKE

buzzingwithblake@gmail.com

Tarboo Valley Woodenware....360-301-1850

TARBOO VALLEY WOODENWARE & HONEYBEES

Frank Neal- Ph. # 360-301-1850...

5% discount for EJB club members for bee supplies

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PLEASE CALL AHEAD!