

JULY 2014



St. Clair Beekeepers Association

Bee Buzz

Monthly Newsletter of the St. Clair Beekeepers Association

Monthly SCBA Meeting — July 2014

Special points of interest:

- Don't forget our website!
- Feed Feed Feed your bees, especially splits, nucs and swarms!
- Stay cool yourself. Beekeepers need close water sources too

**Our next meeting will be on
Sunday July 27 at 2:00 PM**

The meeting will be OUTDOORS at the President's residence:

Bill Mattatal is our Host, Phone 618-910-3149

1496 Black lane

Caseyville, IL 62232

Please bring a potluck lunch item to share at the meeting. We recommend bringing chairs, cups, plasticware and questions

Mite Loads are going up Up UP!

Summer is maximum production time. Nectar is flowing. Queens are laying at maximum capacity. And who is going to take advantage of this? Varroa Mites! Your hive is so busy producing young as fast as it can. Mites love the summer and the heat, they're multiplying at horrifying rates. It's time to take a mite count. The 3 best ways to monitor levels are:

1. Check natural mite fall caught on sticky boards under a screen
2. Jar samples, using powdered sugar shake or alcohol wash
3. Brood sampling with a cappings fork, Drone brood used

Once you have an idea as to the mite count in your hive, you can determine the best way you want to treat. Do your research, ask many beekeepers what works. You will need to make sure you are using a treatment that is legal in Illinois. Some use chemicals, others prefer powdered sugar or use of essential oils.

Prevention is always an asset. Using drone brood combs (just don't let them hatch!) is very effective, moreso in the spring. As summer quickly comes to an end, so does a queen's need to lay drone brood. Regular powdered sugar dusting also knocks mite counts way down.

Here is a great web page on mite sampling with instructions.

<http://scientificbeekeeping.com/fighting-varroa-reconnaissance-mite-sampling/>



Presidents Letter to the Membership July 2014

Hello Everyone:

A few days ago I received a phone call from an acquaintance that lives near Carlyle. She informed me that their family had just purchased seventeen nukes of bees. I was also informed that they had no experience whatsoever at keeping bees; their only knowledge had been gained from books and the internet. I was then asked to come and inspect the colonies as they had a lot of questions they needed answered.

Upon arriving I found 18 colonies all in the same bee yard. The first question that came to my mind "Was there enough forage available to support his many colonies as all the surrounding land is in crop with a few wood lots scattered about. As I inspected each hive I found some to have really good brood patterns with the colony well on its way to drawing out comb on the new frames as well as having reasonable amounts of stored honey.

A reasonable number of colonies were not doing nearly as well. One had swarmed providing the 18th colony. The weak hives had a lot of shot gun brood patterns. Some hadn't gone beyond the original five frame nuke with very little honey and in many cases, no pollen. It appeared that the weak colonies had been hastily put together without time to build themselves up. As we checked each colony the owner told me that many of them looked better and stronger than when she had installed the nukes in their permanent ten frame boxes. I assured her and her sisters that I would continue to work with them to help build up the colonies.

The main problem I see in addition to the weakness of some of the hives is all of the nukes came from one supplier. If many of them were newly formed as they appear to be, I am sure there are groups split off the same hive all sharing the same pheromones. If this is the case I am afraid that the old families will reunite leaving some colonies so weak they will not be able to survive.

My suggestion will be for the owner to spread the colonies across the 120 acre farm separating the colonies as much as possible.

The honey flow is in full force. Our apiary just provided us with 204 pounds of golden nectar. About nine supers are also full but one yet uncapped. Upon speaking with several others in our association their harvest has been equally as good if not better. The worst winter in 30 years caused losses averaging 53% across the association but just to show you we are not in charge, nature has a way of fixing things. The colonies that survived are going full speed with more bees than ever carrying on the work.

Don't forget to keep your bees hydrated. I am feeding a mixture of a little less than 1 to 1 sugar to water and the bees are drinking about a quart a day.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at this month's meeting on the 23rd of July at our place. Come one, come all. Bring your bee questions and your appetite. As always if I can help, call me anytime, day or night.

Bee happy , Billy

618-910-3149 bembam99@yahoo.com

E-Scrip keeps going and going and going



Every month we are seeing the numbers going higher and higher. Thanks to everyone who has signed up with E-Scrip with us. For those of you who have not, it's really easy. Check with the cashier at the checkout at your local Schnucks and they will give you a card and the directions on how to register. Then use it at the checkout the next time you shop. Schnucks scans the card and a percentage of your purchase goes to the SCBA.

All-star Hive is Reaching for the Stars!!

By Tom Simpson

This is my all-star. I am really proud of it because it had European Foul Brood last year. It has not been treated this year and there has been no recurrence. There are 2 brood boxes and 8 supers. Two are Illinois supers. The last two added were foundation and when I added the last one 1 1/2 weeks ago I stood on the tailgate of my pick-up truck as suggested by my mentor Ray Chapman. The Nuc next to it was pulled from it about a month ago. It has a piece of counter-top leaning against the West side to block the afternoon sun as last year the outside comb in one of the deep boxes melted and dropped a large puddle of honey under the hive that they cleaned up in about 1 1/2 hrs. Didn't see any robbing as I expected. It was a swarm we caught 2 years ago. It has survived EFB, our last bitter winter, and last but not least, my best and worst efforts.

