



BEE LINES

Regularly scheduled meetings are on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 pm at [1305 Pine Avenue in Snohomish](#) in the Christ the King Lutheran Church building.

March 09

February 9, 2009

The meeting was called to order by president, Scott Jenrich. The minutes for the January meeting were read and corrected.

There was no treasure's report as John was absent.

A hive count was taken with the people present and we, jointly have 109 hives.

OLD BUSINESS: We have received a receipt from the Washington State University bee research center, for the \$500.00 donation that was given for colony collapse disorder research.

NEW BUSINESS: Scott and Rachel brought their boards, used to assemble foundation on new frames for the hive.

Scott makes his own foundation and assembles his own frames from stock purchased at Western Bee in Montana. He demonstrated how the frames are assembled and the brass grommets are inserted. The wire is threaded and tightened and the foundation lay on the wire before the wire is heated to solidify the wax on the wire.

The three frame boards that were brought into class were "invented" by the people who use them. They were all individual in appearance and form, but all functioned with the same purpose. Many people in the group were able to put foundation on wire that they had strung. The hands on experience were useful to all for confidence in keeping your own hive.

Thanks to Kinga & Rachel who provided snacks. We had a good visit on what the bees are about with types of pollen right now. It was decided that cedar and willow are two of the major contributors.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, March 9th.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Wirt, secretary.

March meeting agenda

Call to order and welcome:

Introductions:

Reading of the last meeting minutes:

Treasurers report:

Old business:

New business:

Discussion topic. Ron Babcock will give a talk on pollen collecting and how to take samples for WSU testing.



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Web Site Update.

www.nwdba.org

Most of the sections are now populated with some information, at the last meeting we started to team beginners up with mentors and I need to put something on the mentor link. I am still looking for pictures to add so if you have any please send them to me along with a notation.

If you are currently on the swarm call list please email me that the information listed is correct or tell me what needs to be changed, only members can be on the call list. If you are a current member and would like to be added just send me an email with your info and I will update the list. In the future we would like to use full names on the list.

Also please note that you can now email a club officer direct from the web page, your email will go straight to them.

Finally do you have any old or unused beekeeping equipment for sale (or anything else for that matter) or trade, let me know and we can list it on the for sale page.

Don't forget to check out the forum link.

Thankyou, David Pearson.

In the News.

27 FEB 09 National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)

Honey production in 2008 from producers with

five or more colonies totaled 161 million pounds, up 8 percent from 2007.

There were 2.30 million colonies producing honey in 2008, down 6 percent from 2007. Yield per colony averaged 69.9 pounds, up 15 percent from the 60.7 pounds in 2007.

Colonies which produced honey in more than one State were counted in each State where the honey was produced. Therefore, yields per colony may be understated, but total production would not be impacted.

Colonies were not included if honey was not harvested. Producer honey stocks were 50.4 million pounds on December 15, 2008, down 4 percent from a year earlier.

Stocks held by producers exclude stocks held under the commodity loan program.

From [The Times](#)

March 4, 2009

Honeybees under threat from amateur keepers who fail to spot parasite

Valerie Elliott, Countryside Editor

The survival of honeybees is under threat from an unknown army of 20,000 beekeepers who keep hives as a hobby.

In a hard-hitting report today, the National Audit Office (NAO) suggests that unless these amateurs



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are identified and taught how to spot disease in bees, the country's food production capacity will be reduced.

The urgency is reinforced by the growing popularity of the pastime, with about 3,200 people a year investing in safety suits and veiled helmets.

The pollination of fruit, vegetables and other crops is valued at almost £200 million a year and the biggest beneficiaries are English apples, which are worth £104 million annually to the national economy.

Figures released by the audit office show that 90 per cent of English apple production relies on honeybees. Unless government inspectors find out who keeps bees, and where, they will be unable to prevent the further destruction of bees.

The plight of honeybees was part of an investigation into whether the handling of animal disease control budgets by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs represented value for money.

About 30 per cent of colonies were lost to disease during the 2007-08 winter and the endemic varroa parasite now affects 95 per cent of hives. There are an estimated 274,000 colonies compared with 400,000 in 1960.

The audit office is concerned, however, that the control of varroa is being hampered by the lack of colony inspections by the National Bee Unit, part of Defra. It is also unhappy that control efforts to date have failed to prevent varroa, which was not seen in Britain before 1992, from becoming endemic in 2006.

The NAO suggests a new campaign by inspectors to persuade all beekeepers to join a national register. So far only 17,000 have done so. If that fails, it suggests that ministers should examine the viability of a compulsory scheme, similar to those in Belgium, France and New Zealand. It is also anxious that the Government should organise training for beekeepers to help them to spot signs of disease and to notify inspectors who can then prevent further loss of colonies.

At present inspectors identify about 80 per cent of hives with disease. Only a fifth of keepers report possible disease problems in their own hives.

Another problem highlighted by the report is that the varroa mite, which feeds on bees and spreads viruses, is resistant to treatments that tackle infestation.

Some beekeepers are therefore buying supplies of oxalic acid via the internet. Its use is widespread within the European Union but is not licensed in Britain. Enforcement authorities have turned a blind eye to this unlawful activity because they recognise that the substance needs to be approved for use.

There are concerns that if keepers dilute the crystals with excessive water it may cause a risk to human health and a burning sensation to the eyes or skin.

Edward Leigh, the Conservative MP and chairman of the Commons Public Accounts Committee, is particularly concerned that disease controls are being undermined by the enormous number of beekeepers unknown to the Government.



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"Action to stem the very high losses of honeybees in recent years crucially depends on a regime of comprehensive inspections and treatment of colonies. At the moment, this isn't being done," he said.

In January Hilary Benn, the Rural Affairs Secretary, announced an extra £4.3 million to be spent over the next five years on bee protection and disease research.

Martin Smith, the chairman of the British Beekeepers' Association, who keeps eight colonies in Skelmersdale, Lancashire, said he was concerned that the extra money would be spent on leaflets and campaigns to persuade beekeepers to join the national register instead of vital scientific research into the underlying causes of the decline in colonies.

Here are some responses to the article,

The national database is something of a red herring. 99.9% of beekeepers belong to their county Association who have full details of their members. The information is already there. All Associations are extremely proactive in educating keepers about treatments. These 20,000 ludites do not exist!

The culprit is industrialized agriculture. Monocultures have contributed to high pesticide use, genetically modified pollen, and a decrease in honeybee nutrition. There are ways to manage bees without putting harmful chemicals in your hives. Hobby beekeepers are pioneering these efforts.

Bee keepers have been shouting about the lack of acknowledgement and help since the then Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food started cutting back on funding for apiary. For the government now to start blaming the beekeepers themselves is just crass.

Books.

QUEEN REARING AND BEE BREEDING

1997 Wicwas Press, LLC by Harry H.

Laidlaw jr. and Robert E. Page Jr.

AMAZON.COM Editorial Review "Written for beekeepers who know little about genetics and geneticists who know little about beekeeping."

Few books deal so effectively with both the hands-on art of queen rearing and the scientific aspects of bee breeding as does this text.

Professors Laidlaw and Page of the University of California, Davis, have prepared a

comprehensive yet understandable book for both the beekeeper and the scientist. Laidlaw, born in

1907, made important discoveries about breeding methods using instrumental insemination during the 1940s. He spent his professional life at the U.

of California, Davis, perfecting II technology to the point where it is widely used in bee breeding



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techniques. Moreover, he worked with commercial queen producers and developed reliable methods for producing quality queen bees for either natural or instrumental mating. Page has developed modern bee breeding concepts using computer methodology. His closed population breeding and mass selection techniques are widely used by bee breeders. If you are a beekeeper interested in producing queen bees for your operation, this is an excellent book for your study. If you are a scientist interested in techniques used in bee breeding, this book is also for you. The book is designed as a work-book textbook, with ample white space for notes and post-its. The twelve chapters cover history of bee breeding to a delightful 'Whimsy' section, and includes 'Song of the Queen Bee.' There are many excellent photographs and illustrations to help you understand complex ideas. The first printing sold out quickly, and the book has been reprinted and is again available.