

SO*BA Bee Buzz

Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association Newsletter

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Time to Renew!

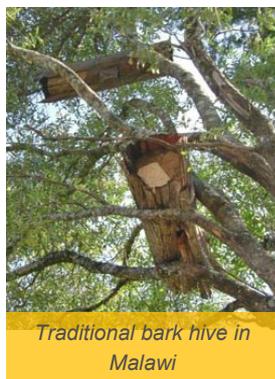
January is the time to renew your membership! Some of the benefits of membership include:

- Voting rights for club decisions
- Swarm Call List
- Free use of club extractors
- Reduced fees for Bee School
- Access to club library

Use **PayPal** on the website ([Join SOBA](#)) Or **Mail** the annual \$12 membership fee to SOBA c/o Cheryl Housden, PO Box 407 Wilderville OR 97543-0407

February Speaker: Beekeeping in Africa

The SOBA meeting on **February 2** will feature a presentation by Dan Carr on Beekeeping in Africa. Dan will talk about his experiences working with the wonderful beekeepers and farmers of Malawi and Uganda. He was a Peace Corps volunteer in a rural village called Mwazisi in northern Malawi from 2007-2010. He learned to keep bees from a Malawian school teacher, and together they started the Mwazisi beekeepers association.



Traditional bark hive in Malawi

After returning to the United States and managing Stone Barns' bees for three years, he was invited by the USAid Farmer to Farmer program to go back to Africa to work on a special project with a beekeepers cooperative in Kasese, Uganda called the Liberty Development Foundation LIDEFO. We will talk about the differences between African and western bees and the most suitable hives for Africa, and the wonderful people Dan had the pleasure to work with in the Warm Heart of Africa (Malawi), and the Pearl of the Nile Uganda.



Dan Carr is a Livestock manager and head beekeeper at Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture in the Hudson Valley of New York. He manages 30+ hives and teaches a variety of beekeeping classes at [Stone Barns Center](#). He was born and raised in Broomfield Colorado, and graduated from the University of Montana with a BA in Political Science and History. He spent three years as an agriculture and environment

Ashland is a Bee City USA

In July of this year, Talent was designated a BEE CITY USA; this month the Ashland City Council approved unanimously to become the next Bee City.

Kristina Lefever of the [Pollinator Project of Rogue Valley](#) explains the Bee City USA focus in her [quest opinion](#) in the Ashland Daily Tidings.



SOBA member Dolly Warden is a driving force behind this effort . Bee City USA (www.beecityusa.org) encourages city leaders to raise awareness of the contributions of bees and other pollinators. The group wants to foster practices to help pollinators, which can include reduction or elimination of pesticides and establishment of areas friendly to bees. A group of citizens in Phoenix have now taken up the challenge and are working to gain Bee City USA designation. If you are interested in helping that effort, email sobeekeepers@gmail.com.

Pesticides and Bees in the News

Contributed by Dr. Dewey Caron

It was great news to hear of the State Tax Court victory for bees in Jackson County. SOBA president John Jacob, whose apiary was the one in question on LeRoy & Nancy Whedes' Rogue River property, called the decision "... good for beekeepers, pollinators, landowners, and Oregon's agricultural economy. Further, we now have at least two legal precedents in Oregon that demonstrate beekeeping is an acceptable farm use."

One of the arguments John and I used when we testified for the bees in State Tax Court was that John's bees need a "time out"; a break from commercial agriculture and the exposure to pesticide used by farmers. Jackson County argued that the land could be put to better use than as bee pasture. I pointed out that turning this pasture into cropland would likely mean increased pesticide usage and increased danger to the bees. This argument helped win the day.



I was an "expert" witness to a pesticide damage to bees back East shortly before moving to Oregon. In that trial, the apple grower had clearly violated the law by applying a pesticide highly toxic to bees during apple bloom. Still we had an uphill battle to convince the judge that the bees have value, something we needed also do in the OR tax court case. That eastern case also was decided in favor of the beekeeper but the damages did not compensate for the loss for the rest of the season, merely replacement of the lost bees.

That beekeeper was fortunate as too few beekeepers receive anything when bees are excluded from clean pasture sites or are killed by a pesticide, often applied by a landowner or farmer besides the one providing the apiary space. In both March and April SOBA articles, I discussed bees and pesticide kills. In the April article, I discussed the loss of bees, including some Or bees, towards the end of almond bloom. Some 80,000 total colonies were affected in that poisoning incident; most colonies were not killed but many lost a generation of brood rearing when an Insect Growth Regulator (IGR) was added to the tank when a fungicide was applied. None of those beekeepers received a penny in compensation.

In Oregon I am hopeful that we are making some progress in helping bees both avoid sudden, pesticide-related losses and in doing something to help the beekeeper. The **OR Governor's Task Force on Bee Health** completed their report (full report due out shortly) and now, hopefully, the OR legislature will enact on the recommendations and do some things to help the bees.

We are also fortunate that the OR Department Agriculture, as result of a mysterious June bee loss in the Cascades foothills (I will have article on this investigation in upcoming Bee Culture magazine) and two springs with bumble bee massacres at Linden tree blooms, has developed a pesticide screen in their pesticide lab in Portland to quickly analyze suspect kills to OR colonies. Additionally ODA had a workshop for their pesticide investigators in Salem in August. They are making progress.

I was struck by follow up to beekeepers reporting a pesticide kill in Switzerland compared to follow up to kills U.S. beekeepers experience. Swiss apple growers had applied a fungicide toward the end of apple bloom that ended up killing several hundred bee colonies. The Swiss authorities promptly took samples and then traced backwards. The offending pesticide, Fipronil, had been packed for U.S. sale in Israel using the same equipment (apparently without proper cleaning) that was then used to fill the fungicide containers subsequently shipped to Switzerland. If only U.S. incidents were so thoroughly investigated.

Whatever the next year brings, I hope you don't have such a sudden bee loss in southern Oregon due to a pesticide. Now in our "down" time, as we reflect on this past year and look toward the coming bee season, take a page from John. If you do suspect a loss don't simply take it lying down. Report losses to the Pollination Stewardship Council www.pollinatorstewardship.org, they did follow up on the almond losses this past spring, EPA (Environmental Protection agency), our federal watchdog agency charged with protecting non-target beneficials like pollinating bees (beekill@epa.gov), the National Pesticide Council's Ecological Pesticide Incident Reporting at Oregon state (npic@ace.orst.edu) and to Oregon Department of Agriculture (www.oregon.gov/oda/programs/Pesticides/). As responsible bee stewards, we need speak up for the bees. They deserve nothing less.



Dr. Caron taught at the University of Delaware for 40+ years and now holds an Affiliate position (volunteer) with Horticulture Dept (the bee unit specifically) at Oregon State University. He is active in Eastern and Western Apiculture societies and national bee groups. He is the Vice President of the Oregon State Beekeepers' Association and served as President in 2010. He serves on the board of the Western Apiculture Society and is an honored speaker at SOBA programs whenever he is

January in the Apiary



In January, the bees continue to cluster, flying only on sunny days when it is 50 degrees or warmer. The queen begins to lay eggs, and brood rearing begins in the largest, healthiest hives. In warm years, the foragers may be able to collect some pollen.

If you want to push for more bees, or a larger honey crop, you can consider feeding pollen substitutes again. Make sure that the hives are still heavy with honey, and that the cluster is in contact with the honey. Protein stimulation this early will get strong hives to swarm or split strength earlier in the season, so be careful.

Adapted from a presentation by John Jacob from [Old Sol Apiary](#)

- In general disturb your bees as little as possible.
- If you are concerned about starvation, lift the back of the hive to assess its weight. Provide emergency feed to featherweight colonies. Drivert sugar may be your best option. Pollen patties will stimulate brood production, so don't use unless you are planning to split your hives or boost honey production. If you feed pollen now, you will need to support your hives until there is enough forage.
- Brood rearing and metabolism increase at this time of year which adds to hive moisture, so make sure lids are water tight, that hives are tilted so water drains away, and that there is sufficient ventilation. Consider adding a super with a screen bottom of wood shavings or other absorbent material above the inner cover in the fall.
- Make periodic checks of your apiary, especially after a wind storm to make sure nothing is amiss. Use straps or rocks to hold down the covers.
- Prepare for next month's tasks – in the past we have always recommended treating for foulbrood and varroa mites in February. I know some begin these treatments at the end of January if weather allows.
- For the non procrastinators, this is a good time to assemble hive components while there is not much else to do.

If you have don't it already, order your queens and nucs now. Check out the [local sources for bees](#) on the SOBA website.

Adapted from Oregon State Beekeepers [January](#) advice.

SOBA Member's Corner

Judy Harris has two hive set ups for sale - this includes two deeps, bottom board, inner lid and outer lid, spacer, 10 frame setups with fresh frames and foundation. \$75 each. The deeps have been used but were scorched to clean them, so no virus/ moths/etc.

- Two suits, adult small. - \$30 each.
- One smoker - \$10
- One hat with veil - \$15
- Gloves (not washed so they will need to be washed) - \$5/pair

Also some foundation and the woodenware to build frames, both deep and shallow. Call Mark, at [\(541\) 499-7373](tel:5414997373) or email at jharris0860@gmail.com

Michelle Durler: mmdurler@gmail.com is looking for locally sourced beeswax.

Ashland folks are getting together at the Playwright Pub (258 A St, Ashland) on Thursday February 12 at 7 PM.

The **Southern Oregon Beekeeper Association** meets at 7:30 pm on the first Monday of each month at the Southern Oregon Research & Extension Center in Central Point. Come early to the meeting (6:30) and watch a hive inspection demonstration (March—September).

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