

St. Croix Valley Beekeepers Association

Next meeting: April 12
6:30 How and When to Make a Divide
7:00 General meeting
Dan Ziehli, WI State Bee Inspector
“Mite Treatments: Decisions, Availability, and Effectiveness”

Peace Lutheran Church
2084 County Road N
Baldwin, WI 54002 ([map](#))

The Waggle Dance

April 2018 newsletter



Nature's Nectar Page

Jim at Nature's Nectar over in Stillwater, MN, has a very helpful web site for his business. One part of it that many beekeepers in the area find especially useful is the short blog he runs each month. It is called What Should I Be Doing with My Bees This Month. Jim is clear that this is just what he does, he makes no claims that it is the only way to do things. Below is his advice for March.

- ≥ Check colonies for alive or dead
- ≥ Order Package Bees Now
- ≥ Put on pollen patties
- ≥ Feed syrup if necessary, don't over feed
- ≥ Paint and repair bee equipment now
- ≥ Inventory equipment for coming season

Vote NO to Neonics in Wisconsin

Your chance to speak up for bees

(From Wisconsin Ornithology Society)

Wisconsin has an important system for gauging public opinion on major wildlife issues. The Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) is a citizen advisory body to the Natural Resources Board (NRB) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

On **Monday April 9, 2018, starting at 7 p.m.**, there will be a WCC hearing in each county. These Spring Hearings include advisory voting on hunting and fishing rule changes proposed by the DNR along with additional advisory questions proposed by the WCC. The balloting results provide advice to the NRB, the DNR, and the legislature.

Anyone may attend and cast a ballot at the Spring Hearings. Most of those attending actively hunt, trap or fish. The perspectives of others are generally less represented, but equally important. You must attend, however, to be able to cast a vote. (Continued p.2)

(Continued Vote NO on Neonics)

The full ballot and hearing information can be found at:

http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/Documents/spring_hearing/2018/2018SpringQuestionnaire.pdf

The locations of the hearings (one per county) is in this document:

http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/Documents/spring_hearing/2018/2018hearinglocations.pdf

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The **neonic Advisory Question** is:

Question 45. Should the Conservation Congress work with the DNR, NRB and Wisconsin Legislature to take up the “Saving Wisconsin Pollinators Act,” and include specific language to ban the use of neonicotinoid insecticides (dinotefuran, clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam) regardless of application method on all state owned agricultural and forest lands, and establish limited use guidelines for continued use on commercial and private agricultural lands?

The hearing in Pierce County is to be held at Ellsworth High School, main entrance, 323 W. Hillcrest St., Ellsworth. April 9, 7:00 p.m.
The hearing in St. Croix County is to be held at River Crest Elementary School cafeteria, 535 County Road F, Hudson. April 9, 7:00 p.m.

The Dunn County Beekeepers Association extends an invitation to our club to attend a presentation sponsored by their club at Jarvis Hall Science Wing Room 110, UW-Menomonie, on April 9 at 7:00 p.m. The speaker will be Jim Burritt, presenting on “The Honeybee Pathosphere.” The presentation will provide an overview on the infectious diseases of honey bees and a follow-up to a talk given one year earlier pertaining to bee research at UW-Stout. The talk from one year ago can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoSi5v9rtWo>

Please let Melanie Waldon know if you plan to attend so she can let the organizers know the expected head count.



Club officers

President: Melanie Waldon, melwaldon@bellsouth.net

Vice-president: Doug Sjostrom,
<mailto:dksjostrom@outlook.net>

Secretary co-chairs: Claude Bovi,
boviman1970@msn.com, Charlotte Nicholes,
cnichole2000@msn.com

Treasurer: Connie Bennett, cmbennett@live.com

Club website at stcroixbeekeepers.com

Links to other bee-related sites:

<http://pollinator.org/bff> (Bee Friendly Farming)

info@ahpanet.com (American Honey Producers Association)

HoneyBeeSuite.com

info@pollinatorstewardship.org (Pollinator Stewardship Council)

<http://www.beeculture.com>

<https://wihoney.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/WHPA-BMP-for-Mite-Control-in-Wisconsin.pdf>

<http://americanbeejournal.com/>

www.beeculture.com

<https://www.beelab.umn.edu/>

scientificbeekeeping.com/mite-washer-still-improving/

<https://beeinformed.org/2016/03/08/why-did-my-honey-bees-die/>

Sustainable Club Hives

This year my goal is to strive to make the club hives a sustainable apiary. By teaching through the club hives I hope to help all of our members get off the "import bee tread mill" by raising nucs for overwintering. At this current point of time we have 2 live hives out of the 3 that went into winter. We have a package coming in on the first load of bees from Nature Nectar LLC as well.

Outline for the season:

(On each of these dates we will meet at 6pm at the club hives)

- [Install package of bees. It will be the day of bee pickup, April 6 or 7. I will send out an email to all members with approximate time so anyone can come.
- [May 10th - planning to make splits if needed. Will be doing a mite wash every month.
- [June 14th - make up 2 or 4 nucs for overwintering - will use queen cell either ready to hatch or 48hr cell. Room inspection and discussion on supering.
- [July 12th - Room inspection for honey stores. Nuc inspection and discuss what will go on going forward.
- [Saturday August 4th (time to be determined) Honey harvest mite check and mite treatment.
- [September 13th - Feeding and mite check.
- [October 11th - Discuss winter wrapping, and late season mite treatment when they are broodless.

Monthly Club Hive Activities

- [Mite wash of at least one hive.
- [Hive Health Inspection
- [Bee Husbandry

I would like to challenge everyone to give nuc colonies a try. I think that if you want to have 2 hives for honey that you should have 2 nucs going into winter along with the current year's honey production colonies. This will help you out in the spring. If you have a 50% winter loss you come out of winter with 2 colonies even though you lost 2, and if you winter 100% you can sell them to another beekeeper. I started making nucs in 2014, and it has been one of the most satisfying things that I have done in beekeeping. I like being able to look for the young queen and watching her develop the nuc as they grow to 8 or 10 frames.

The nucs will be made up of 2 frames of brood-- preferably capped or emerging brood, 1-2 frame of nectar, 1 frame of pollen. You need the bees to stay on these frames. Then add a queen cell to them. For a ripe (ready to hatch) cell, wait for minimum of 2 weeks. For a 48-hr cell you will have to wait a minimum of 24 days. After the wait period, when you go into the hive you will be looking for eggs and larva. A brood break has been correlated with survival. If you are unable to move them to a new location you will want to shake extra bees with them, as a large majority will fly back to the parent hive. You will want to start this between the 2nd week in June and the end of the first week in July.

If you are interested in starting nucs and mimic this process at your home apiary I am willing to help you get started on being a sustainable beekeeper. I can point you in the direction on what you need for equipment. There is a group of us working at promoting this method.

If you have any questions please contact me at waynehoney2010@gmail.com Please put **Nuc Project** in the subject.

Good article about Queen cells

http://www.wicwas.com/sites/default/files/articles/Bee_Culture/BC2012-06.pdf

I also want to thank Adrian Quiney for talking to us back in 2013 about this method.

Questions, comments, additions to newsletters: Maureen Ash, mash76@sbwireless.net

Starting your package of bees

Mitch Wayne gave a good demonstration of this at the March meeting. There are several blogs and articles and videos on line, as well as in magazines and books, about starting your package of bees. This is just one way it can be done. **If it is going to be chilly on the day you install, CONSULT**

THE NATURE'S NECTAR BLOG FOR ADVICE ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THAT. THERE IS AN EXCELLENT POST ON IT.

<http://naturesnectar.blogspot.com/>

- [Your bees will come in a box equipped with a sugar-water dispenser and a cage to keep the queen separate from the bees. Prepare for their arrival by purchasing a new spray bottle or finding one that has not been used with chemicals, as this might harm the bees. Mix up a solution of sugar water, 1:1.
- [Keep the package in a cool (not cold) dry place if you can't install it right away. Spray it with the sugar water three or four times through the day. Be sure the bees have access to air.
- [Choose a time of day that is warm and not too windy.
- [You will need your bottom board, a deep hive body, ten frames and foundations, and inner and outer covers.
- [Remove four of the center frames from the new hive body. Spray both sides of all ten frames with the sugar-water mixture. Spray the sides of the bee package.
- [Open the bee package. Depending on the type of package, you may need a hive tool.
- [Take out the can of sugar water that was in there to feed the bees on their long journey.
- [Remove the queen cage and set it safely aside.
- [Hold the package over the hive body and shake the bees into the empty space created when you removed the four inner frames. Shake hard and even strike the side of the package to dislodge bees if necessary.
- [Replace the four frames, gently pressing into the mass of bees in the box and allowing them to get out of the way.
- [Look at the queen cage. Make sure there is nothing but candy between the queen and one of the exits. If there is a cork plus candy, remove the cork but NOT the candy. If there is no candy, use a small marshmallow to block the entrance. The bees need time to accept the queen, and

eating through the candy allows queen and worker bees to get to know one another.

- [Hang the queen cage between the frames, using the pressure of the frames to “squeeze” the cage and keep it from dropping to the floor of the hive box. Hang it with the candy-clogged exit down. Though some beekeepers hang the cage with the entrance up in case the worker bees with the queen die and clog the entrance.
- [Check to be sure all ten frames have been replaced and that the queen cage is hanging securely between the frames.
- [Block the entrance/exit with grass for a day so the bees get accustomed to their new home.
- [Have a feeding plan for the bees. Until the dandelions are blooming profusely, your bees depend on you for their food. In spring, a sugar-water solution of 1:1, with the water heated to dissolve the sugar completely, then cooled to ambient temperature, is recommended.

St. Croix Valley Beekeepers Association has many veteran beekeepers who are willing to answer questions about getting your package started. If you feel uncertain, contact someone in the association and make sure your bees have every benefit as they get started. Good luck!