

The Voice of
Professional
Beekeeping

Cowlitz Beekeepers Association Newsletter

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

June 2023

Issue 4

Next Meeting:

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

When: June 15, 2023 7:00 PM

Speaker: TBD

Topic: TBD

Association Officers and Board:

Ken Curtis, President (360)261-2795 or
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Al Wilmoth, V. President (815) 391-4089

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Barbara Skreen, Treasurer

Elizabeth Peters, Trustee (360)241-6954

Dave Scott, Trustee (360)425-2314

Anna Pitkin, Trustee

Vicky Turek, Trustee (303) 808-3764

Handmade Proud:

Looking to buy new woodenware at reasonable prices?

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

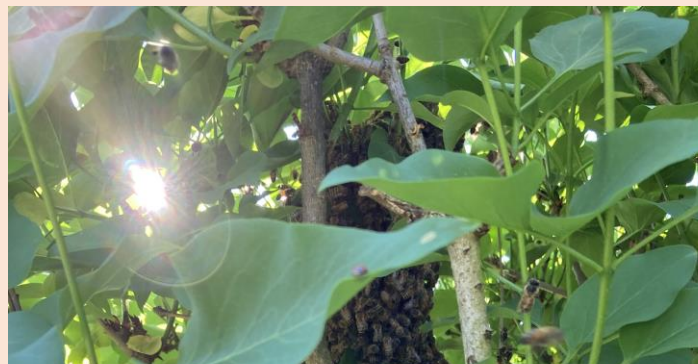
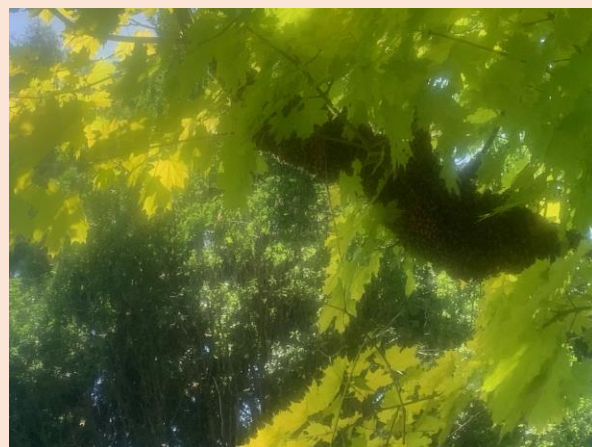
Contact **Gerry Herren**

Ph. (360) 355-0051

Swarmchaser40@gmail.com

Swarm Season Going Slow

The last two years there were more swarms than I could have imagined. Unfortunately, this year there have been very few swarm calls. It is my belief this is due to the colder than usual weather combined with rain we experienced in April. Here are a few examples of the swarms that have been rehomed by club members. Here are pictures of a couple swarms captured. Unfortunately, some of the swarms captured were small and/or flew away.



WASBA is pleased to present the Pollinator Knowledge & Fun Fest at Medicine Creek Winery in Olympia, WA on Saturday, July 22, 2023!

Washington State Beekeepers Association
PRESENTS

The Pollinator Knowledge & Fun Fest

Support Washington Pollinators!

FREE TO THE PUBLIC • FAMILY FRIENDLY • COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!

SATURDAY, JULY 22 10AM-5PM

Medicine Creek Winery
Olympia, WA

WASBA CLUBS!
REGISTER TODAY

WASBA MEMBER CLUB
KNOWLEDGE BOOTHS
VENDOR BOOTHS, FOOD,
MUSIC, BOUNCY HOUSE,
WINE & MEAD TASTING,
CARNIVAL GAMES, RAFFLE,
SEE THE NORTHERN GIANT
HORNETS FROM "NEST O"
MEET THE 2022 AMERICAN
HONEY QUEEN & MORE!

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FREE TO THE PUBLIC • FAMILY FRIENDLY • COSTUMES ENCOURAGED!

Register today!

- WASBA Member Club Knowledge Booths
- Vendor Booths
- Food & Music
- Wine & Mead Tasting
- Raffle Prizes
- Carnival Games
- Bouncy House
- See The Northern Giant Hornets from "Nest O"
- Meet the 2023 American Honey Princess
- AND MUCH MORE!

Presented by the Washington State Beekeepers Association (WASBA)

Knowledge Booths & Topics

- **Washington State Beekeepers Association:** Observation Tent
- **Mt Baker Beekeepers Association:** Honeybee queen common races
- **West Plains Beekeepers Association:** Difference between honey bees and wasps

A Beekeepers Daughter

By Cinthia Curtis

This morning I woke up and it is a beautiful sun shiny day. As usual my dad was nowhere to be found. I know from experience he was either with his bees or in his workshop working on a hive body as he calls them or some other project for the bees that he cares for. He explained to me a long time ago that you do not own bees, you are simply their caretaker.

My dad's adventures in beekeeping began in 2016 after a horrific accident at work. He is permanently disabled, but he refuses to accept the fact that he has a bad back, hips, knees, and shoulders. One day he announced that he needed something to do to keep busy so he was going to become a beekeeper. He said that it couldn't be that hard to pit bees in a box, watch them fly, and harvest their honey.

My brother and I were floored by this revelation. You see, we are both allergic to bees, but he reassured us that we would not ever be threatened by honeybees. By this time, he was hooked. As a safety measure we both received just in case EpiPens. I then decided to research beekeeping... just to make sure we were really safe. What I discovered was that many beekeepers who had never experienced any bad reactions in the past could suddenly develop an allergy to bee stings. In fact, beekeepers have been discovered dead in their bee yard from an allergic reaction after several years as a beekeeper without ever having an issue. When I brought this to my dad's attention, he showed me that he also had a just in case EpiPen in his toolkit for himself.

Over the next few years, he developed a passion for pollinators of all kinds, especially honeybees. He is currently working on his journeyman beekeeper's certification. On sunny mornings he can be found in his bee yard. He has become obsessed with anything that involved bees. I started to feel like I took a backseat to these tiny, stinging insects. He constantly talks about bees. He joined a local bee club, and took a beginning beekeepers course. After three years he was elected to the board as a trustee. Eventually he was nominated as the vice president, a position he held for only a couple of months. The club president resigned so he stepped up to position of president. A position he presently holds.

Yesterday my dad sat his one-year-old grandson, Zac, on the tractor seat with him and took him on a tour of the bee yard. He then told my brother that one day his son would learn beekeeping, providing he is interested, and is not allergic. To my surprise my brother agreed. He said it would be quality time for Zac to spend time with grandpa.

Now that a few years have passed dad has developed the skills to spend time with the family first, and his bees second.

Basic Beekeeping Summer Hive Management

A common misconception about is that a beehive can be left alone during the summer (early to mid-June). Summer hive management addresses what problems could arise, how to correct them, and what to expect during hive inspections.

The first step in summer hive maintenance is to determine the size of the colony. An overcrowded hive might need to be split to prevent it from swarming. You should consider adding a honey super when 70 to 80 percent of the frames are covered in bees. If the colony is not strong you should consider requeening.

A lot of times the reason for a weak colony is a Varroa Mite infestation so a mite check should be done right away.. If a mite infestation is the problem treat right away. A common way to treat is the use of oxalic acid vapor.

You should also check food stores. If there is only a little bit of honey you might want to feed 2:1 sugar syrup (2 pounds of water to 1 pound of sugar).

Keep the hive cool. Hive temperature is vital to colony health. Hives can be placed in a shady spot. Entrances should face east so the morning sun shines in, protecting the hive entrance from the hot afternoon sun. You will also want to make sure there is a fresh water source available. If you don't have a natural water source nearby you should provide a water source. An easy way to do this is to fill a small wading pool or bird bath with rocks for the bees to walk on, and add water to level in which the bees can get to it without risking drowning.

Honey Flow; Typically, the honey flow begins around the middle of June. The first sign of a honey flow is a dramatic weight gain in the hive over a few days. Lift the hive, if it feels like it weighs over fifty pounds or so you know the honey flow is on. Another thing to look for is the formation of wax on your frames. A rapid building of wax is an indication that the honey flow is on. Bees also seem to be in a better temperament and are easier to work with during the honey flow. As the dearth approaches the bees will be slightly more aggressive as they become more protective of there food stores. Another indication that the honey flow is on is the formation of fresh burr comb on the top of your frames.

The final sign that the honey flow is on is the smell of ripening fresh honey.

When you know your bees are healthy and the honey flow is on it is a good idea not to open the hive. Just let your bees do their work.

However, you should continue to monitor your hives for problems every two or three weeks. If you re-queen the hive be sure to check it after about three days to make sure the new queen has been accepted. Two weeks after the queen has been accepted you should make sure she is still present and laying eggs.

Finally, provide plenty of ventilation.

Cowlitz Beekeepers Association
Monthly Meeting
May 18, 2023

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

In attendance:	in person	23
	via Zoom	<u>7</u>
	Total	30

Presentation was a video on "Practical Application of Amitraz Resistance of Varroa", by Frank Ringevich.

Right now the Varroa Mite is the major cause of colony losses. Open discussion about the Varroa Mite and other causes of hive loss.

Make sure you register your hives with the Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Swarm response call discussed by Ken Curtis. Also, discussed recovering swarms.

We want to welcome Vicky Turek as our newest Trustee.

A big thank you to Maegon Barnaral and John Horness for bringing treats, and to Susan Brookfield for the raffle donations.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Minutes taken by,
Vicky Turek, Trustee

Thank you Vicky for taking the minutes of the meeting while I had to be away.
Zenobia Scott, Secretary