



The Diablo Bee



Newsletter of the Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association

January 2007

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www.diablobees.org

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Stan Thomas
(925) 228-3209

honeymanstan1@netzero.net

First Vice President

Tom Lewis
(925) 348-4470

Past President

Stan Thomas

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Judy Casale
(510) 881-4939

jmcasale@comcast.net

VP-Member Education

Richard Coleman
925 685-6849

rich6849@yahoo.com

Treasurer

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(510) 444-6245

larryw@sanfranciscocourier.com

Secretary

Lois Kail

Membership:

Gary Eubanks
(925) 875-1871

beedad94568@sbcglobal.net

Newsletter

Ersten Imaoka and Kieran Mone

(925) 408-0498

ersten3@yahoo.com

Kieran@usmones.com



Next meeting:

7:30 pm – 01/9/07

Heather Farm Garden Center

1540 Marchbanks
Walnut Creek

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What's the Buzz?



THANK YOU!

Thanks to Dorothy, Thelma, Stan, Tom and the members who contributed to making the BBQ a huge success. Thanks to those who contributed to the raffle!

Pictures from the BBQ



January Meeting

Important DATE!

At the meeting on January 11th, we will have representatives from the five areas of Contra Costa County leading groups to discuss beekeeping in each area.

2007 MDBA Calendar of Events

Jan 9	General Meeting: 7:30, Heather Farm
Jan 18	First Board Meeting: 7:00 p.m. Larry Wadler's home
Feb 8	General Meeting: 7:30, Heather Farm
Mar 8	General Meeting: 7:30, Heather Farm

Wild Bees Make Honey Bees Better Pollinators



By Liese Greensfelder, Media Relations, 28 August 2006

BERKELEY — When honey bees interact with wild native bees, they are up to five times more efficient in pollinating sunflowers than when native bees are not present, according to a new study by a pair of researchers at UC, Berkeley, and Davis.

Coming at a time when populations of honey bees — a species that was imported into the Americas centuries ago — have been decimated by parasitic mites, the findings suggest that protecting wild native bees and their habitat could play a crucial role in ensuring adequate pollination for a host of important crops.

“Up until now, we’ve thought that honey bees alone were doing most of the pollination,” said Sarah Greenleaf, a postdoctoral researcher in plant pathology at UC Davis and the study’s lead author. “But now we know that a lot of honey-bee pollination happens because of their interaction with wild native bees. This means that wild bees are much, more important than we previously thought.”

The study is being published in the online early edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences the week of Aug. 28, and will appear as the cover story in the journal’s Sept. 12 print issue.

Working with conservation biologist Claire Kremen, an assistant professor at UC Berkeley’s College of Natural Resources, Greenleaf observed the behavior of honey bees from managed hives and wild native bees in sunflower fields during two growing seasons. The sunflowers were being grown for hybrid seed production on 16 farms in Yolo and Solano counties in Northern California.

The Latest Buzz on Russian Bees



By [Erin Peabody](#) August 9, 2006

The busy bee—that tireless purveyor of plant pollen—has had a rough time of it lately. Parasitic mites are beating down this industrious insect that’s crucial for producing more than \$15 billion worth of U.S. crops each year.

But according to scientists with the Agricultural Research Service ([ARS](#)), there’s hope for weary American bees. It comes from the hills of southeast Russia.

According to recent studies done at the ARS [Honey Bee Breeding, Genetics and Physiology Research Unit](#) in Baton Rouge, La., Russian bees are capable of deflecting three of the honey bee’s worst assailants: varroa mites, tracheal mites and cold temperatures.

Ten years ago, Baton Rouge bee researchers led by [Thomas Rinderer](#) trekked through Russia’s Primorsky Territory in search of bees that could naturally hold their own against varroa mites. There, bees have become battle-hardened against the blood-sucking mite, which has been harassing Russian bees for more than 150 years.

Since Russian bees were first imported by Rinderer, they have continued to impress researchers. In fact, ARS entomologist [Jose Villa](#) recently discovered just how the bees fend off tracheal mites, which kill honey bees by invading and clogging their airways.

Villa discovered that, much like other bees resistant to tracheal mites, Russian bees are fastidious and agile groomers, capable of using their middle pair of legs to brush mites away.

Villa and fellow ARS entomologist [Lilia De Guzman](#) have also confirmed that Russian bees are excellent cold-weather survivors. After studying Russian bee colonies for five winters in northeast Iowa, Villa and De Guzman found that the bees are less likely than other bees to lose hive members during harsh, cold weather. Russian bees appear more frugal with their winter food stores.

Thanks to the ARS Russian bee breeding program, promising Russian bee stock will continue to reach U.S. honey bee queen breeders. Kicking off an intensive selective breeding effort this year, Baton Rouge researchers are still striving for the ultimate Russian bee—one that embodies the important

economic qualities, like mite resistance and good honey production, which beekeepers look for.

ARS is the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)'s chief scientific research agency.

Tips and tricks



If you do need to remove propolis from clothes, put the clothes in the freezer. Frozen propolis peels off easily.

If you feel the need to wear gloves when inspecting hives and those clumsy leather ones just don't give you the tactile sensitivity you crave, try Nitrile gloves. These gloves are both chemical and puncture resistant. You can find them at garden centers and auto parts stores. Dust cornstarch or baby powder on your hands before putting on these gloves, or any latex or rubber type glove. Doing so keeps the sweat down and makes them go on and off easier. Yes, they won't totally prevent stings, but they do make it more difficult for the gals to get one in you.

Announcements

Apimondia 2007

FROM: Trevor Weatherhead (Organizing Committee) queenbee@gil.com.au:

Melbourne, Australia 9 – 14 September, 2007

With registrations now open on our website at www.apimondia2007.com, it is pleasing to report that as at 24 November 2006 we have 24 delegates registered. The first registration came from Belgium.

The countries represented so far are Australia, Belgium, Germany, United Kingdom and Yugoslavia. We want you to register so we can add your country to the list from which delegates are coming.

It may seem a long way off but for those coming to Australia from overseas please visit the website and

look at the Travel Information. You will need to obtain a visa to come to Australia; this visa **must** be obtained **before** leaving home. Secure your visa early.

Newsletter

E-mailing the newsletter saves the club substantial printing and mailing costs, and helps keep our membership dues low.

If you have an active email address, you will receive this newsletter by e-mail unless you inform Gary Eubanks by phone (925) 875 1871 or email beedad94568@sbcglobal.net that you wish to receive a hard copy.

Library

If you have books from the MDBA library, please return them at the next meeting.

Suggestions

A suggestion box is available at each meeting for members to give feedback on the meeting, suggest guest speakers, etc. Please feel free to give the board your input.

Extractors

Check with Mary Andre, Jeff Peacock, or Stan Thomas regarding extracting needs.

Monthly Meeting Snack Table

Refreshments: If you wish to volunteer to bring refreshments to any meeting, please contact:  [Stan Thomas](#).

Membership Renewal Notice

If you need to send a new or renewal check for your membership, please mail it to:



Larry Wadler, Treasurer
2525 Mandela Parkway
Oakland, CA 94607

Diablo Bee
21 Newell Ct
Walnut Creek, CA 94595



Thought for the day

If a beekeeper tells you he knows what he's doing, be wary and keep a keen eye on this fellow. For he has already told one lie, and no doubt will tell you another.

January Meeting
January 9th, 2007, 7:30 pm