



September 2008

Rhode Island Beekeepers Association

The Newsletter of the Rhode Island Beekeepers Association
PO Box 31, Ashaway, RI 02804. <http://www.ribeekeeper.org>

President's Report

It's hard to believe that by the time you read this the summer will be well on its way to being over! The first of September marks the beginning of the school season and at least for me, that's the signal that the season's activities are ready to switch over to winter preparation. Looking back at our short summer – they seem to get shorter as I get older – I realize that mite mitigation is slipping in my apiary. I don't know about you, but I always find myself trying to catch up on this. Do you find Integrated Pest Management (IPM) sometimes confusing?

I do! I've been doing quite a bit of research and will be glad to share my findings with you at this September's meeting. I would have made this presentation earlier this summer, but we need an indoors location where the projector will work. The Normand Bird Sanctuary has a hall that we can use. I'll review the information that Jim Lawson, our State's apiary inspector, put out at Smith's Nursery. This time we'll take it up a notch and cover the so-called soft chemical treatments such as Thymol and Formic Acid. I'm hoping to move a couple of hives to the Sanctuary and actually apply the common treatments in a hands-on demonstration. If I can pull it off, we'll also do a mite count so I can go back at the end of September and see how well the treatments worked. I'll report those results at the October Harvest Dinner meeting. It goes against my natural practices grain, but I'll also give the so-called hard chemicals honorable mention – just to cover all of the bases.

Please don't miss this important end-of-summer season meeting! If you have a hive you are willing to

Next Meeting

Sunday Sept 14 @ 2 PM

Norman Bird Sanctuary
(401) 846-2577

Bring Chairs, Veils, Dessert
Directions on back

have moved and treated give me a call. I'll pick it up and make sure you get it back at the end of September. My cell phone is: (401) 374-4730 and you can also email me at: everett@beehavin.com.

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General meeting Notes 8/10/08

Held at the home of Kate Malmborg, Chepachet. A beautiful day in a beautiful setting. The short but informative meeting was followed by scrutiny of Kates hives.

How are the bees?

A wet August is bringing nectar but many are seeing it stored and uncapped. Health is generally good with no losses reported and swarms continuing to be captured.

We had a short discussion of treatments and techniques; one member inquired whether one could treat with Apigard when the bees own honey was in the hive or whether that had to be removed first.

In September Everett will discuss soft treatments in detail. "Soft" refers to using more natural materials and techniques to treat, instead of the "hard" use of chemicals and poisons.

Extractors

Bernie will be away from August 19 to September 5. The extractor that he looks after will be available from Everett during that time.

Signs

Bernie has "honey for sale" signs available for \$20 plus \$5 shipping. Please contact him directly. Checks should be made out to Jim Puvel. There is a phot online - and yes, I know this isn't a great photo; I deleted the larger one that I took. If anyone has a better pic of Jim's sign please send it to me!

Treasurers Report

Little change from last month. We have healthy balances but income/expenditure for the year is showing negative.

Honey Prices

Discussion of show events prompted a disussion on price-setting. Members own prices vary greatly - from \$5 to \$8 per pound. Opinion varied on whether we should be selling honey at a lower or higher rate, and whether we should be consistent across all shows for the year or make adjustments per show. There was also a

suggestion that only RIBA be allowed to sell half-pound jars; the suggestion brought a variety of responses.

Inventory

Discussing show arrangements also highlighted some coordination needed in identifying honey owned by the Association and ensuring it was available at events for which we have purchased a stand.

Mike and Everett will address this and make sure we know where our honey is and that it is available for events.

Events

Foster Old Home Days

Thanks to Kit for pulling this together. This event, too, was affected by rain. In terms of honey sales the stall did not do as well as last year; there was lots of interest but not many sales.

Scituate Arts Fair

October 11 - October 13 10am - 5pm

<http://www.scituateartfestival.org/>

Volunteers needed to help with this. Bill Jones is coordinating. I will email separately asking for support. The website will show more details as they become available.

Taste of RI

September 27th-28th. Volunteers needed to help with this. I will email separately asking for support. The website will show more details as they become available.

Soft treatments

At the September meeting Everett Zurlinden will discuss what soft treatments are available to help with hive health. There are several treatments, and this can be confusing as to what to use to new and experienced bee keepers alike. We meet in a nice setting, and all should make an effort to attend.

Fume Board - Correction

The August issue mentioned using a fume board, and Fischer's Bee Quick as a quick way to get the bees down and out of the honey supers. We have just learned that Bee Quick has not been available for the past 18 months. We do not know what has caused the problem. You'll have to use an escape board.

Honey Extracting/Bottling

September is extracting time. You have removed the bees from the honey supers via escape board, and have the extractor and hot knife.

You can purchase an un-capping tank for about \$90.00. I do the following, which you can improve upon since I am a klutz.

I use a Pyrex baking dish 14" x 10". Over this I put a hardware cloth which will catch wax carvings and allow honey to drain into Pyrex dish. Between dish and screen I put a block of wood (wrapped in plastic food wrap). Through the board there is a heavy screw or nail which is long enough to be above the top of the screen. This screw allows you to rest the end bar of the frame to pivot as you uncap and allows the cappings to land on the screen.

When the extractor is full, the honey should go through a strainer. You can purchase a double screen strainer or use nylon paint strainer cloth, or pantyhose with the legs securely tie around the rim of a 5 gallon bucket which the honey flows into. The bucket should have a gate for easy bottling.

Whether using jars or beers, tip these at an angle to reduce air bubbles.

Pick a day to extract that is not humid, as honey absorbs moisture. Extract in a room where insects and bees cannot enter. The smell of honey will have every flying insect trying to get in. If you use smaller extractors you will have to periodically drain the honey out so that it doesn't rise above the level of the frame rack

You will note that a white foam comes to the top in the honey bucket. I try to skim off as much as possible. I have seen jars with foam in stores, but a little bit should be acceptable.

Save a jar or two for our honey judging in October at our Harvest Dinner and Field Day.

Catch The Buzz

Researchers at the University of Warwick are examining naturally occurring fungi that kill the varroa mite. They are also exploring a range of ways to deliver the fungus throughout the hives from bee fungal foot baths to powder sprays.

At present, the mainstream management of varroa is based on the use of chemical pesticides, but the mites are developing resistance. Biological control technologies (use of one organism to control another) could offer a way of moving pest management strategies away from a reliance on the synthetic pesticides but no natural insect or other enemies of varroa species have been identified on the varroa or on their bee hosts.

Now Delfra-funded studies by researchers at the University of Warwick's plant research group Warwick HRI and Rothamsted Research has found some new natural enemies of varroa from other hosts.

University of Warwick researcher Dr. Dave Chandler said:

"We examined 50 different types of fungi that affect other insects (known as entomopathogenic fungi) to see if they would kill varroa. We needed to find fungi that were effective killers of varroa, had a low impact on bees, and work in the warm and dry conditions typically found in the hives. Of the original 50 fungi we are now focusing on four that best match those three requirements."

This article is reproduced from "Catch the Buzz" by Bee Culture Magazine (www.BeeCulture.com) and although included here RIBA does not necessarily support its use.

Next Meeting / Directions

The September 2008 meeting is at the Norman Bird Sanctuary, 583 Third Beach Road, Middletown, RI 02842. Directions and map links are also available online.

<http://www.normanbirdsanctuary.org>
T: 401.846.2577 F: 401.846.2772

Here are directions on to the island from all directions. Pick the one that suits you best - you might want to check the maps links first to see what works. Don't forget a packed lunch and a blanket ...

From the west/south/northwest

Make your way to the Jamestown bridge, Rte 138E then follow these directions as given by Mapquest.
Merge onto RI-138 E toward JAMESTOWN/NEWPORT/BRIDGES (Portions toll).
Take the RI-138 E ramp toward RI-114 N/FALL RIVER/CAPE COD.
Take the RI-138 N ramp toward RI-114/FALL RIVER/CAPE COD.
Turn LEFT onto ADMIRAL KALBFUS RD/RI-138 E.
Turn RIGHT onto ADMIRAL KALBFUS RD/RI-138.
Stay STRAIGHT to go onto MIANTONOMI AVE.
Stay STRAIGHT to go onto GREEN END AVE.
Turn RIGHT onto THIRD BEACH RD.
End at 583 3rd Beach Rd Middletown, RI 02842-5738

From East Providence

Cross the Mount Hope Bridge.
Continue to follow RI-114.
Stay STRAIGHT to go onto TURNPIKE AVE.
Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto E MAIN RD/RI-138.
Turn LEFT onto MITCHELLS LN.
Turn RIGHT onto THIRD BEACH RD.
End at 583 3rd Beach Rd Middletown, RI 02842-5738

From Fall River/I-195

Take MA-24 S via EXIT 8A toward TIVERTON R.I./NEWPORT R.I. crossing into RHODE ISLAND.
Take EXIT 1 toward RI-138/MIDDLETOWN/NEWPORT BEACHES.
Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto TURNPIKE AVE.
Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto E MAIN RD/RI-138.
Turn LEFT onto MITCHELLS LN.
Turn RIGHT onto THIRD BEACH RD.
End at 583 3rd Beach Rd Middletown, RI 02842-5738

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For the online list of officers go to:
<http://www.ribeekeeper.org/officers.php>