

Southern Oregon Beekeepers Association Newsletter

In this issue:

- April 4 Meeting – Splits!
- Volunteer for AG in the Schools
- Spring Bee School
- Queen Opportunity
- Organic Roundup Alternative
- Let's Talk Bees
- Next Gen Beekeeper Event
- Pesticides, People, Pollinators, and the Planet Conference

Archived newsletters are on the website [here](#).

April 4 Meeting 6:30 PM - Splits!

John will be doing a demonstration split on the club dink hive at 6:30 behind the Extension Center. He is bringing a new queen—don't miss it! Bring protective gear—a hat and veil at a minimum.

NEW—SOBA meetings now start at 6:30 PM. In the spring and summer, the first 30-45 minutes will be at the club hives weather permitting. This change was voted in at the last meeting to make it easier on members who have to drive long distances.

Volunteer for AG in the Schools

Russ Williamson needs volunteers for 2 hour shifts May 5 and 6. Please contact him at sandruss3500@msn.com or SOBA at sobeekers@gmail.com if you'd like to help. **This is a great way for our Oregon Master Beekeeper Apprentices to get volunteer hours!**

Successful Spring Bee School !



Over 100 people attended our Spring Bee School this year. It was great fun with wonderful speakers and amazing door prizes!

Sarah Red-Laird (aka **BeeGirl**) taught us about hive equipment and on how to avoid common mistakes in beekeeping. **Morris Ostrofsky** gave an introduction to bees with information on the history of beekeeping and basic bee biology. **Tom Chester** set our expectations straight and discussed using NUCs as hive management tools.

My favorite part was meeting our youngest beekeeper—a 7 year old who is really into bees!

Thank you to our **sponsors**—all of whom donated some terrific door prizes:

Old SolBees, **Shooting Star Nursery**, **Grange Co-op**, **Brushy Mountain Bee Farm**, and most especially **Shastina Millwork**! Dave and the crew at Shastina overwhelmed us with their wonderful donations and with the Shed Sale.

The Bee Schools would not exist without the hard work of our **volunteers**. A special shout out to **Cheryl Housden** whose many ,many hours of work ensured the success of another class. **Richard Dumanowski**, **Debbie Gent**, **Risa Halpin**, **Marianne Heater**, **Rick Hernandez**, **Shari Shattuck**, **Kip Skelton**, and **Kathryn Voorhies**—you rock!

Pictures of the event are posted on our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/SouthernOregonBeekeepersAssociation.

Be sure to mark your calendars for our **Fall Bee School** on overwintering techniques and growing fat fall bees—Saturday July 31.

Master Gardener Spring Fair Volunteers Needed

SOBA will have an exhibit table at the annual Jackson County Master Gardeners Spring Fair at the Jackson County Expo **April 30-May 1**. If you would like to volunteer contact Ellen Wright at ewright42@gmail.com. **This is a great way for our Oregon Master Beekeeper Apprentices to get volunteer hours!**

Opportunity to get Early Queens from California

Rafael Aragon has offered to pick up queens from Kyle Wiggins in California on April 16. If you would like to order one, **contact him by Saturday April 12**. The queens cost \$27, and you can choose between Italian or Carniolan.

Safe Alternative to RoundUp from Master Gardeners

The Jackson County Master Gardeners have published a recipe for a safe alternative to RoundUp or glyphosate. The main ingredient is acetic acid—or vinegar!

Check out the details on the SOBA website:

www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org/gardening-for-bees/safe-alternative-roundup

Let's Talk Bees

At our **March** meeting, Ron Padgett gave a presentation on **catching swarms**.

Ask questions about the swarm before you decide to try to catch it:

- Get the correct address and phone number
- Size of the swarm – ask them to send a picture via email or text if possible
- Is it coming out of the ground (not honey bees!)
- How high is it? Get a picture with a ladder or a person in it for reference.
- How long has it been there? The bees get testier the longer they have been clustered in the swarm.

Call right before you leave to make sure the swarm is still there. They only stay in place a short time – from a few hours to a few days.

It's a good idea to have your swarm catching supplies in your car all season. You can use a large cardboard box with a few windows cut into the box to hold the swarm temporarily. Use screen and duct tape to create the windows.

Carry loppers, pruners, and a small hand saw. Bees frequently cluster on a tree or bush branch. Be sure to get permission from the owner before you do any pruning!

Lightly spritz the clustered swarm with a sugar water solution before moving it. This will help keep the bees from flying/scattering when moved.

If the swarm is high in a tree, you can use a 5 gallon bucket with an extension pole. Move the bucket under the cluster and then give a good upward thrust to knock the bees into the bucket.

To get the bees into the hive box or temporary box, you can:

- Cut the branch and lay it into the box. Cover all but a top corner of the box with a cloth. If the queen is in the box, you will see bees fanning and spreading a pheromone from their nasanov gland to guide the rest of the swarm to the box.
- Shake the bees into the box.
- Shake the bees onto a light colored tarp or cloth spread in front of the box assuming there is an entrance close to the ground. The bees will move from the light cloth to the dark entrance – especially if it smells like a hive in the box. The white cloth makes it easier to see how many bees still have to move into the box.

Thin spatulas or credit cards can be used to scrape bees off of a wall and into a holding box. Scrape from the top down.

It's a good idea to put a frame of comb or honey into the box to attract the bees and make it more likely they will not fly away.

Leave the box at the sight until dark, or close to it, to make sure all the scouts have returned and are in the box. Once you move the hive to its final location, do not disturb the bees for at least one week. Once the queen has begun laying, it is unlikely that they will abscond.

Ron showed us a bee vacuum that could be used. The vacuum must be modified so that it will be gentle enough that the bees will not be injured.

You can also set up bait hives or hive traps to catch swarms. These should be placed about 100 yards from an apiary at about 10 -12 feet high. Put them in a tree or structure on the edge of a meadow or field if possible. Add a frame of old comb and/or a very small amount of lemon grass on a cotton ball in a Ziplock bag with a pin prick or two.

Only 12% or so of swarms survive, according to Ramesh at OSU, so it is a good thing to try to hive swarms and steward them to help them survive.

Bees in swarms are stuffed full of honey and ready to produce lots of comb. Hive them with empty frames to get a good set of drawn comb frames.

Before you move the swarm, take a minute to watch the surface of the cluster. You may get to see scouts doing their waggle dance as they describe any potential future home to the rest of the bees in the cluster.

Consider Checkerboarding to prevent swarming. Here are some links with information about that method:

<http://www.knology.net/~k4vb/all%20walt%20articles.htm>

<http://www.bushfarms.com/beesexperiment.htm>

Suggested Bee Forage

Peter Lindtner's book **Garden Plants for Honey Bees** provides a beautiful guide to improving bee forage in your garden. He has a list of plants suitable for hobby beekeepers with 1-3 colonies and only 1/4 acre garden. The list is on our website—with permission from the author.

www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org/gardening-for-bees/suggested-bee-pasture

Events

Ashland beekeepers will get together at the Public House (formerly the Playwright's) in Ashland at 7 PM on **April 14**.

Bee Girl & NW Farmers Union Next Gen Farmer/Beekeeper Event

Friday April 15 at 6 PM: Ashland Community Center , 59 Winburn Way, Ashland

What's a "Next Generation Beekeeper"? "Next Gen" is defined as, "The step forward that perpetually propels us into our impending destiny." We are the next generation in our family of beekeepers, we are the drivers of the next stage of development in the products, services, expertise, and knowledge our industry provides. This beekeeper is a commercial or small scale beekeeper, or works as an educator or researcher. They are passionate about bees, and want to be involved in future beekeeping innovation, research, policy, technology, advocacy, or community leadership.



What's a "Next Generation Farmer"? According to the USDA, this is one who has operated a farm for ten years or less. The term next-generation farmer is used to describe young people who will be the next generation of farmers. Sometimes the term specifically suggests the next generation of the family to take over an existing farm. This, however, can anyone from a first-year farm apprentice to someone pursuing a mid-life career change to agriculture.

Moving forward, we need a functional model of collaboration between these two groups. This event is aimed to bring the two groups together for networking, beer drinking, a potluck dinner, great music by "The Brothers Reed", and a breakout session. The session is to develop a few ideas for collaboration, as well as finding how the Bee Girl organization and the NW Farmers Union can best serve you at local, state, and national levels. You tell us what that needs to be done, we'll listen and help to develop a positive action plan.

Please RSVP at: <https://www.universe.com/nextgencollaborative>

Pesticides, People, Pollinators and the Planet Conference

Saturday April 16 at 8AM-5PM: Southern Oregon University - Stevenson Union, Rogue River Room 1250 Siskiyou Boulevard, Ashland, OR 97520

This day-long conference will bring national and regional experts together to speak on the crucial topic of pesticides, people, pollinators and the planet. The conference includes 6 panels with multiple panelists addressing how synthetic pesticides affect human health, agriculture, yard care, schools, pollinators, public spaces, and wild places. Four "hands-on" afternoon workshops will encourage participants to build wild bee boxes, plant for Monarch butterflies, organize to write school IPM policies, and use safe alternatives to synthetic pesticides.



Presentations by **Bee City USA, Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides, Beyond Toxics, Unete Center for Farmworker Advocacy, Xerces Society, SOU Landscape Services, Ashland Parks and Recreation, Base Landscape Architecture, One Earth Landscape, Lomakatsi, Valley View Orchards, Jackson County Master Gardeners, Siskiyou Vital Medicine, Southern Oregon Monarch Advocates**, and more!

Presenters will share what is being done in our cities, schools, lawns, gardens, farms, vineyards, and orchards to create healthy, pesticide-free environments for people, pollinators, and the planet.

If you are aware of any events in southern Oregon that are bee or beekeeping related, please send an email to sobeekeepers@gmail.com and we will add it to the event calendar online and the newsletter.

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).

Email: sobeekeepers@gmail.com

Phone: (541) 862-1604

Website: www.southernoregonbeekeepers.org

Facebook Forum: www.facebook.com/groups/1418688815101076/



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