



The PSBA Newsletter

April 2004

2004, Issue 4

EVENTS at the Arboretum Visitors Center

2200 Arboretum Drive
East, Seattle

Apr. 27

MEETING 6:30 -9:00 pm
Beginners Instruction
6:30 – 7:15 pm
Main Presentation:
Swarm Prevention and
Swarm Capture
7:30 – 9 pm

May 15

FIELD DAY
10 am to 3 pm
Bring Your Beesuit !
Speaker: Jim Bach

May 25

MEETING 6:30 -9:00 pm
Beginners Instruction
6:30 – 7:15 pm
Main Presentation:
Requeening
7:30 – 9 pm

June 22

MEETING 6:30 -9:00 pm
Beginners Instruction
6:30 – 7:15 pm
Main Presentation:
Queen Rearing
7:30 – 9 pm

July 17

ANNUAL PICNIC

Hive Calendar

Year-to-year variation in temperature or rainfall, hills that block or funnel prevailing winds, northern or southern exposures, nearby lakes or rivers, and other geographic features near your apiary will speed or delay the blossoming time by as much as three weeks. Use the hive calendar as a guide.

April

Nectar flows include Dandelion, Clover, Maple, Scotts Broom (pollen), Raspberry, Heather, Apple – early April, and Alder (pollen). As of the first week of April, Maples and fruiting Cherries are blooming on the East side!

Cold snaps or extended rainy weather may cause starvation or robbing - be prepared to feed your colonies. Install packages on foundation in mid April and feed until the brood nest (2 deeps or 3 westerns) is fully drawn. Add supers when the fruiting (not flowering) cherries bloom or, alternatively, when the local Maple nectar flow begins. If medicating in the spring, install and remove per manufacturer's directions. Our climate makes fall a much better time to medicate. Apistan and Coumaphous must be removed 14 days before supering. Formic Acid Gel packs must be removed 28 days before supering.

May

May blooms include Dandelion, Clover, Scotts Broom (pollen only), Huckleberry (ground hugging variant of blackberry), and Geranium.

Feed all hives if a dearth of nectar occurs. All medications except non-terramycin grease patties should be removed by mid-May if you intend to collect a honey surplus. Begin regular checks for swarm cells. Beware of crowding in the brood nest. Super in advance and no later than May 15 unless you are absolutely certain they have lots of room in the brood nest. Garage sales often have inexpensive canning jars. Optional spring requeening.

Based on Roy Thurber's Bee Chats, Tips and Gadgets

Apiary Report

Introducing Bruce Becker, our new Apiary Manager

Bruce Becker has accepted the post of Apiary Manager. Bruce became interested in beekeeping at six years of age - his Great Uncle on Bainbridge Island was a beekeeper. He started his first hive at the age of 14 and kept bees for 8 years. He then pursued other activities for 25 years and resumed beekeeping a few years ago. Bruce keeps 8 hives in several backyard locations in north Seattle, and 4

at the Arboretum
11 am - 3:00 pm
Panel and Open
Discussion: Bee
Dances

Aug. 24

MEETING 6:30 -9:00 pm
Beginners Instruction
6:30 – 7:15 pm
Main Presentation:
Diseases
7:30 – 9 pm

Sept. 11

Fall Trustee Meeting
9:30 AM to 1:30 PM
At Tim Celeski's office

Sept. 18

**Seattle Tilth
Festival**

Educational Booth and
Honey Sale

Sept. 25

**Bug Day at the
Burke Museum**
Educational Booth and
Honey Sale

Sept. 28

MEETING 6:30 -9:00 pm
Beginners Instruction
6:30 – 7:15 pm
Main Presentation:
Nectar Source Plants
7:30 – 9 pm

Oct. 3

**King County Fall
Harvest Festival**
Educational Booth and
Honey Sale

Oct. 26

MEETING 6:30 -9:00 pm
Beginners Instruction
6:30 – 7:15 pm

hives at relatives' homesteads on the Olympic peninsula. Bruce will graduate from the University of Washington Law School in June, and has researched aspects of law that apply to beekeeping. We are fortunate to have Bruce Becker as our Apiary Manager.

We all wish our outgoing Apiary Manager, Bruce Eckholm, the very best of luck and success. Bruce E. is focusing his time on the study of entomology at the graduate level. Bruce E, its been wonderful to have you as our Apiary Manager, and we look forward to when you complete your studies.

The first work party of the year

Dawn Corl led the first 2004 work party and was helped by Norm Hawkins, Mary McIssac and Jerry Mixon on sunny, 63 degree, Saturday, March 13th.

Grease patties were installed and Sucracide was sprayed the hives for Varroa control. Two of the hives were quite weak. One had a supercedure with three queen cells all in a row that had hatched.

There were only 3 surviving colonies, but all of the labels had come off except for #7. I could just barely make out the names of the adoptees and renumbered colonies giving it my best guess. Colony #6 (I think) had 2 queens running around on combs right next to each other. I split them up, putting the old queen in the new spot next door to approximate a swarm and labeled it #4. We ended up with 4 colonies total by the end of the day. We replaced all of the solid bottom boards and slatted racks with new purple screened bottom boards. Colony #5 was ok with moderate population but rather nervous and spotty brood. We did not see the queen but did see eggs. Colony #6 was boiling with bees had about 16 frames of brood (somewhat spotty though), and was nice tempered too. This was the one that had 2 queens walking around just one comb apart - one was marked yellow and the other had no mark, of course. There was plenty of bees and brood for the split we did, Colony #7 looked great and healthiest of the bunch. This was the colony that had AFB last year and was treated and given nothing but foundation and new boxes to restart with. We found the queen, lovely light colored comb, solid brood pattern and nice tempered bees too. I did a 24 hour Penn State grid Varroa count just for fun. Although we saw no deformed wings or actual varroa, yet the drop was 123/day, which is probably about economic threshold and Colony #7 should be treated. There was one other very tiny, almost dead colony that had a live red marked queen in it. Jerry's surviving colony in Alger is queenless, so I "loaned" the queen to him to resuscitate until he can requeen his colony, at which time he will return the nuc with the queen, should she survive.

All of the surviving colonies were hungry, but there was plenty of honey from the deadouts to supply the others. We also left out one box as a bait hive in hopes of a swarm moving in. The other interesting fact was that all of the colonies that were treated with Sucroside had died except #7.

Unfortunately we could easily tell which ones had been treated with Apistan (#5 and #6) because the strips were still in the colonies); Dawn, Cara, and hopefully one other "nurse bee" keeper will try to get back to the shed Sun, March 21 and do a little more cleaning up (there are still some droppings) and sort through the comb we took off of the deadouts and toss the really black yucky ones.

What needs to be done next time is treat #7 for varroa and check the sliders on the others for need for treatment. I wouldn't recommend Apistan though since the fall treatment strips were left in #5 and #6 (and #4 which came from #6) overwinter. The 2 unpainted brood boxes of colony #7 should be swapped for boxes with paint. There are 4 more painted screened bottom boards with sliders in

Presentation: Mead Making

7:30 – 9 pm

Nov. 16

MEETING 6:30 -9:00 pm

Election of Officers,
Potluck Dinner,
Tall Tales, and Awards

(The third Tuesday instead of the fourth. Bees don't like to compete with turkeys.)

December

We do not meet in December.

Reindeer and honeybees don't play together.

We're on the Web!

www.pugatsoundbees.org

www.psbees.org

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TRUSTEES

the shed, and a couple of boxes of brood frames that have quite a bit of honey in them as well.

As an aside, Thom Lee checked on the feral colony that he found last year in a hollow tree just above the Arboretum visitor center and it has survived the winter, so it must have pretty good resistance to mites. He will continue to monitor it over the season. Maybe it will swarm and we can catch it!

Work-Party Schedule

Period	Work-party Leader
April 1 – 15	Tim Celeski & Nancy Beckett
April 16 – 30	Laura Benditt (work party on 4/17 or 4/24, call 206-242-8114)
May 1 – 15	Cary Therrault
May 16 – 31	John de Groot
June 1 – 15	Cara Mathison
June 16 – 30	Rob Stevens
July 1 - 15	Tim Comstock
July 16 – 31	Mary McIsaac & Tim Comstock
August 1 – 15	Mary McIsaac & Tim Comstock
August 16 – 31	Mary McIsaac & Tim Comstock
September 1 – 15	Paul Knutzen
September 16 - 30	Paul Knutzen
October 1 – 15	Scott Enright
October 16 - 31	Scott Enright

Thanks to Dawn Corl for the apiary report.

President's Column

Thinking about Beekeeping - better yet - Bee Farming

When I first started beekeeping, I came at it with the idea that it was pretty much like a lot of hobbies. There's knowledge to acquire, equipment to purchase and a definable, achievable goal to accomplish. After doing this for over five years, now, and carefully watching and listening to the experienced masters among us, like Van Sherod, Frank Fitzpatrick, Jim Bach, Dawn Corl and many, many others, I've slowly learned that this hobby has all the high points, low points and the subtleties that are a regular part of farming.

First there's the seasonal aspect to it. You do things at different times of the year for very good reasons. Then there's the necessity to carefully understanding the dependent plants and the weather cycles. There's the problems introduced by insecticides and all the problems with diseases and parasites. There's major issues related to genetics and a limited gene pool for the queens. And, then there's the random nature of all farming.

What this all means is that beekeeping is part science, part art and part magic (of course). And, it means that learning beekeeping from a book just doesn't work very well. Like many farmers who pass on hard earned knowledge from generation to generation, beekeepers get together to do the same amongst each other. This

Laura Bendit
Bob Clark
Tim Comstock
John deGroot
John Keenan
Cara Mathison
Mary McIsaac
Rob Stevens
Cary Therriault
Wes Ulman

is especially important on a regional scale as what's good for northern Canadian or Texas beekeepers has little to do with us in the soggy Northwest.

The reason I bring all this up is that here I am in yet another spring checking out my hives and wondering why one hive that was so strong going into the winter died and two of the weaker ones last fall are boiling over with bees and are already needing supers ASAP.

Welcome to bee farming.

Field Day is May 15th

Ever since I decided to learn beekeeping I've made sure I've not missed our annual Field Day featuring Jim Bach. And, every year I walk away with some very relevant new knowledge that I can immediately apply to my own colonies and add to my personal knowledge base. I can't encourage you enough to attend this event. And, if you're not a beekeeper yet, or just beginning, you have even more reason to attend. Bring a note pad. Bring a lunch. Bring a bee suit. It'll be the best 4 hours and \$15 dollars you've ever spent.

Remember, check your hives regularly this time of year as weather allows. There's a lot of swarming going on, so you have to keep an eye on them.

Happy Beekeeping, and see you at the next meeting and at Field Day on May 15th.

Tim Celeski, President PSBA

Field Day, 2004

Field Day will be May 15, 2004 from 10 AM to 3 PM

Once again, we are fortunate to have Jim Bach to be our chief speaker and teacher and to conduct the hands-on hive examination. You will not find a better learning experience anywhere. Last year Jim wowed us with his keynote presentation "State of the Art Integrated Pest Management". What will we learn from the Master this year? Come and find out. Each year, Jim conducts a hands-on Hive Inspection workshop, so be sure to bring your bee suit. There will be a few loaner suits for those who don't have one yet. Jim plans to cover: ideal state of the hive and colony from last fall; colony size and supering prior to field day date; starting a hive from packages, nuc or parent colony; disease medication programs, monitoring HBTM and Varroa levels, mite resistance measurement; queen and stock evaluation; colony behaviors; and effective colony and hive management for a crop. Field activities will revolve around "seeing what you're looking at" - a practical introduction to bee behavior and the colony environment. If there are queen(s) available and the colonies are strong enough to make a split, or if a colony has a poor queen to be requeened, Jim will demonstrate the most effective ways to perform those procedures. This day will be the best half day instruction in beekeeping that you will find. Don't miss it.

Newsletter Editor

April Meeting

The Beginners Instruction

Van will start things off with his usual excellent instruction into procedures that need to be done at this time of year.

Main Presentations: Swarm Prevention and Swarm Capture

Wes Uhlman, John Keenan, Van Sherod, and Tim Comstock (might have missed a name) will comprise a panel of experts to discuss methods of swarm prevention. This will be your chance to ask questions and clarify issues. When the panel has finished preventing swarms, John de Groot will explain how to capture those they missed. Swarm capture tools and methods will be shown.

Newsletter editor

Thought Provoking

Beginners Instruction Class

Our President, Tim Celeski, recently commented on our dedicated and super excellent Beginners Class instructor, Van Sherod. I got to thinking – it wasn't always this way. How and why did the beginners program get started?

Well, you know we used to meet in the sixties and early seventies in the Glaszier's Bottling Works Hospitality Room (across from the now long gone Sicks Rainier Stadium). We had about 200 members at that time and seating space was at a premium. On top of all that, each meeting was crammed full of great discussions, lectures, demonstrations, movies and camaraderie. We would meet from 7:00PM till 10:00PM or later. It was a mix of Beginners and Old Timers and quite often comments were overheard (mostly from the experienced guys) that they were sick of hearing the same old elementary questions that were asked over and over again.

Looking back, in an August 1974 PSBA newsletter, some of the discontent began to surface in a remark. To quote: "The subject of children has come up again. They are welcome but bring adhesive tape and tape their little mouths shut". Yes, some of the old guys were pretty gruff. The October 1974 newsletter suggested that we set up a Beginners Corner in the Lobby Foyer where correct equipment, supplies and new things could be displayed prior to the meeting. Beginners could ask questions there.

An August 1975 newsletter talked about the meeting being devoted to bee diseases and it recommended that beginners listen up (the intent was - now is the time for the inexperienced to learn and ask their questions). Back to the problem. Just imagine that you are an old timer and have come to meetings for 10, 15 or 20 years. You have patiently sat through hearing the same questions being asked over and over by beginners and have finally thought "I've had enough of this" You quit coming and the club loses another valuable resource.

The last meeting at Glaziers was December 1975. For the next three months meetings were held temporarily in the Museum of Science and Industry not too far from our present location at the University Arboretum. In April 1976 we held our first meeting at the new location – the National Guard Armory down near the Pier 90/Inter-bay district. Guess what? We had a separate beginners section.

7:30PM Business

7:45PM (Rear Section – Beginners Class by Mirium Bishop and George Swartz)

(Front Section – Multiple Queen hives by Ted Reamer

Hive Analysis by Richard Thomas

Swarm Control by Tom Hurlbert)

8:45PM Coffee

9:00PM Suburban Beekeeping by Roy Thurber

9:30PM Movie: Bees for Hire

As you can see, the Officers and Trustees finally made the big decision. We now had separate sessions for the Beginners and the Advanced. The simultaneous meetings didn't quite work out (the beginners wanted to listen in on the advanced presentations) so in May 1976, it was changed: 7:00PM Beginners, 7:30PM Business (for all), 8:00PM Main Presentation (for all). This became the format for many years of beekeeping meetings and worked out well. Mirium Bishop was the Van Sherod of the past. She taught the Beginners Class for years on end. Bless Her! Many of us older guys supplemented and filled in the presentations in the later years for those 'new to beekeeping'.

A final comment: In the June 1975 issue of the British Bee Journal, it states as follows "Associations may place too much emphasis on beginners lectures that those members with several years experience become disenchanting". My interpretation of this has always been and still is – your Main Program is the most important item on the Monthly Agenda. Everyone learns.

Bill Rahr, March, 2004

Thanks to Bill Rahr for his observations.

Apitherapy Convention

Apitherapy for the lay person

The American Apitherapy Society's Charles Mraz Apitherapy Course will cover the use of honeybee products to treat diseases and to promote overall good healthcare on Thursday, July 27 through Sunday, August 1, 2004 at the Holiday Inn Select, in Stamford Connecticut.

The CMAC 2004 course will provide instruction in the use and safety standards of honeybee products for general health and healing therapy for the layperson. The course will cover the use of: bee venom therapy (BVT), royal jelly, pollen, and propolis. Included in the teaching will be the basics of apitherapy, culminating in an understanding of indications for apitherapy use, procedures for safety and treatment techniques. The presentations will offer introductory information for new participants and updates for returning students. Registration for the course and materials (including one year membership):

\$350 for the weekend course, if you register by July 1

\$400 for the weekend course, after July 1.

To register, mail (or fax) to the AAS office. Do not e-mail credit card information. Mail, fax or use www.PayPal.com to pay the CMAC registration fees. The Holiday Inn Select hotel is offering a Special AAS Room Rate is \$79.00 per night, single or double occupancy. To get the AAS discounted hotel rate reserve your room by July 10, 2004 using the AAS name. Contact the hotel at: 203-358-8400. For more information contact the American Apitherapy Society at:

American Apitherapy Society, 1209 Post Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583-2023 USA

Tel: 914-725-7944 Fax: 914-723-0920 E-mail: aasoffice@apitherapy.org

www.apitherapy.org

The AAS also offers an Apitherapy CD ROM, which covers all aspects of apitherapy -- bee venom therapy, pollen, propolis, royal jelly, and honey. To order, go to the

website: www.apitherapy.org and click on Products.

This news note came by email.

Bee Q & A

Question

We're ordering new bees from Beez Neez in Snohomish. We'll be out of town when the bees are delivered. The person we ordered them from said she preferred we pick them up between 4/12-17th but would "hold them" until we can get there on Monday the 19th. Is this too long of a period for them to be without nourishment? If this isn't good for them, where else could we purchase bees? Thank you.

Answer

If someone tells you they will "hold them", it is reasonable to interpret that as the bees will be fed and watered during the hold time. You could ask a buddy to pick up and install them for you. The sooner you install packages the better. That said, the maximum hold time (April 12 to 19) is probably tolerable if the bees are given water and sugar water each day.

The question was edited to fit the newsletter

Foraging

Jar Lids for Sale

Frank ordered 20,000 new jar lids before he passed away. Van's got 'em and is selling them in lots of 100 or 300 at 12 cents per lid. These are good quality brand new white plastic lids for wide mouth mason jars. If interested call Van Sherod at 206-284-1520, but please call no later than 8 PM.

Mason Jars for Sale

Van still has much of Frank's hoard of mason jars. They will be available to club members at reasonable prices. If interested call Van Sherod at 206-284-1520 (no later than 8 PM).

Short ads are run for free for members of PSBA! . Commercial ad rates: \$15 for _ page, \$30 for _ page, or \$60 for a full page. Deadline for entry is first of the month

Round Dances

Volunteers wanted for work party on 4/17 or 4/24

Laura "Dances with Bees" Benditt will lead a work party at the club apiary on Saturday 4/17 or Saturday 4/24. Swarm prevention and routine spring hive care are on the agenda. To participate call Laura at (206) 242-8114.

PSBA wants a talkative projector

The club needs the type of gizmo that projects electronic images from a laptop onto a wall screen.

Contact Tim Celeski if you know where to find one for a reasonable price.

