
August Newsletter

1 message

WillBees News <newsletter@willbees.org>
Reply-To: WillBees News <newsletter@willbees.org>
To: Keith Meiser <kem5243@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 5, 2021 at 1:00 PM

[Will Bees](#)

August 2021

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

We have t-shirts, sweatshirts, and hats for sale. If you are interested please let us know and we will bring it to the meeting. Please complete the attached Google Form.

<https://tinyurl.com/WillBeesWear>

- Green Bee Prepared Sweatshirt (M, L, and XL) \$20
- Green Bee Prepared T-shirts (S, M, L, XL, and XXL) \$10
- Yellow Willbees T-shirts (M, L, XL, XXL, and XXXL) \$10
- Gray hats \$13

THIS MONTH IN YOUR HIVES

- 1st week of August: Start to feed nucs if needed as they need to build up.
- 2nd week of August: Begin monitoring for robbing from yellow jackets and other honey bees as the nectar flow ends.
- 3rd and 4th weeks of August: Place honey supers on for fall goldenrod and aster nectar flow.

Beecabulary

We NEED Your Help!

We are looking for people to help contribute to your monthly newsletter:

- Feature articles that you'd like to write
- Review of a book or article in a journal you read
- A good website
- An educational opportunity that you are aware of
- Pictures that you'd like us to share
- Recipe using honey you would like to share

Basically, anything interesting! If interested, please email willbees-board@willbees.org

Information on Dues:

If you paid dues for 2020 then that covers 2020 and 2021. If you paid dues in both 2020 and 2021 then your 2021 membership will be refunded. If you did not pay dues in 2020 and only paid in 2021 then that covers 2021 membership as expected.

Did everyone get their monthly mailing from the Illinois State Beekeepers Association (ISBA)? If not, please email to let us know (willbees-board@willbees.org). Do not pay ISBA directly, they are paid from your dues paid to WillBees.

Beecabulary by Pat Costion

Monthly words for thought. Bring your answers to the August Meeting.

1. Slumgum
2. Nectaries
3. Play flight

Don't forget to bring your answers from the July newsletter too.

Mentor-Match

Are you an experienced beekeeper who would like to share your knowledge?

Are you a new beekeeper who would like to have a go-to person?

If either of these describe you, we would like to attempt to match a mentor to a mentee. Please fill out this Google Form.

<https://tinyurl.com/WillBeesMentorMatch>

We will make a list (which will be available online for the people who would like to participate) of beekeepers who would like to make a connection to other\ beekeepers. If you need assistance with this, please reach out to Michelle Gattuso (michellegattuso@yahoo.com).



SMALL HIVE BEETLE by Wayne Dailey

This month we will discuss another enemy of the honeybee-the Small Hive Beetle (SHB). The Small Hive Beetle is native to Sub Saharan Africa, but has spread to nearly every country in the world. It can be very destructive to the honeybee colonies, as it causes damage to honey and pollen stores as well as the comb.

SHB pupate in the soil, and are attracted to the bee colony by their olfactory senses (smell). Upon entering the hive, they will seek out the honey and pollen stores. Bees tend to herd the beetles out of the brood area, and into cracks and crevices of the hive. It is believed that the SHB has evolved to the point where they will use their antennae to rub the mandible of the bee, causing it to regurgitate. The SHB then feeds on the regurgitated food.

SHB will lay eggs along the edges of the comb, and the newly hatched larvae will feed on the honey, pollen and bee bread. As the larvae ages it will work its way out of the hive to find soil, where it will pupate and later emerge as an adult SHB and the process starts over again.

Larvae will defecate on the honeycomb as they consume the hive stores. The waste contains a type of yeast within it that will cause the honey to ferment, rendering it unfit for human consumption. Colonies (particularly weakened colonies) will be overwhelmed by this and eventually abscond the hive. Strong colonies generally show a minimal effect of SHB.

Treatment for SHB generally involves trapping the adult beetles, or using chemicals mixed with an attractant to kill them. SHB have an affinity for animal fat (Crisco). One method for control is to mix Crisco with Boric Acid and place it into a specifically designed trap that will allow SHB to enter, but is too small to allow honeybees to enter. There are several non-chemical SHB traps on the market. Google "SHB Trap" for information on trapping methods and reviews on traps.

Beecabulary

How (Not) To Catch a Swarm *by Keith Meiser*

The morning after we returned from a Michigan camping trip and ready for some rest, my next door neighbor sent a text that "something was going on" near my beehives. I dragged myself out of bed, put on my glasses, and looked out the window. A cloud of bees was high above the trees at the back of my yard. A SWARM AT THE END OF JULY!

I agree that I neglected my duties. The camper hadn't been used for 2 years and needed a lot of TLC to get ready for our trip, we had family and friends' gatherings to attend, and not the least, I am still recovering from back surgery and not very nimble. Oddly, the hive that swarmed was the weak split this spring from my one surviving colony from last winter.

I strolled out there even before they had all exited and realized that they were clustering about 30 feet up on a spindly surviving ash tree. Climbing it was out of the question but now I could try my secret weapon, the vacuum swarm catcher I made last year that hadn't yet had a real test. It consists of a 6-5/8 supper with a plywood cover with a hole on one side for the intake hose and a screen on the other side (to keep the bees from ending up in the vacuum) which is covered by

another plywood cover with a hole for the vacuum.

As the bees finished clustering at the top of the tree, I collected all the large hoses and tubes to suck in the bees and realized it wouldn't reach. I added another 10 feet of PVC pipe. While I was running around doing that, my diminutive wife Alma was dragging out the heavy 18-foot fiberglass extension ladder and somehow got it upright against the tree. I took a few steps up and realized the tree couldn't support my weight so she volunteered.

With her bee jacket and hood on, she bravely climbed the ladder until the pipe could just reach the cluster. I had to stand on the base of the ladder to keep it from toppling over. The length of hose and pipe was as much as my wife could lift and she could barely see the bees from that angle. Worse, the bees that were being sucked up were battered by the long violent ride down to the swarm box and would probably not make it. My great invention had failed! Out of equipment to house them in, I called for backup. Pat Costion offered some frames and I asked her if she would like to take the swarm when I caught it.

After a while it was obvious that we hadn't gotten the queen as the cluster in the tree wasn't about to break up so it was time for plan B. Out came the pole pruning saw to drop the remaining bees. After some strenuous sawing by my wife, the top of the tree came off but caught partway down. By now my wife was down and got the bee suit back on and zipped up just in time for me to yank on the branch, dislodging a shower of bees on her head. As I lopped off branches to expose the remaining cluster to shake it into a box, I looked up, and amongst the hundreds of bees on my wife's back, there was the (unmarked) queen!

After a few futile tries to catch her and a suggestion from my wife, I caught her inside a ventilated glove and took her into the house to transfer her to a stainless steel queen catcher. Now confident that everything was under control, I took the captive queen outside and put her (in the trap) on the outside of the screen on the swarm catcher and shook all the rest of the bees into the air so they could cluster around her. After a couple of hours and approaching dusk, they were settled in, half inside the box and half clinging to the outside of the box with the queen.

Now for part 2 of the saga. I put the box, with bees inside and out, in the back of my van and started out to Pat's house. On the way, someone abruptly braked in front of me and the box flipped, throwing the queen in the catcher and a lot of the bees about 6 feet deeper into the van. Because of my lack of clear communication, Pat wasn't aware that I was taking them to her so late and she scrambled to set up a new hive. We stacked some stuff up with a mismatched bottom board and a shop coat to dump them onto, so they could climb up to the entrance. In the increasing darkness, I released the queen at the entrance and dumped the rest on the cloth and called it a day. "Are you sure she (the queen) is in there?" Pat asked. "Of course," I said. "I've done this dozens of times and the queen wants nothing more than to get into the hive and get to work. I'll come back tomorrow to check them out."

The next day, something was decidedly wrong with the new hive. Bees were flying a bit but there were few to none in the hive. As I removed the shop coat from the ground, I noticed that the swarm had parked themselves UNDER the hive in the 5 inch space beneath that the queen apparently dove into when I released her. While trying to rearrange the hive on a new bottom board and dump the bees again, the nervous queen took to the air and the bees were away again.

After a few minutes, they began to cluster in a newly planted tree about 7 or 8 feet up. Pat said, "Don't even think about cutting that tree! What are you going to do now?" Remembering a line from Raiders of the Lost Ark I said, "I don't know! I'm making this up as I go along!" Pat got out a 6 foot step ladder and I got to work. I strained the bees in the cluster through my bare fingers, looking for the queen. After about 6 handfuls, I thought I saw her but she disappeared. I turned my hand over and then back and there she was. I got the queen catcher from my pocket and closed it around her!

I put her, still in the queen catcher, into my daughter's butterfly net that I happened to have in the van, hung it from the side of the ladder, and dumped a handful of bees on her. I gave the little tree a good shake to put the bees back into the air and within a few minutes they had all clustered near the queen. This time the queen would not be released but put over the hole in the inner cover where the bees could find her and the workers were dumped at the entrance. Success. We released her later and all is well (as it should have been the first time)!

Beecabulary

Education Offerings:

University of California Cooperative Extension

The University of California Cooperative Extension-San Diego County offers a 3-module long beekeeping course that is always free. There are training videos and a quiz that is 10 questions long. Overall the course should take about 30 minutes to complete. This course is advertised as helpful to beginning beekeepers as well as a way to keep up-to-date for annual training for established beekeepers.

https://ucanr.edu/sites/sandiego bees/Online_Beekeeping_Course/

The Ohio State University

Beekeeping and Honey Bee Biology, Part 1

In collaboration with iTunes, The Ohio State University created a program that consists of 139 videos all about bees and beekeeping. This program is completely free and is available through

the iTunes U app on iPads and iPhones. This program goes in-depth about the biology of honeybees and queens.


Resources for Beekeeping (including online classes)

<https://www.abfnet.org/page/resources>

Library: The lending library is a rich resource available to all of our members. Please visit our catalog of books, videos and even candles molds at: <https://willbees.libib.com>

“Beekeeping - A Primer on Starting & Keeping a Hive”

By Dominique DeVito

This primer does a nice job of talking about supplies needed and how to develop and sustain a healthy hive for each season. The book also talks about the life cycle, behavior of honey bees and how to keep them healthy. The books end by harvesting honey, using the products of the hive and finishes with some recipes. As an added bonus, there is a final section on resources for beekeepers. The book was published in 2010. 

Michelle Gattuso

Our Next Meeting will be Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 6:30 pm (doors opening at 6:00 pm).

Board Members

President: Patrick Schab

Vice President: Alexander Parks

Treasurer: Patricia Costion

Secretary: Michelle Gattuso

Directors (years remaining on term): Wayne Dailey (1), Keith Meiser (2), Dave Meyer (3)

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