

# The Voice of Professional and Backyard Beekeeping

# Cowlitz Beekeepers Association Newsletter



**Dedicated to Preserving the Honey Bee through Community Action, Awareness and Education**

**April 2023**

## **Next Meeting:**

**Where:** In person at the Sons of Norway Bldg. 224 Catlin St. Kelso WA or  
**Anywhere worldwide on your computer via Zoom**

Attendees can join a Zoom meeting without signing into the app. Join us at our next meeting. Click the link I will send out a few days before the next meeting. If you are not a member but would like to attend a meeting, request the code to

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

**When:** April 20, 2023 7:00 PM

**Speaker:** Shane Westin

**Topic:** The Demarree Method of Swarm Control

If you live in Longview or the surrounding area and already keep bees, intend to do so or are simply interested in this fascinating hobby, Cowlitz Beekeepers Association is the association for you. Even if you don't keep bees, joining us will help support our cause, our community action and awareness and education programs.

## **Association Officers and Board:**

Ken Curtis, President (360)261-2795 or  
[cowlitzbeekeepers@gmail.com](mailto:cowlitzbeekeepers@gmail.com)  
Al Wilmoth, V. President (815) 391-4089  
Zenobia Scott, Secretary (360) 425-2314  
Zebscott56@gmail.com  
Barbara Skreen, Treasurer  
Elizabeth Peters, Trustee (360) 241-6954  
Dave Scott, Trustee (360) 425-2314  
Ray Davis, Trustee (360) 431-2882  
Anna Pitkin, Trustee

## **2023 Nuc Purchase**

Our Nuc group purchase has closed for 2023. It looks like our total is 58 colonies which are tentatively scheduled for delivery on April 22<sup>nd</sup> (weather permitting). Everyone who ordered will be contacted about when and where to pick them up. If you haven't heard anything by April 15<sup>th</sup> contact Ken (360)261-2795

## **2023 Membership**

<https://cowlitzbeekeeping.wixsite.com/website/registration> click this link, fill out the form, submit. Then send your check to the listed address on the form. Cash payments can be arranged. Thank you for supporting Cowlitz Beekeepers Association.

## **Handmade Proud:**

Looking to buy new woodenware at reasonable prices?

- Bottom Boards - Top Covers - Inner Covers -  
Hive Boxes and more...

Contact **Gerry Herren**

Ph. (360) 355-0051  
[Swarmchaser40@gmail.com](mailto:Swarmchaser40@gmail.com)

## Swarm List

If you want free bees then join the swarm list. All you need is a phone that receives texts and be a member of CBA. When I get a notice of a swarm, I group text everyone on the swarm list with the general location.

The first person who texts back that they can quickly respond will get the details. Very few swarms fly before they are rescued when we respond fast.

Text Ken @ (360)261-2795 to get your spot on the list.

**The 14th annual PNW Honeybee Loss Survey by Dewey Caron** is now live as blogged on here

<https://pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/2023/03/>

It will be advertised on our Facebook page in the coming days. To keep me from making repetitive posts throughout Facebook would you please consider following the page and referencing it in a post to your club's page or otherwise sharing with your members via newsletter or meeting announcements until it closes early May?



The PNW Honey Bee Survey for the 2022-23 bee year is live and ready



for your input!

Please participate before May 1st

@ <https://pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/survey/> If you want a quicker survey experience please



print the note sheet @ <https://pnwhoneybeesurvey.com/notesheet/> which is a great tool just to have in your bee yard as a reminder for all that can be done, not to mention for ease



of tracking for next year's survey. #KeepCalmAndBEEon!  
at <https://www.facebook.com/PNW.Honey.Bee.Survey>

follow us

Thank you for your continued support,  
Jenai & Dewey

Cowlitz Beekeepers Association  
Monthly Meeting  
March 16, 2023

Meeting came to order at 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: In person 25  
                    Zoom     7  
                    Total     32

Our guest speaker was Eli Ocheltree. She talked about "Swarm Control Without Splits - Until Necessary. There was a short question and answer time afterwards.

Home and Garden show will be at the Expo Center (Fair grounds), April 15th & 16th, 2023. There are 2 volunteer spots available. On the 15th from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on the 16th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Call Zenobia Scott at 360-425-2314 to sign up.

Earth Day Celebration is at Lake Sacajawea on April 29, 2023 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Convention will be in Olympia, Washington this year in October.

Shane Westin talked about queen rearing.

Kyle Hurley was at our meeting. He is the agriculture teacher at Wahkiakum High School in Cathlamet, Washington. He would like to start an apiary at the school and would appreciate help getting started once he gets a hive set up.

A big thank you to Pete Cassell who brought the raffle prize and Anna Pitkin for the treats!

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Minutes taken by,  
Zenobia Scott, Secretary

## What I Love Best About Keeping Bees...

Is that I am constantly Learning.

Bees have so many lessons to teach us.

**Teamwork** – bees use their bodies to make chains to measure the spaces where they are building comb.

**Conservation** – bees let nothing go to waste. If we have a piece of comb leftover from a hive rescue, the bees will clean the honey out of the cells and will then cut the comb into tiny pieces so they can reuse the wax.

**Focus** – every bee has a specific job, the activity on a frame of bees is like a ballet.

**And bees are natural healers** - Everything bees create has healing properties. Honey has natural antibacterial properties and was used for years to treat wounds. Propolis, what we call bee glue, is a substance bees use to repair parts of their hive. It is used as an anti-inflammatory. I've even read that the air from beehives (called apitherapy) is being used to treat respiratory conditions (Nona Evans, 2019).



## Trapping Yellow Jacket Queens in Early Spring

The most effective way to reduce yellow Jackets from becoming a nuisance, as well as a threat to honeybee colonies is to trap the queens in the early in spring. The number you capture depends on where you live and the number of nests nearby.

Placement of bait traps is important; you will probably have to experiment here. I try to

place spring Yellowjacket traps about 3-4 feet off of the ground and bait with an attractant of rotting apples and pears for the Western Yellowjacket. For Common and Aerial Yellowjackets and Bald-Faced Hornets (which are Yellowjackets), I add a piece of cooked chicken and hang traps on tree branches. Yellowjackets will not eat rotten meat so I check the chicken daily, and change it when it starts to smell bad.

You can purchase traps of various designs from different manufactures, or you can build one yourself. Some are disposable such as the **Rescue** Disposable Yellow Jacket Trap which comes pre-baited.



There are also traps available that could last for years if taken care of and stored properly such as the WHY dual chamber trap for wasps, hornets, and yellow jackets. This trap comes with three two-week attractants designed to attract paper wasps, bald-faced hornets, European hornets, and yellowjackets.



Another popular option is to build a trap from common items you probably have around the house. A 2-litre pop bottle makes a good yellow jacket trap. This is the trap I use at home.

## How to Make a Yellow Jacket Wasp Trap

[Charlotte Anderson @ Carolina Honeybees, LLC](#)

Step by step instructions to make a yellow jacket wasp trap using a plastic soda bottle and homemade bait recipe. This will help reduce the number of wasps in your backyard.

[Print Instructions](#)[Pin for later](#)

## TOOLS

- scissors

## SUPPLIES

- 1 2-litre plastic soda bottle (any tall bottle)
- 1 banana peel
- 1 cup Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup water

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. You need a plastic bottle.

An empty 2-liter soda bottle is ideal. If that is not available, any plastic bottle of the correct shape will do. (I like a clear bottle so I can see the little suckers in there.)



2. Carefully cut the top 1/3 of the bottle off.



You now have 2 parts. If you had the small plastic lid, you can throw that away – you don't need it.

3. **Recipe for wasp bait:** Gather your ingredients:

1 cup of vinegar, 1/2 cup of sugar, 1 cup of water and 1 banana peel.

Now let me say that you may experiment with other combinations to see which one works better in your area.

Some folks add a few drops of dish soap to break up the surface tension of the water and help drown the wasps.

Do not use just sugar water (or honey!) – that will result in dead honey bees instead of wasps.

Mix the liquid ingredients of your wasp trap bait in the bottom half of the bottle.

Stir well to dissolve the sugar as best you can. Then add the banana peel.



4. Invert the top cut part of the bottle and place it upside down into the larger section.  
This forms a funnel with the hole near the middle of the larger bottom piece. The shape of the neck of the bottle (now upside down) confuses the wasps and helps prevent escape.



5. Set trap outside in a location that is protected from rain.  
You can use string, cord or part of a wire clothes hanger to create a handle if you wish. Attach it to a fence post or hang it from a tree limb.  
In a few days, the scent of the bait should attract hungry wasps and they will drown in the soapy solution.  
Sometimes the trap will catch Yellow Jackets or hornets in a short period of time.  
And, sometimes it may not seem to work at all.

#### ***Prepare Hives for April***

- Check colonies for adequate Honey/Pollen supply. If colonies do not have adequate honey stores feed with 1:1 sugar syrup with Honey-Bee-Healthy. This month colonies can starve for lack of adequate food supplies particularly if the weather doesn't allow them to forage.
- Check for eggs and laying queen. This should be done on a warm day. Check the queen's laying pattern. If it is scattered and sporadic, she may be getting old, tired, and ready to retire.
- Check for Varroa mite levels by performing a sugar shake, alcohol wash, or 24-hour mite drop count. Treat as necessary, Formic Pro is a good option in spring. Oxalic acid vapor will not be effective at this time.
- By the end of April, you should be looking for swarm cells and have a plan for what you are going to do if you find them.
- If you are getting nucs or packages make sure that your site and equipment are ready.