



The

March 2010

BUZZWORD

Interactive newsletter for West Sound Beekeepers Association
Proudly serving bees, their keepers, and the public in Kitsap County, WA
(Editor's note: The interactive newsletter is still under construction.)

Refreshments

16 March, 2010 Meeting
Drinks: Aurora See
Snacks: Jim & Peggy
Dunbar

Meeting Schedule:

**Apprentice Beekeeping
Class**
6PM Tuesday 16 March 2010

Regular Meeting
7 PM Tuesday 16 March 2010

**Steering Committee
Meeting**
7 PM Tuesday 06 April
2010

Queen Rearing Group
Meets after the Steering
Committee

Meetings at Stedman's
Beekeeping Supplies in
Silverdale

Beekeeping Class

6 PM Tuesday March 16, 2010

Regular Meeting

7 PM Tuesday March 16, 2010

Program:

Tim Celeski: Swarms & Swarming

What's inside:

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Bee News Links:

Common scents - honeybees guide UQ neurological discoveries (Feb 4 2010)
<http://www.uq.edu.au/news/index.html?article=20538>

Are bees also addicted to caffeine and nicotine? (Feb 10 2010)
<http://esciencenews.com/articles/2010/02/10/are.bees.also.addicted.caffeine.and.nicotine>

Biologist Discovers 'Stop' Signal in Honey Bee Communication (Feb 11 2010)
http://biology.ucsd.edu/news/article_021110.html

A headbutt spells danger in bee talk (Feb 20 2010)
<http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20527484.600-a-headbutt-spells-danger-in-bee-talk.html>

In Plants, Yeasts Raise Temperatures (Feb 26 2010)
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/02/science/02obwarm.html>

Megabee Candyboard Recipe
<http://www.megabeediet.com/candy.html>

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes March 2, 2010

Officers and Legacy Members – all welcome

First Tuesday of each month at Stedman's, Silverdale, WA. Starting time 7:00 pm.

Present – Jim Dunbar, Peggy Dunbar, Paul Lundy, Basil Gunther, George Purkett, Jason Deal, Dave Mackovjak, Carlson family, Pat Kuney Darren Gordon, and Lori Christie

Submitted by Peggy Dunbar

Jim Dunbar presided

Business:

Changes to the By-laws accepted for approval at the March Association meeting. Changes are posted on the Yahoo group and on the website.

Old minutes not read for approval.

Summary Notes:

- **Apiary notes:** The goal for this summer is to have 10 production hives, 10 backup nucs, and 2-4 hives for the queen rearing group. Any extras? The group will reevaluate what to do with them, if any, in May.
 - **The newsletter will include classified ads.** Members advertise for free. Non-members - \$30.00 for three months.
 - **Presentations:** There was a brainstorming session on the topics for presentations for the meetings this year including the following possibilities:
 - Swarm Talk – scheduled for March meeting with Tim Celeski
 - Mead Making
 - Queen Rearing
 - Wax products
 - Immunology
 - Commercial Beekeeping
 - Dan Harvey
 - American Foulbrood
 - The schedules will be posted in future Newsletter when Presenters are confirmed.
 - **Discussion of the Budget.** A budget will be presented to the Board of Trustees by Jim Dunbar
 - **Dave discussed the goals of the Queen Rearing Group:**
 - Explore the physical method of queen rearing
 - Educate members on Queen Rearing
 - What do we do with the queens?
 - Establish the hygienics of the queens
 - Invite at least two other bee associations to work with our group
 - Placement workshops
 - Provide mated queens
- Future goals:**
- Explore artificial insemination
 - Saturate our area with WSBA queens
- An initial grafting schedule was set:**
- Sunday April 11 @1:00
 - Sunday May 9 @1:00
 - Sunday June 6 @ 1:00 at Stedman's. All welcome.
- Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Message From The President

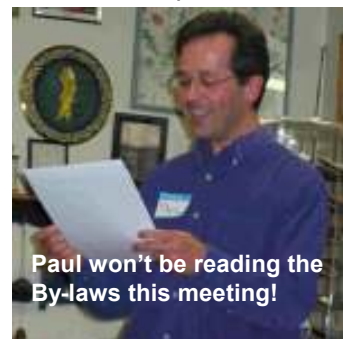
Well, had anybody asked the last week of February or the first week of March I would have said 'yep, looks like queen rearing is going to be an early one this year' and left it at that. The second week of March it would go something like 'I'm not sure where this snow came from!' Ahhh, the bittersweet of living in the Puget Sound – you just can't bank on the weather. Hopefully all of our beekeepers took the opportunity to check on their colonies that one 60 degree Saturday of March 6th.

Several beekeepers (me included) had checked their colonies just weeks before that Saturday. Believing the bees had enough stores they were left with what they had. Not aware of how prolific some colonies had began brood production resulted in a tremendous consumption of stores, and in several cases leaving the colony starved. Two of our colonies and one at the association's apiary resulted in queens with very few support bees, culling her brood production to a minimum. In two cases, with just 20 or 30 capped brood cells and a handful of bees, the chances were slim the hive would make it into spring. In an effort to save the queen (and the colony) we augmented the hive with a frame of capped brood and young support bees. We have yet to determine if our efforts will bear any fruit.

The association's apiary, rigorously checked on the 6th of March, fared quite well. Jason Deal's idea of over-wintering split deeps (five frame colonies as back up) proved to be a masterful plan. He personally experienced success over wintering a couple of two frame nucs in a queen castle. Our association now goes into spring with healthy colonies, nearly doubled in number minus the two or three that consolidated in the middle of winter (queen loss, health issues, etc). We all can learn and benefit from this practice of cheap insurance.

For those interested, there will be NO discussion of business during the apprenticeship or the following meeting – only a vote of Aye or Nay from members. If anybody would like to engage in the business aspects of the association's affairs to discuss policy, present ideas, or just to cause mayhem (humor) please join us on the 1st Tuesday of each month from the hour of 7 to 8 pm. Thanks go out to ALL of the associations members – you make this a great venture for beekeeping.

Jim Dunbar, President, West Sound Beekeepers Association



WSBA is now officially Non-Profit!

A Prayer In Spring

**Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers to-day;
And give us not to think so far away
As the uncertain harvest; keep us here
All simply in the springing of the year.**

**Oh, give us pleasure in the orchard white,
Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by night;
And make us happy in the happy bees,
The swarm dilating round the perfect trees.**

**And make us happy in the darting bird
That suddenly above the bees is heard,
The meteor that thrusts in with needle bill,
And off a blossom in mid air stands still.**

**For this is love and nothing else is love,
The which it is reserved for God above
To sanctify to what far ends He will,
But which it only needs that we fulfill,**

Robert Frost 1915

Split Deep Nucleus Colonies

One part of an essential beekeeping Strategy By Jason Deal, WSBA Apiary Manager

The Assessment

Winter was over and the apiary assessment did not meet my goals for the new year. Not even close. Seven colonies faced the northwest winter with four displaying a will to survive another season. One of the four was too weak even to consider being worthy until the blackberry flow. I needed all my Langstroths full of strong viable honeybee colonies able to attack the earliest of nectar flows. This is the golden elixir a beekeeper dreams of while listening to Paul Lundy's harvest management techniques, in a packed classroom hosting many other beek daydreamers. A management strategy needed to be found, read, discovered, manipulated, and or created to provide my apiary with all the boxes full of nectar seeking bugs after winter shed its drizzling cold spell. That was a few years ago when I was a two year neophyte in the world of honeybees.

Searching for Beeks Blues Clues

Countless hours of traveling, research, and experiments was the path to attain the clandestine knowledge guarded by the "Templar Knights of Honeybee Husbandry". The quest was very rewarding in the aspect of interacting with or reading about beekeepers throughout the world, not to mention the results upon the apiary.

I asked Paul Lundy about an excellent nucleus colony survivor plan a while back during my lucrative hobby career. He referred me to the nice gentleman wearing stitched colorful patches on his jeans. The opening salvo for latent knowledge was launched. An interesting conversation soon followed with this fellow. He explained the elusiveness of having nucleus colonies survive the winter and explained his successes. He showed me the direction to some reference material. This guy was contagious and displayed a passion as I did for attaining the Holy Grail of beekeeping. His words of encouragement invigorated me to continue my search.

"The Man up North" is strikingly full of knowledge and has always been a pleasant fellow to converse with each and every time. I met him a few years ago on a trip to obtain some queens. On a particular visit to his apiary I discussed strategy and components to help with my increases. He was very generous in volunteering his time to school me on his practices. He unveiled the very element I read in a C.C. Miller book before my very own eyes. The split deep nucleus colony! I observed and listened very closely to the teachings by this wise man for his time was precious.

"The Man from Manitoba" provided many visuals in his bee teachings. The split deep and its technique were demonstrated by him. Wow! Great info! The manipulations and feeding methods were fully described in exact detail.

"The Two Wise Men from the East" also have split deeps but true to the form of C.C. Millers illustrations and description. The fascinating aspect was not only their split deep methods but the management plan I was seeking. Wow! Somehow I obtained a great video presentation that soon was lost in the great black hole of beekeeping knowledge. Not to worry! I only watched the video five times and took great notes!

The Epiphany

Split Deep Nucleus Colonies- Use a deep Langstroth or even a Western! Divide the box lengthwise and utilize a 3/8" separator board. Slide the separator board into routed grooves on the ends of the box.

Block half the entrance on each end. Each half utilizes their own entrance and inner covers. The inner covers are drilled out for feeding in the top.

Throw four (I do five) frames in each half. Have two of those frames with eggs, larvae, and brood, one frame of pollen, one frame of honey, and one fully drawn but empty comb frame for the queen to lay. A new queen or ripe queen cell is introduced into each half of the box. Keep 1:1 sugar syrup on the colonies to ensure healthy growth of the nucs.





In **October** remove the inner covers and install a queen excluder flat side down. Ensure it contacts the top of the divider board and is secure. Spray sugar water on the bees to reduce or eliminate fighting. Turn your inner cover boards over and utilize the reverse side on top of the queen excluder. This side of the board still has the 3/8" rims except on the sides meeting in the center. This provides a common head area for the bees to travel across the divider. Why? Failure of one queen in the winter will not be the demise of one half of the colony. They will travel to the queen-right side and support her. Put 2:1 feed with inverted jars over the inner cover holes to prepare the bees for winter. Load the comb with feed but ensure there is some open comb allowing the bees

to cling. As the temperature drops the two nucleus colonies will cluster as one even though there is a divider board in the middle. Really cool stuff!

The Management Plan- Before winter, have a nucleus colony for each production colony. If you operate ten production colonies ensure there are ten nucleus colonies.

10 Production Colonies to 5 Split Deeps

The first signs of **spring** indicate the ritual post winter apiary assessment. Your total losses were 50% between the production colonies and the split deep nucs. Transfer the nucleus colonies into each of your production boxes when the weather warms up enough. This is part of **sustainable beekeeping**. Sustainable in the sense you have ten colonies and did not have to purchase new bees. However, this will not fully capitalize on the earliest of nectar flows if the nucs are separated into production colonies. Try these methods.



Option 1: Keep the nucs together and operate a two-queen set-up for the early nectar flow.

Option 2: Remove a queen from one nuc and combine the two nucs into one colony. Or even combine multiple nucs. The extra queen/s can be given to someone wanting to perform early splits or banked. However, this will not fill empty boxes if there were 50% losses in the apiary. **This manipulation is best utilized if minimal losses were incurred.** This is your goal! Minimal losses, or better yet, none!

Final Assessment

The results of utilizing split deep nucleus colonies with a management strategy are astounding. The apiaries look great every year and are full of life after winters' onslaught. There is great potential for enthusiastic beekeepers if they have the diligence and time to contribute in their apiaries.

I hate losing and quitting acknowledges defeat. Losses are inevitable in the beekeeping arena even for those who are worthy of a golden hive tool. Minimizing the losses and developing/implementing sustainable colony practices is vital to keeping the apiary alive along with your extractor!

I encourage all of you to do your homework: Research, talk to people, ask questions, and watch demonstrations to gain knowledge in beekeeping. 99% of your success is you having the initiative and dedication! WestSound Bee Club has established a new bar this year to help you become a better beekeeper. Watch the Calendar of Events. Show up! And when you do attend...pay attention in class and stop daydreaming about the golden harvest!!



Queen Rearing group Update:

West Sound Beekeeping Association by David Mackovjak, Queen Rearing Group Leader



Peggy grafting queen cells



George with a nice batch of queen cells

The Queen Rearing group held their first meeting of the 2010 year on Tuesday 3/2/2010. The Queen Rearing group will meet on the first Tuesday of the month following the WSBA business meeting held at Stedmans. The business meeting starts at 7 PM and the Queen Rearing meeting will start at approx 8 pm or after the business meeting ends. We may also explore the possibility of holding the queen rearing meeting at other locations as may be needed.

During the first meeting the purpose and goals of the Queen Rearing group were discussed and confirmed.

Purpose: The Queen Rearing group is to provide an opportunity for members of WSBA a venue to learn and explore the art of queen rearing.

2010 Goals for the Queen Rearing group of West Sound Beekeeping Association (WSBA):

- 1. Explore and document different physical methods of queen rearing**
- 2. Educate both the Queen Rearing group and the WSBA on queen rearing**
- 3. Provide quality queens to the Queen Rearing group and WSBA**
- 4. Investigate and conduct hygienic testing**
- 5. Explore drone management methods**
- 6. Invite at least two other local beekeeping associations to our queen rearing meeting**

Resources – The WSBA will support the queen rearing group by providing up to four hives for queen rearing purposes. Additionally they will provide resources for purchasing queen rearing equipment as needed as defined within the scope of the WSBA annual budget.

Training - Training will be provided on different methods of queen rearing. We would like the members of the Queen Rearing group to be active participants and to conduct research and report back to the Queen Rearing group what they have learned. This then would allow us to collectively take that knowledge and experiment/apply it to the Queen Rearing apiary.

On 6 Apr, at the next Queen Rearing meeting training will be given on the "Cloake Board Method" which developed by Harry Cloake of New Zealand. We will discuss the Cloake Board mechanics, the procedures, properly setting up the hive, grafting, queen incubating and banking.

On 21 Apr, a less technical "Cloake Board Method" presentation will be presented to the WSBA general meeting as part of our first distribution of new queen cells as noted below in our hands-on-demonstration schedule.

A tentative schedule of hands-on-demonstrations and skill events was also discussed and confirmed (dates subject to weather and hive strength)

Friday, 9 Apr 10 – Cloaking setup demonstration, 6 pm Stedmans
Sunday, 11 Apr 10 – Queen rearing grafting demonstration, 1-3 pm Stedmans
Tuesday, 21 Apr 10 – Queens handed out, 6-7 pm Stedmans

Friday, 7 May 10 – Cloaking setup demonstration, 6 pm Stedmans
Sunday, 9 May 10 – Queen rearing grafting demonstration, 1-3 pm Stedmans
Tuesday, 18 May 10 – Queens handed out, 6-7 pm Stedmans

Friday, 4 Jun 10 – Cloaking setup demonstration, 6 pm Stedmans
Sunday, 6 Jun 10 – Queen rearing grafting demonstration, 1-3 pm Stedmans
Tuesday, 15 Jun 10 – Queens handed out, 6-7 pm Stedmans

The Queen Rearing group is open to all members who are interested in learning about the art of queen rearing or would just like to learn more about bee keeping. To be included in any queen rearing correspondence please send me your name, phone number and email address.

Thanks and looking forward to seeing a great turnout at our next Queen Rearing meeting!! Come join all the fun!!

David Mackovjak
Queen Rearing group leader
Trimack1@yahoo.com
360-340-0381



Basil with drawn out queen cells

Still interested in keeping honeybees?



Almost everyone has renewed their memberships and we have most of the new members signed on but there's bound to be a couple of you about to be left behind. We're still hoping you'll stay onboard and it's all just a terrible mistake, etc, etc... Luckily for you we have put in this reminder so you can retain the pleasure of being part of and supporting our worthy association and reap the many and various benefits of being a member. Thank-you for finally renewing and saving the overworked newsletter editor from having to tediously remove your sorry @** name from the mailing list.

Yes! I want to be a member of West Sound Beekeepers' Association during 2010. I have enclosed a check payable to West Sound Beekeepers Association Check one: \$24 annual household membership dues \$34 Bee-ginner class fee (\$24 membership dues + \$10 study guide OPTIONAL)

NAME(S): _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

Please return to: WSBA Treasurer: Lori Christie 14686 NW Seaview Dr. Seabeck, WA 98380

Editor's Corner

Forgotten Pollinators

Photos : Al Gunther early March 2010

It's no secret that I am a bee forage enthusiast. Who knows what people think when they see me meandering along with frequent thoughtful pauses, numerous backtracking circuits, and the occasional foray into the bushes only to stuff my pockets with dead weeds (and their seeds)? I must not present a too alarmingly deviant appearance since I frequently find myself in conversations with people who are deciding what plants to choose for a planting project they have in mind. Of course, I am full of suggestions for plants that just happen to be good for bees.



One thing they often say is how they are thinking of using native plants. I nod my head thoughtfully instead of following my natural inclination to shake it sadly. I don't have anything against native plants. I just have a broader definition of native plants than most people. And I know that many would consider some of my favorite plants as exotic invasives. I have trouble accepting the narrow and vague definition of so-called native plants. Perhaps I would be more comfortable if people called them common woodland plants. It seems to me the intent of planting 'native' plants is to preserve some small part of an idealized ecosystem compromised by the ever rampaging activities of human beings, an ecosystem that may only exist in the mind.

My problem with the label 'native plants' is that it appears to be arbitrary and static. It doesn't give you a 'when' or a 'where' and you don't get a complete list of animals, plants, fungi, microbes, etc.



It is accepted that a very long time ago, in what is now Washington state, there existed a temperate hardwood forest. You can visit the Ginkgo Petrified Forest Museum in Vantage, Washington, and see the petrified remains of trees whose living counterparts are spread throughout the northern hemisphere. Ginkgoes themselves were forced off our continent, long ago, by volcanoes or glaciers, so you wonder if that cost them their 'native' status.

In fact, all plants were forced out of our immediate area by the Vashon Glacier that carved out Puget Sound and left a pile of sand, clay, and gravel that we now call the Kitsap Peninsula. The plants and animals that moved into the exposed area as the glaciers receded could have been classified as 'exotic invaders'.

My point is that no ecosystem is truly static and that ours is in a state of perpetual turmoil due to the incredibly disruptive effects of human activities. Many plant and animal species have gone extinct in our lifetimes. That's why I think it's good to plant all sorts of plants and hope for the best, as it will be a long, long, while until we have anything approaching a stable ecosystem, if, indeed, that will ever occur. A diverse gene pool may be the best hope for now and the future.

When I am talking to a person who wants to plant 'native plants' I don't try to dissuade them, but point out that these are dangerous times for the honeybee, and pollinators in general. I think it is a good thing to plant plants. Why not also plant some nectar producing plants, not just for the bees, but for the numerous other pollinators, hummingbirds, and beneficial insects?



Recipe Corner

Honey Gingernuts

1 cup honey
1 cup sugar
1 cup softened butter
1 beaten egg
2 cups flour
2 tsp. baking soda
3 tsp. Powdered ginger
1 cup chopped nuts
additional flour

preheat oven 350' F

- Mix honey, sugar, butter, and egg. Sift flour, baking powder, and ginger. Add to honey mixture.
- Add nuts.
- Add additional flour to make batter of right consistency.
- Drop by spoonfuls on greased cookie sheet and bake about 10 minutes.

Recipe from 'Old Favorite Honey Recipes' printed by the American Honey Institute, Madison, WI. 1941

***"Of all the cookies I have eaten
Those made with honey can't be beaten!"***



A poem to enjoy
from the librarian:

The Honey Bee

In the springtime, joyous spring-
time,
When the birds begin to sing,
And we hear the murmuring brook-
lets,
Then the bees are on the wing.
When the long, cold days are over
Bees are out to sip the dew
And the nectar from the clover,
Buttercups and daisies blue.

Supers placed above the beehive
For the honey bee to find,
Will be filled if showers are given
To the flowers of every kind.
Then the bees are kind and gentle
"Take it hog," they seem to say;
"We will work again the harder
After the next rainy day.

"And we'll fill again the super,
We don't mind with you to share,
Early morn will find us busy
Gathering honey everywhere.
We just gladly gather honey,
And the wax from off our back
We produce, now isn't it funny,
No material do we lack.

"For our queen cells we have pollen,
Any egg a queen may be,
From the proper food and cover,
We produce a queen, you see.
If some drones we wish for mating,
Other food we must supply,
Just the food we give while waiting
For their hatching by and by."

"But when frost on field and hillside,
In the autumn kills the flower,
And in vain we search for honey,
In each glen and leafy bower,
Then in every hive is stationed
Guards to watch our winter's store,
For if you would rudely take it,
We would search in vain for more.

"And we sting with all our fury,
Take our honey if you dare,
For we want to keep from starving
In the winter, so beware."
There's a moral we may gather
From the busy bee for all,
Gather food stuff in the summer,
And protect it in the fall.

—Nettie Squire Sutton.

