

# THE BEELINE



Official Newsletter of the Central Iowa Beekeepers Association

## ISSUE

Summer, 2018

## UPCOMING MEETING INFORMATION

June 16, 2018

**Spring Valley Honey Farm**  
**14405 Hull Avenue**  
**Perry, IA 50220**

11:00 a.m. Gather for Field Day  
12:00 p.m. Potluck Lunch and Meeting  
2:30 p.m. Curt Bronnenburg

- ✓ Supering Hives -- When to do it and How
- ✓ Checking Queens and Requeening

Any questions contact:

Jamie Beyer

(515) 231-0215

[beyersbog@aol.com](mailto:beyersbog@aol.com)

## NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSION

**DEADLINE: August 10, 2018**

### Email Submissions

[3oakshoney@gmail.com](mailto:3oakshoney@gmail.com)

### Mail Submissions

Jolene Erikson

324 NE 64<sup>th</sup> St

Pleasant Hill, IA 50327

We encourage you to receive the newsletter via email; however, we understand if electronic delivery is not for you! You may make updates to your subscription, or add a subscription by sending a notification to:

[justiowahoney@gmail.com](mailto:justiowahoney@gmail.com)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT, MIKE SANDER

Hello Central Iowa Beekeepers,

I hope your bees all made it through the winter and are on their way to another successful honey crop. Mine are growing, healthy and hauling in the nectar. It amazes me how the bee population seems to explode just as all the plants start to turn green. I always wonder how the bees are able to time this out with the spring green up being so variable from year to year. It seemed to me like we had a really long cold winter this year, and I have been wondering if it just seemed that way because we have been spoiled by the last couple of easy winters.

I sometimes use part of this article to share with something the bees are teaching me. Something I had not considered, with last year's early spring, was how the mites would explode in late season because of having the extra weeks of brood rearing. Fortunately, most of the mite treatments worked, and those colonies wintered well. I will be remembering this lesson so when I see the early spring again mite treatments can go on a little sooner. Thanks to fellow beekeepers for bringing this up in conversation.

Another lesson they are trying to teach me is when to super. I remember commenting to my wife, in early spring, both of the last two years that we need to put supers on sooner. Each year we have, but it seems like it still needs to be sooner. I don't think I have that timing worked out yet. Because of this, I am looking forward to our upcoming June meeting.

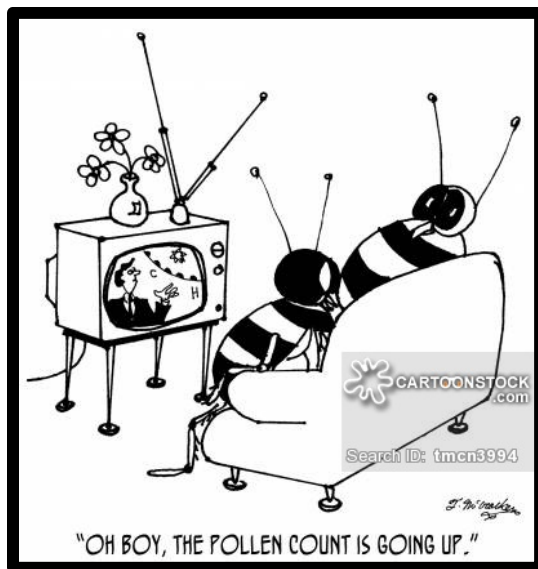
Jamie has a great program lined up for us. The day is coming up soon. We will meet on June 16<sup>th</sup> at Curt and Connie's just outside of Perry. Curt will be presenting to us on supering, and queen less hives. This should be very informative and educational. Please look for the announcement later in this newsletter.

We had a great auction again this spring. I am grateful for our many awesome volunteers. Thank you volunteers for your donations, time, and hard work to make this a successful event. Julie our auction chair did an amazing job for us again this year. An early heads up, we will be moving to a new site next year. You will have to check out Julie's report later in this issue for more information. Hope to see you at the June meeting.

Mike, (515) 957-8730, [masander3@gmail.com](mailto:masander3@gmail.com)

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## CIBA Summer Field Day

CIBA Summer Field Day is going to be Saturday, June 16. It will be held rain or shine at Spring Valley Honey Farms at [14405 Hull Ave., Perry, IA 50220](http://14405HullAve.com). This is Curt and Connie Bronnenberg's Honey House. They are very good members of CIBA and do a lot for our group!!

The Field Day will start at 11 AM with a potluck meal at noon. CIBA will provide the meats and condiments for them. But bring what you like to cook or fix for the potluck. The meeting should be finished by about 2:30 or 3. Bring your own chairs, table service and plan on having a relaxing good time talking bees.

Curt will present on two subjects. "Supering Hives -- when to do it and how". Also, on "Checking Queens and Requeening". Bring your veil and bee suit -- we may be into hives with hands on demo. Curt, as most of you know, is a long time commercial apiarist and a good one at that. So, come and learn from an expert. They also have all that you need for your hives. This meeting is not about selling stuff but as long as you are there -- well.....

You will not want to miss this! It will be a great day of fellowship, great food, and valuable information.

Any questions please contact Jamie Beyer, 515/231-0215 or [beyersbog@aol.com](mailto:beyersbog@aol.com)



## CIBA Beekeeping Auction Update

The 2018 auction had another great year thanks to all the wonderful volunteers, buyers, sellers and Bronnenberg's for the use of the property. We had 16 consigners from 14 different cities and 59 of the 91 registered attendees made purchases. The concession stand was full of delicious food and treats that were enjoyed by all. It raised an amazing \$360.31 for the CIBA honey queen. This year's queen is Cameron Vannoy, hopefully you stopped by the concession stand to meet her.

Sales for the auction totaled \$8,914.50, with a profit for the club of \$870.51.

The planning for the 2019 auction is underway. One exciting update is the location. We have rented a building close to Perry that provides us with an indoor area to better handle check in and payment, concessions, restrooms and a place to cool off or warm up. The majority of the auction bidding will still occur outdoors.

The new address is 18930 210th street Minburn, IA with the auction date of April 20, 2019. Rest assured, we will be forwarding more information as we get closer to the auction in 2019. Until then, gather up your extra equipment and supplies and store them for the auction.

Thanks again for all those that volunteered and gave of their time, the auction success would not have been possible without all your hard work.

Julie Sander, Auction Chair



## CIBA Committees Need Someone Just Like You!

By Valerie Just and Jamie Beyer

**We Make a Living by What We Get, but We Make a Life by What We Give ~ Winston Churchill**

As you all know, our organization has several objectives written in our by-laws, with a primary goal to promote the art of beekeeping and honey production through close coordination, cooperation and fellowship amongst our membership. We have various committees that you may not be fully aware of, and we need someone just like you to engage with fellow members to accomplish the goals within the committee. Together, we can make a difference.

If you have been thinking that you would like to become more engaged in our organization, but just don't have the time commitment to serve as an officer or director, working on a committee is an excellent way to get your feet wet without over-committing personal time. If you are waiting for the perfect timing to volunteer, it will never come, especially if you continue to sit on the sidelines - take the plunge - joining a committee allows you to take volunteering for a test drive, just as you take a test drive when buying a new car!

## **What's in it for you?**

### **Happiness and Health!**

DID YOU KNOW that the happiest people are those who help others? Most folks discover that the surest way to happiness is to be part of something bigger than themselves.

"There's a growing body of research showing that volunteering is associated with better physical and mental health outcomes," says Eric S. Kim, a research fellow at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

### **Engaging with others that share the same interests and passions!**

Who doesn't want to spend time with a bunch of like-minded, fun-loving beeks – and gain valuable beekeeping tips, tricks and secrets? Trust me when I tell you this will be an outcome of your volunteer journey.

### **Accomplishing group goals, feeling productive and energized!**

Working together as a group/team to accomplish goals and objectives that assist others along their beekeeping journey; drive legislation that protects our bees; provide further education to the public to enable greater support for our bees – and the list goes on.

## **Committee Opportunities**

This is the list of active CIBA committees, which provides a host of opportunity! At the upcoming June meeting, committee opportunities will be an agenda item to ensure that we give ample opportunity for you to ask questions and gain clarity. We will have sign-up sheets for each committee at the meeting, so please don't be shy – we need you!

Committee Name	Committee Defined	Program Chair	Committee Members
Queen /Ambassador Program	Interview potential candidates. Assist the queen/ambassador throughout the year providing resources and guidance	Connie Bronnenberg	Jamie Beyer, Arvin Foell
Bee Yard Program	Dependent on Articles of Incorporation progress. Upstart and define the program parameters; will be a learning resource for CIBA members and public education. Dependent on the non-profit 501C3 committee, as this program chair will need to gain liability insurance for the yard.	Open	Arvin Foell, Mike/Julie Sander, Linn/Ann Wilbur, Dean Howarth, Jeremiah/Gordan Kusel, Jenny Burton, Christina Nigon, Curt Bronnenberg,
CIBA Bee Squad: Beekeeping Mentorship Program	New committee! Upstart and define the program parameters. Works closely with the Bee Yard Chair, as bee yard will be a resource for new beekeeper education. Engages with club members to determine mentoring needs. Works with new beekeepers each year to meet the educational/hands-on needs of new beekeepers in the membership. Works with local educational programs to create club awareness, club benefits of the mentorship program	Val Just	Open
Program Committee	Develops quarterly meeting program agendas, finds speakers, and locations of meetings and seminars.	Jamie Beyer	Linn Wilbur
Newsletter Committee	Provides editor with content and assists in preparing the quarterly Beeline for preparation for the CIBA membership and distribution to the Iowa beekeeping clubs. Works with state apiarist for quarterly articles.	Jolene Eriksen	Val Just
Bylaws/Articles of Incorporation - 501C3	Manages annual revisions of CIBA By-laws. Works with volunteers for the objective of gaining a non-profit status for our organization.	Jamie Beyer	Dean Howarth, Marlon Mormann
Website Committee	Creation and maintenance of the organizational website	Mike Sander	Carly Vannoy
Facebook Committee	Maintains and monitors Facebook pages. Enables the ability for club engagement/social engagement.	Jeremiah Kusel	Jenny Burton Carly Vannoy
Publicity Committee	Manages the marketing of our programs through the various media outlets. Will collaborate with most committee chairs to ensure needs are being met.	Open	Open





## Membership Directory

Our CIBA 2018 Membership Directory is sent out annually in June if you indicated on your membership form we could share your information. Please review your individual information; if you find wrong information, please contact Valerie Just so we can ensure that our records are accurate:

[JustIowaHoney@gmail.com](mailto:JustIowaHoney@gmail.com)

(515) 278-4835

Your leadership team would also like to ensure that you find this directory valuable. We will get your feedback at the September meeting to see if you would like us to continue this service.



## The Queen's Corner

By Carly Vannoy, Iowa Honey Queen, 2017

### **Beekeepers Around the World**

Meet Chuck Magri, a beekeeper from Southwestern Ontario, Canada!

Chuck has been keeping bees for 6 years and has no intentions of stopping anytime soon! He has 75 hives on average from year to year and hopes to build to 100 colonies this season. If these hives yield anything near the colony which produced 180 pounds of honey last year, he should be set!

Despite varroa, pesticides, and destruction of natural habitat that make successful beekeeping difficult, Chuck remains optimistic - "In 6 years there has never been a day when I am out checking bees that I didn't want to do it - it's pretty fun."

As far as Varroa goes, he has an interesting solution that is a solid win-win... his practice is to (in his own words) "treat them by inserting frames with no foundation and allowing the bees to draw comb ideal size for drone brood. Mites love drone brood. I love cutting out the capped drone brood and feeding it to my chickens. Bees are happy because they have better things to do than deal with mites. Chickens are happy because they get larvae to eat which by their standards is Christmas dinner!"

Chuck's favorite beekeeping saying is "the bee's knees" - "I'll say that when something is downright cool." Black coffee sweetened with honey - his favorite use for the liquid gold - sure seems to fit the bill!

If you'd like to learn more about Chuck and follow his beekeeping adventure, you can connect with him on Facebook at his page, Wildflowers Honey, or on Instagram @wildflowers\_honey.



## NATIONAL POLLINATOR WEEK

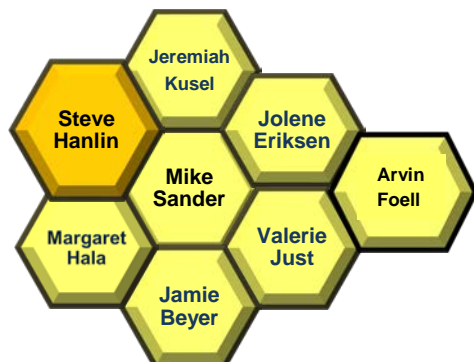
National Pollinator Week is a time to celebrate pollinators and spread the word about what you can do to protect them

Eleven years ago, the U.S. Senate's unanimous approval and designation of a week in June as "National Pollinator Week" marked a necessary step toward addressing the urgent issue of declining pollinator populations. Pollinator Week has now grown into an international celebration of the valuable ecosystem services provided by bees, birds, butterflies, bats and beetles.

## The Pollinator Partnership is proud to announce that June 18-24, 2018 has been designated National Pollinator Week.

For more information, here is the website: <http://pollinator.org/pollinator-week>

### Get to Know Your Club Leadership



#### Steve Hanlin, Board Member

Hello, my name is Steve Hanlin and I am a board member for CIBA. I was asked to give a “brief” history of how I got into beekeeping. So, let’s see if I can keep this short!

In 1978 as a freshman in Vocational Agriculture/FFA in Sheridan Wyoming I was told I needed “an agricultural project”. As we were living in town at the time, it was recommended that “I start a garden”. Being that my thumbs have never been very green I started looking for another project that I could do. My Grandfather had thought of having a hive of bees in his past life, so when I happened to tell him of my quandary, he handed me a copy of The Hive and The Honey bee and some old American Bee Journals and told me to look into it for “my project”. My first two starter hives came from Montgomery Ward’s catalog and, needless to say, I must not have read all of the stuff from my Grandfather, because they did not survive the first winter. The next year I was “taken under the wing” of Vern Osgood, a beekeeper of some 30 years of experience, who sold me two hives of bees and let me put my hives near one of his bee yards. It also came with 30 years of knowledge in beekeeping. Four years later, from these two hives, I received many awards at the local, state and national FFA levels and 18 colonies of bees. I managed these hives, producing honey and extracting 100’s of pounds of honey in my garage until around 1990. At that time, I passed “the honey bee torch” to a young man wanting to have bees for his 4-H project.

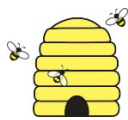
During my sophomore and junior summers, I also worked for a local beekeeper by the name of Dan Dokes, who managed around 200 colonies for honey and wax production. I gained a lot of knowledge on how the “big boys” extract honey and care for large numbers of colonies. Once I graduated from high school I read about a “beekeeping technician program” at a small trade school in Fairview Alberta located in the Peace River Region in Northern Alberta, which is known as a paradise for the production of honey from rape (canola) and alfalfa. I was accepted into the program the second year of its existence and moved to Canada in 1982 and 1983. Along with learning how to build equipment, manage an agricultural business, and just general information about honey bees, you were placed with a beekeeper in California for a month and a beekeeper in Canada for the summer months. I was assigned to Honey View Apiaries owned by Dr. Jerry Orm in Hines Creek Alberta and Dersch Apiaries in Shingletown California. Honey View Apiaries managed around 1000 colonies which were made up of over-wintered colonies (an oddity at that time for Northern Alberta) and several hundred packages purchased every year. I also learned that using “12 frame equipment” was not in my future with boxes of honey weighing hundreds of pounds that were stacked so high that you had to use a ladder to get them up and down and two by fours to prop them up so that the hive would not tip over. The training I received at Fairview I believe prepared me for my beekeeping future.

Once I was back in the U.S., I received a call from Dersch Apiaries asking if I would come and work for them. So, in January of 1984 I headed for Northern California to work for Wayne and Nedra Dersch. Dersch Apiaries ran around 500 colonies, which they used for pollination of almonds, citrus and alfalfa seed. Dersch Apiaries produced several hundred queens and packages, honey products and wax products. I worked for the Dersch

for two years before deciding to go back to school and get an A.S. in Ag. Business and then moving on to the University of Wyoming at getting a B.S. in Entomology and a M.S. in Veterinary/Medical Entomology. Once I left the education field, I was hired by the USDA first in Texas and in 1999 moved to Ames. My present job is with Agricultural Research Service where I manage not only honey bees, but also bumble bees, alfalfa leaf cutting bees, mason bees and flies for the research of pollination of specifically raised plants for the production of seed.

Beekeeping has allowed me the fortune of seeing many different places and meeting many people along the way and so it becomes difficult to “keep it too condensed”.

## CIBA Member Contributions



### Margaret's FAQs

By Margaret Hala, Board of Director

Since this is the season of installing packages, capturing swarms before they occur, catching them when they do and using swarm queen cells, I thought I'd focus on these problems. Of course, it's also the time to get your honey supers ready to go for those colonies who behave themselves and go to work on producing a bountiful crop of honey for you. HAPPY BEEKEEPING!

If you do get packages the easiest way to install, especially if you don't want LOTS of bees flying around the yard is to set up the new home for the package. When the package arrives remove the lid and inner cover and 4 or 5 frames. Set these aside then remove the syrup can from package and queen cage. Remove the cork from queen cage and place between first two remaining frames, dumping a clump of bees onto those frames, then the package into the open area so the bees can crawl out onto the frames. Replace inner and outer cover and leave. The next day you can go back to remove the package, shaking any remaining bees out of the package. The majority of them should have crawled out and set up housekeeping. Replace the removed frames and close the hive back up. **MY RECOMMENDATION IS DO NOT GET BACK INTO THE HIVE FOR AT LEAST ONE WEEK, PREFERABLY TWO.** It will take that long for the bees to settle in and the queen should have eggs by then. This will help eliminate any tendency to abscond from the hive as they sometimes do if there is no brood present. This works especially well if it's rainy or cool/cold.

The other method of installing a package of bees is to open the hive they are to be put in, remove the syrup can from package, remove queen cage, shake about 1/2 the bees into the hive, open queen cage, remove cork and place it between the center frames, then shake the rest of the bees into the hive. Be sure to keep your thumb or finger over the hole you've removed the cork from. You will have to hit the side of the package on the ground or with your hand to make the bees release from the package sides to get them all out of the package and it does make quite a few mill around the hive in the air. This is more time consuming but eliminates the need to go back the next day to remove the package from the hive and return the frames into the hive.

Question	Margaret Says
<p>Q1. I know you've printed your splitting procedure, but I've lost it. Please print again.</p>	<p>We do our best to find out when the queens are to arrive and go out to our yards one to three days before their scheduled arrival to separate the brood we want to remove and what to leave. Take a queen excluder for each hive to be rearranged. Take off top brood chamber and sort through the bees till you locate the queen. Set the frame she's on aside so she can't crawl back into the hive and proceed with sorting frames of brood. We leave 3/4 frames of eggs and larvae and one frame of capped in the bottom, moving all the rest (large larvae and capped) into the upper brood chamber. If the queen is on a frame you want to move up top, she can be gently guided down into the bottom. Place the queen excluder on top of the bottom brood chamber, then put the top brood chamber back on and close up. When the queens arrive all you do is go out the separate hive, remove brood from the top brood chamber, remove the queen excluder and let the queen resume laying upstairs.</p>



Question	Margaret Says
	<p>The best part of this is that if the queens are delayed the newly hatching bees are still in the hive but the queen is restricted from lying more upstairs. If the delay is going to be more than a week, remove queen excluder or resort the brood to swap hatched frames of brood with more capped frames. This is a man-made artificial swarm control method.</p>
<p><b>Q2.</b> As a second or third year beekeeper who has seen swarm cells, I need to know if I can use them to make more colonies and how to go about it. We are again approaching swarm season, so a fresh reminder will be helpful.</p>	<p>When we first started beekeeping, we were told that a new queen WILL NOT SWARM, but we've found out differently. It takes longer for them to do so, but if they get too crowded they will swarm. The breeders continue to 'upgrade' their genetics, but it's done for year around honey production in the south and not winter conditions in the north, so the bees explode like gangbusters sometimes and become crowded fast if the weather is warm enough for the queen to keep laying. At any rate you need to keep an eye on how fast your new colonies are expanding.</p> <p>As a second or third year beekeeper, I'll assume you are not talking new colonies but overwintered ones. They also can expand rapidly in weather with temps in the 70's and 80's, as it is now in mid-May. The answer to your question of can you use swarm cells, is yes, you can.</p> <p>If the swarm cell is capped the queen has stopped laying and will leave the hive. In this case you leave at least one swarm cell, TRY to find the queen (she's shrunk down for flying) and remove either her and a goodly number of bees with a frame of brood (if any) and install in a new body. Move to a new yard if possible. If you can't find her, and you probably won't, leave a frame with at least one swarm cell on it and take the rest. Put one frame with at least one swarm cell in a nuc box, and if you can, one frame from another colony to supply capped brood and bees till the new queen hatches and matures. This relieves the crowding in the swarming colony and makes them feel they have swarmed. Many times, there will be more than one frame with a swarm queen cell on it in a colony preparing to swarm, so you may be able to make several new colonies. If the weather is to stay warm you can make these on only the frame of brood you removed from the swarming colony, but if it's in May when it can get chilly again, you will probably need an additional frame of brood and bees. June and July are good months to start new hives on one frame of brood. Of course, these queens will be for fall replacement of failing or old queens. They will not get strong enough to produce anything that year.</p> <p>In addition, the hive that 'swarmed' will probably not produce anything that year, as the main honey flow is only 4-6 weeks long, and it takes the majority of that time for a new queen to get the hive population back to full strength. Remember the time frame for maturing and hatching days for the queen (14 days) the worker (21 days) and the drones (24 days).</p> <p>A hive will not, normally swarm unless there is a honey flow on, so a queen hatching the first week of the honey flow takes about 7 days to mature, 7-10 days to fly and mate, 7-10 days to start laying upon return, and 21 days for workers to hatch and start helping in the hive. It takes a couple of weeks or longer for newly hatched bees to become field bees, so there is pretty much the length of the honey flow.</p> <p>Obviously, your course of action is to prevent swarming to start with, but I know things happen and it occurs.</p>
<p><b>Q3.</b> How do I know if I've gotten the queen when I do get a swarm captured, and how do I ensure they swarm remains in the hive I install the into?</p>	<p>When you remove the swarm from the limb, fence post, wall, etc., the bees will keep returning to that location unless you have captured the queen. Of course, a few will keep returning to where they were because the queen smell is there but will eventually go to the hive box. It helps a lot to have some honey and a frame of brood, if possible, in the hive box when you 'install' the swarm. We like to leave the newly installed swarm setting where we caught them till evening, but it's not absolutely necessary that you do so. Sometimes it's very easy to keep them in place and sometimes nothing you do will keep them.</p>

# 2018 Iowa Honey Producers Association

## Summer Field Day

Saturday, June 30, 2018

Dordt College

498 4<sup>th</sup> Ave NE, Sioux Center, Iowa

Registration: 8:30 Field Day: 9:00 – 4:00

Field Day Guest Speakers include an ALL IOWA line-up featuring:

- ✓ Curt Bronnenberg, “Evaluating and Splitting Your Hives”
- ✓ Phil Ebert, “Wintering your Bees in Iowa”
- ✓ Bob Fassbinder, “Queen Rearing”
- ✓ Andy Joseph, Iowa’s State Apiarist, providing an update on the state of Iowa’s honeybees.
- ✓ Also meet Joy Westerkamp, the Iowa Honey Queen and hear her speak.

This will be a full day of knowledge exchange for beekeepers of all levels. IHPA District 6 Director Dave Korver will be placing hives at the college in early spring. Please mark your calendar and remember to bring your bee gear. A delicious lunch will be provided. Bottled water, honey lemonade, and coffee will be available throughout the day.

Please complete the following form for registration:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

CELL:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**Single (member)**

\$30 before June 1, 2018

Number attending: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$30 = \_\_\_\_\_

**Walk-ins (members and non-members)**

\$45

\*\*\*Walk-ins on June 30, 2018 welcome however lunch may be unavailable.\*\*\*

\*\*\*Space for this event is limited to the first 200 registrants.\*\*\*

**Return this completed form together with your check payable to IHPA, by Friday, June 1, 2018 to:**

Rhonda Heston, IHPA Treasurer  
52735 187th Avenue  
Chariton, IA 50049

Got questions?

E-mail Erin Miller at:

erinmiller722@msn.com

and put "Summer Field Day Question" in the subject line or call 319-360-4913.

No calls after 9:00 p.m., please.

~~~~~  
8:30 AM Registration

9:00 AM Welcome and Announcements

9:10 AM Andy Joseph – State of Iowa Honeybees

10:10 AM Iowa Honey Queen Joy Westerkamp

10:50 PM Expert Round Table

11:30 AM Lunch/Social Hour/Purchase your IHPA items

12:45 PM Afternoon sessions and times

Start where you like!

✓ Queen Rearing – Bob Fassbinder

✓ Evaluating your colonies and knowing when to make splits – Curt Bronnenberg

✓ Wintering your hives in Iowa - Phil Ebert

12:45 PM Session 1      1:45 Rotate

2:00 PM Session 2      3:00 Rotate

3:15 PM Session 3      4:15 Rotate

4:15 PM Another successful field day comes to an end

Note: The Annual Field Day is always followed by a Board Meeting. See your District Director with comments.

# Wax Moths

Wax moths can be a terrible problem to bee hives if allowed to get out of hand and will destroy brood comb in a very short time if unchecked. There are some simple steps to prevent the damage, but first, it might be simpler to discuss the life cycle to understand where the problem comes from.

A normal healthy hive will keep wax moth under control by ejecting the larvae but weakened hives with small populations can be overcome by wax moth infestations destroying the brood comb, ultimately destroying the hive.

There are two varieties of moth which take delight in dining on wax the 'Greater' and also the 'Lesser' Wax Moth the greater wax moth is a mottled grey in color approximately 1 ½ inches in length while the lesser is smaller and slimmer approximately a ½ inch in length and white/silver. As all moths, they prefer night time to mate and lay eggs.

## Wax moth larvae

Most wax moths are seen in early summer in our area, and we see them under the overhang of hive roofs, out of the daylight, when the hive is disturbed they take off quickly and disappear into the trees.

Preferring to work in the dark the moths enter the hive through top entrances left unscreened and unguarded by the bees, perhaps a sudden cold snap making the bees cluster, and lay eggs in cracks unavailable to the bees. These hatch in due course and the grey larvae begin feeding on wax and hive debris, tunneling just under the cell caps and feeding on the discarded cocoons left by the bees, leaving behind an extremely sticky white web, similar to spider's web but almost impossible to pull apart. So perhaps they are misnamed and should be called Cocoon moths?

With a little care, the wax moth can be outwitted and the damage they do can be prevented.

First, the practice of top entrances should be examined, provided they have screening then there will be no problem. Leaving a big hole in the inner cover, then a badly fitting roof is just asking for trouble. Or even worse those holes drilled in the top of boxes allowing the bees a second entrance are a real problem. Apart from pollen in the honey, a cold evening and the bees pull down and form a cluster leaving that entrance unguarded, easy pickings for the wax moth, as they will fly in cooler conditions than bees.

They do say that prevention is better than cure. I have already given one way, using screening to prevent wax moth entering the hive top. The second point could be to use a trap to draw the moths away from the hive area. There are, to my knowledge, no commercial wax moth traps, but we use a country cure which works extremely well and I would recommend to all.

## Wax Moth Trap

Take a 2-litre plastic pop bottle and drill a 1-inch hole just below the slope on the neck, then add 1 cup water, 1 cup sugar, ½ cup vinegar and finally 1 banana peel. Wait a few days till it starts to ferment, then tie it into a tree close to the hives. This trap will draw the wax moth, they enter the hole can't get out and drown in the liquid, this will even draw in and kill the bald-faced hornet.

Assuming you have followed the above instructions, then you should be able to prevent damage, but what to do if you have already a problem of wax moth?

Extensive damage, evidenced by the white webs, might be simpler to burn and start again. In cases of minor infestations pull out any larvae you can see and clean out all webs. Freezing is a very good way of killing larvae and eggs, so storage in an outside unheated shed during the winter can be useful. Boxes should have a screen top and bottom to prevent mouse damage and allow light to filter down as wax moth prefer the dark.

There are also preventative treatments to treat boxes of drawn brood comb if the above suggestions cannot be incorporated into your management regimes, there is no need to treat honey supers as they don't normally hold brood cocoons. One is a product called Certan, mixed with water and sprayed on the comb with a garden pressure sprayer. This is the only biological larvicide available for wax moth control, it has no effect on you, your

honey, bees or wax. Used just before storage or before the comb is placed on the hive it is ingested by the larvae and kills from the inside out.



**Wax Moth Pupae**

The second treatment is placed onto the stacked pile of boxes during storage and consists of ParadiChlorBenzene crystals. These are used over a newspaper in the stack, needs airing out before use.

Contrary to public opinion wax moth can be controlled, but I stress that prevention is better than cure, and the simplest way is to prevent wax moth getting into the hive through gaps and spaces.

### **The Authors**

**David** and **Jean** have been involved in keeping of bees for a total of 127 years and enjoy sharing information. Their experience spans two continents and numerous hive styles. After many years of Queen breeding they have semi-retired and have reduced the volume of hives they manage. Since David designed the D.E. hive in 1988, they have travelled around the U.S.A. and Canada promoting the hive and meeting new bee keepers. Lecturing on the importance of having good queen stock and how to market honey for better profit. Their aim in life is to help and encourage bee keepers to enjoy the art of bee keeping and bee health. They spent several years aiming to produce the perfect strain of bee, but due to age they have decided that helping another local bee keeper to achieve this aim would be far more productive.



## Beekeeping Banter

### **Traveling Bees**

- What sort of vehicle does a bee drive? An automobeel.
- What sort of car does a rich bee drive? A Bee-mer (BMW).
- How does the queen get around her hive? She's throne.
- Where do the bees like to go on holiday? To the beech.
- How do bees travel to school? By school buzz!
- Why did the bee cross the road? Just bee-cause!

### **Seven Literary Bees**

- Who is the bees favorite pop group? The Bee Gees.
- Who is the bees favorite singer? Sting.
- What's a bee's favorite novel? The Great Gats-bee!
- What kind of bee can't be understood? A mumble bee!
- What did the bee say to the bluebottle? I must fly now but I'll give you a buzz later.
- Why did the bee start quoting poetry? He was waxing lyrical!
- Why do bees hum? Because they've forgotten the words.

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