Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association
May 2, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Attendance

Scott Allison   Christina Jones   Gary Peterson
Jody Blankenship Ian Jones   Judy Peterson
Tal Blankenship Joe Jordahl   Bill Porter
Chuck Blanton   Bob King   April Powell
Diane Chambers   Gary Kliwer   Rebecca Ramm
John Chambers   Kent Knock   Mary Sale, Jr.
Steve Crittendon Kelly Leatherwood   Mary Sale, Sr.
Tom and Liza Crosse Leslie Lundgren   Sharon Schmidt
David Cyphers   Juliann Mastain   Marci Schurman
Robert Denman   Della Matson   Shari Shattuck
Richard Dumanowski Bill McEnany   Don Smith
Kim Elmer   Cara McEnany   Anthony Torreson
Greg Fernandez   Jay McMurtrey   Kathryn Voorhies
Gary Feuerhelm   Ioana Mioc   Dolly Warden
Norm Foley   Benjamin Moore   Suzanne Westover
Raymond Foster   Bret Moore   Russ Williamson
Aaron Friesen   Merrie Morgan   Joe Wismann
Chalyse Gillespie Ken Muhlestein   Ellen Wright
Mario Gonzalez   Ken Olmstead   Mary Ann Wright
Risa Halpin   Nancy Olmstead   Wes Wright
Jennifer Harder   Jody Palzer   Daniel Yadon
Richard Hernandez   Don and Kelly Peccia
Rick Hilton OSU   William Pesterfield

Hive Demonstration (Splits) 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM
Call to Order at 7:40 PM

Vice-President Risa Halpin presided over the meeting

Treasurer's Report- Cheryl Housden

Cheryl was unable to attend.

Oregon State Beekeepers Association Regional Representative’s Report – Sarah Red-Laird

Sarah was unable to attend.

Secretary's Report- Ellen Wright

A MOTION to accept the minutes from April was PASSED by majority vote. The minutes are posted on the website under Resources->Club Resources->Club Documents.

Speaker – Andrew Watson on Finding Your Queen

Andrew Watson from Applegate Apiaries gave a presentation on how to find your queen, and what to do if you do not see her.
When you open your hive, and the frames are covered with bees, you can blow very gently to move the bees, assuming it is not an aggressive hive. Always have a veil on if you do this though, since the bees might fly up into your face if you blow too hard.

Brood the cover of light suede leather is fairly new and a good sign that the hive is queenright. If you have only very dark brood it could be a problem. Watch for disease.

It is normal to have queen cups at this time of year, but you don’t want to see active cups where the workers have primed the cell and the queen has laid eggs. If you have a lot of these queen cells it indicates swarming. If there are only one or two – it might be a supercedure.

You can add one short medium frame to each deep nest box as the second frame in from one side so that the bees have a good place to build drone comb. You can remove the drone comb they build below the frame as part of an integrated pest management approach. In spring, it is good to have the drones though. A healthy colony makes drone comb.

Drones are large and square with big eyes that go completely across their head. Workers and the queen have two smaller more distinct eyes.

Andrew mention ‘heater bees’ who generate heat on top of capped brood, or by going into empty cells in the brood pattern. This can be the reason for some spotty laying. (More information on heater bees here: honeybeesuite.com/heater-bees/)

If you see eggs, the queen has been there within the last 3 days.
If you see larva, the queen has been there within the last 8 days.
No need to spot the queen if you see eggs, and little reason if you see larva. Best to have a quick inspection and close the hive back up and not spend too much time trying to see the queen.

The queen decides whether to lay a worker or drone egg based on the size of the cell she is laying into.

VSH bees can be great at handling mites, but there is evidence that they spend so much time dealing with mites that their honey production suffers.

To spot your queen, hold the frame at an angle, you will be less likely to see her if you look straight at it. Look around the periphery first, she may be escaping to the other side to get away from the light. Then look at the middle of the frame. The workers will clear a path for her as she moves and will be slow to fill in behind her. When she is laying or resting, there will be a circle of workers facing her.

It’s most likely the queen will be on a center frame that has larva and eggs. Always hold frames over the hive when you examine them in case the queen falls off. If you see a bunch of bees on the ground after an inspection, the queen probably dropped off of a frame and is there too. Put her at the entrance to the hive. If the guard bees start to ball around her – she does not belong to that hive.

A queen right has organized behavior. When you look at a box full of bees, you will see bees at the top of the frames in a line looking up at you.

If you see half heads and half tails – that is a disorganized hive. The bees will be more agitated and may emit the queenless roar – the workers all beat their wings. They will be running around the frame sin a disorganized manner.
Pollen coming into the hive tends to be a sign of a queenright hive. If you have lots of pollen coming in and brood – that’s a sign of a queenright hive.

A hive with laying workers (who only lay drones) can also have some pollen coming in. If you have laying workers, take all the frames and shake them far (at least 30’) from the hive. The laying workers cannot fly and the rest of the bees will return to the hive. Re-queen immediately.

Alternatively, add a frame of brood to add brood pheromone which can stop the ability of the workers to lay. After a week, add a frame with eggs and they will build a queen or re-queen.

OR you can combine the laying worker hive with a queenright one, and the queenright one will dispatch the laying workers.

Don’t requeen a laying worker hive until the laying workers are removed or calmed down with brood; they will kill the new queen.

Queen math. It takes at least 28 days for a new queen to be raised and start to lay eggs. It takes 21 days for a worker bee to go from egg to hatched bee. Therefore when a hive has swarmed or is superceding, you may well have a period of a week or more where there are no eggs, larva, or capped brood.

A pretty surefire way to test for a queenless hive is to add a frame with eggs to the hive. If it is queenless, the bees will begin to create a queen cell over one or more of the eggs in about 24 hours. If they do not do this, you are very likely to have a queen in the hive.

**OSU Liaison's Report- Rick Hilton**

The new Extension Center director has moved into the valley and started his job.

**Announcements**

No announcements were made.

**Old Business**

No old business was discussed.

**New Business**

No new business was discussed.

**Let’s Talk Bees**

We had a shortened Question and Answer session.

One member asked about robbing. Robbing can be a real problem during the summer and fall nectar dearth.

- If you normally use a sugar water spritz instead of smoke, do not had essential oils at this time and be very careful not to spritz outside of the hive.
- If you are feeding syrup, do not use a Boardman feeder or any other method external to the hive. Do not add essential oils to the syrup since the smell will attract robber bees.
• Open your hives briefly when you inspect to prevent the smell of honey from attracting robbers.
• If you have a hive that is attacked, use a robber screen to protect the hive. This should be put on at night. The hive bees will figure out how to exit and enter, the robbers will not. You can add a robber screen proactively to weak hives.
• Throw a wet sheet over the hive to stop the frenzy. Remove in the evening and add the robber screen.
• Use entrance reducers after the main honey flow. If you have a weak hive, reduce the entrance to 2 or 3 bee width so that they can better protect it.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM