



JANUARY 2009

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MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our Next Two Meetings will be held on:

Thursday, January 8, 2009
And
Thursday, February 12, 2009.

Gary Lawrence will demonstrate a typical program that we present in schools, and Bob Kelly will show a video that he recently created at his hives which we will use to educate.

American Beekeeping Foundation - North American Beekeeping Conference

January 13 - January 17
Reno/Sparks Nevada
Visit www.abfnet.org for more information.

Membership Information

Your \$15 dues should be sent to:

Jeff Peacock, Treasurer
Mount Diablo Beekeepers Association
3341 Walnut Lane
Lafayette, CA 94549

Or you can give Jeff your check at any monthly meeting.

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If you have an active email address, you will be receiving this Newsletter by email, unless you inform Kim Coleman at Kdeem@calng.com that you wish to receive a hard copy.

If you are not receiving a hard copy or email, please contact Kim at the above email address or call her at 925-685-6849.

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Please send interesting Bee Articles via email to:
laurallandscapes@gmail.com
and
calliclark@yahoo.com



A BEE'S PERSPECTIVE BEE TOWN IN JANUARY

By Laural Roaldson

It's feeling a little snug in the hive right now. I have antennae's poking me all over, what with all us bees packed in tight to conserve our body heat. And about those antennae's – I'm not complaining...

It's the usual jostle to get the bees which are on the outside of the cluster to the inside and vice versa so everyone gets honey and warmth. That means one more trip down the "Chimney".

We have been in this hive for over a month now and it's getting a little rank. The other girls and I have been betting on when it's going to hit 45°. As soon as it does, we're outta here! We'll take a short "cleansing flight" and come right back, not like poor Inga, who just had to check out the roses next door.



Upon hatching, first she has to murder her sister queens – "bee-genocide". Then she gets a whole 6 days to be a kid. After that it's mate, mate, mate, mate, mate. If your into polygamy (10-17 drones) that could be a good thing. The Queen's debauchery is short lived. She only mates for a day or so. That's all it takes for her spermatheca to have 4-6 million sperm in it, enough to last her entire life. Our benevolent Queen lays 1,500 eggs every day for 2 - 7 years after until she dies or gets displaced the following year by a beekeeper who wants a new, younger queen. I wonder if the beekeeper is related to Henry VIII. In all, I think the Queen gets a raw deal.

It's still too cold for the Queen and her Court to be doing the Royal Bee Boogie. We have to wait until the temperature is 50 - 55°. Once that occurs, we worker bees will start foraging, checking out what's new on the block. I heard Mr. Conrad planted Asters this fall and Sarah Hawkins planted Sweet Peas. Those are good eats. See you on the flyway.



Looking For New Brood

WannaBees -

Someone who wants to be involved with Bees and is not sure how.

Example: Desire, who's backyard may be perfect for a Bee Colony!

NewBees -

People just new into the Buzz of Beekeeping.

Example: Laural, who just joined this Association.

Neeb -

Someone who wants or needs Bees but has not yet become involved with them.

Example: A mead brewer named Skip, who needs a constant honey supply.



ASK AUNT BEE

Advice for the Bee Weary and Honey Soured

Question:

Recently I discovered a colony of bees in the water box in my front yard. I do not have young children, but I am worried about children in the neighborhood. There are a lot of bees in the box and I am curious on average how many bees make up a colony?

- Water box beekeeper.

Answer:

First you need to wait for a Hot Day to remove your new tenants. • There shouldn't be any wind, just lots of sun. • Dig out your water box and examine combs for separation from below the box. • If possible, see if you can locate the Queen. Put her in a safe spot to keep her protected. • Use clean, empty Frames to put cut pieces of Comb into.

• Wrap wire (not galvanized, stainless steel is the best) at the frame. • Transfer the Hive to a new box. • Put the Queen with the Brood by releasing her between 2 brood frames. This job is messy, so prepare for a honey bath!

Or, if they aren't too much of a problem, wait until March when they will swarm on their own.

If you have a beekeeping related question please e-mail either Loral

(laurallandscapes@gmail.com) or Calli (calliclark@yahoo.com) and look for the answer in next month's newsletter.

BEE CALANDER

WHAT BEES ARE DOING IN JANUARY

By Calli Clark

Winter months are without a doubt the most strenuous for bees. Limited sunlight, colder temperatures, rain, stronger winds, and lack of seasonal flowers to feed from are a few of the obstacles faced by a bee throughout the winter months.

There are ways a beekeeper can help his/her bees survive even the harshest of winters. It is important to be prepared, as the first frost can sometimes come quicker than expected. One of the most effective ways to prepare a hive for rain and/or frost is to wrap one's hive(s) in black tar paper. In order to do this, simply purchase black tar paper and a heavy-duty stapler from your local hardware store. Prior to insulating one's hive(s) he/she should look over the hive(s) simply to make sure everything is running smoothly. Finally, wrap the hive(s) with the black tar paper, securing it where necessary with a staple. The black paper will not only protect the hive(s) from rain, but it will also provide heat to the hive(s) on those few sunny winter days. Providing warmth – even if just a little – to bees during the winter is important because it will allow them time to separate and move around more in the hive.

It is important not to block the entrance of the hive(s) with the tar paper because the bees may want to venture out on a sunny winter day. Wrapping one's hive(s) during the winter months does not pose problems for hive checks, because it is not advised to perform in-depth inspections on the interior of a hive during the colder seasons.

Checking to make sure the top is securely on one's hive is especially crucial during the winter because it is important for a hive to remain as dry as possible. It is a good idea to secure the top of a hive with a brick or some other heavy object that will aid in holding the top in place.

Finally, winter months should be used to repair any damaged equipment and to build any newly acquired equipment.



BLESSED BEE

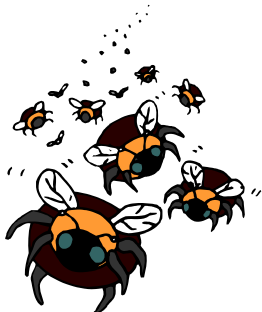
OLD WILLOW, THE BEES AND THE NORTH WIND

By Laural A. Roaldson

There was a nasty North Wind that wrecked havoc on the countryside. The only pattern it followed was that it went where it pleased. Shrubs were broken, flowers pulled out of the ground and even trees felt its capriciousness. There were limbs laying everywhere you looked.

Old Willow had been following the movements of the North Wind. Being old and wise, she knew that the North Wind was not going to stop because the plants or animals asked it. The North Wind was empty from the inside out. It could never fill itself and be sated. All it did was blow and blow, wrecking destruction wherever it went. That is how it knew where it was and who it was. It destroyed to have an identity.

Old Willow knew that a being like the North Wind was not ready to evolve. He would have to be stopped from an outside force. Old Willow called the Bees. She swished her graceful branches in the wind and the Bees heard her and came. They landed on her leaves, her limbs and her trunk. They gathered at her root flare as if they were genuflecting, because they knew of her power. They trusted her.



The behavior of the North Wind was discussed. Old Willow and the Bees came up with a plan to capture the North Wind.

Then the Bees feasted on nearby honeysuckle and when they were full they came back and nested in the hole in Old Willow's trunk. The Bees went to sleep to the lullaby of Old Willow's branches in the night breeze. Old Willow slept with the hum of life in her belly and it was good.

The next morning, Old Willow dispatched the Bees and called upon the North Wind to come talk to her. The North Wind was busy frothing up the water down by the river, but he came when he heard it was Old Willow calling.

"What do you want, Old Woman?" the North Wind cockily asked her. "Can't you see that I'm busy doing important things?"

"I see that you are busy doing things to make yourself important, but that's not going to work. You blow and blow North Wind and you never get anywhere. Have you ever asked yourself 'Why'?"

"There is no 'Why' Old Woman. I'm doing it and that's that. I'm the great North Wind. No one can stop me!"

It was after he said that that a tremendous humming started and seemed to be coming from everywhere. The sky turned brown and shook with the efforts of the millions of Bee's wings surrounding the North Wind and Old Willow.

The North Wind hesitantly said, "What are all you Bees doing in my sky?"

With that, each Bee grabbed an edge of the North Wind until he was completely engulfed by the Bees. The North Wind struggled, but the Bees held on, each giving the other a wild ride.

The Bees flew with the North Wind to the foot of the mountains where a cavern mouth saw daylight. The North Wind figured out what the Bees were going to do and tried to escape, but the Bee's will was too strong. They kept the North Wind in their control long enough to escort him into the cave and throw him down into the bowels of the mountain cavern. The mountain was glad to have the North Wind because the wind kept the mountain clean inside. The mountain was grateful. The North Wind could not do damage in his new home. After eons of blowing, eventually the North Wind would be able to SEE the good that he was capable of creating. This would lead to his evolution.

Old Willow welcomed back the Bees with much rejoicing. She had gotten some birds to drop flowers on her and squirrels to tie them to her. Her branches were jeweled with Bees as they supped. Their own low mellow humming hypnotized them and it was Old Willow who told them to go inside her and sleep. And they did and it was good.



RECIPES

Cooking With Food Brought to you by Bees

Posh Squash

(from squashrecipes.net)

Colorful Squash Casserole Dish.

Ingredients -

8 Medium Yellow Squash, sliced
 1/2 Green Bell Pepper, seeded, chopped
 1 Small Red Onion, chopped
 1 (8 ounces) package Mexican Processed Cheese

Preparation -

1. Add sliced Squash and chopped Onion to saucepan. Cover with water.
2. Cook over medium heat about 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
3. Drain vegetables into colander. Return to saucepan.
4. Add Cheese and cook until cheese melts.
5. Spoon into large, buttered baking dish.
6. Bake 15 minutes in preheated 350 F oven. Serve hot.

Ginger Fruit

(from *Food For Life*)

Ginger Fruit is best marinated for several hours or overnight to allow flavors to develop.

Ingredients -

1 1/2 cups Fresh Peaches **or**
 1 (16 ounce) can Peaches in Juice, drained
 1 1/2 cups Fresh Apricots **or**
 1 (16 ounce) can Apricots in Juice, drained
 2 Bananas, sliced
 1 cup Orange Juice
 2 tablespoons Crystallized Ginger, chopped **or**
 1 tablespoon Fresh Ginger
 Mint Leaves for garnish

Preparation -

Slice Peaches, Apricots, and combine with Bananas, Orange Juice, and Ginger. Marinate 12 hours or more. Garnish with Mint Leaves, if desired.

Tell Us What You Think!

Please Email Laural

(laurallandscapes@gmail.com) or

Calli (calliclark@yahoo.com) to give us
 your feedback!

