



SEMBA NEWS

Volume 15 Number 5 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association
September / October 2005

Upcoming Events

SEMBA Planning Meeting:

Thursday, September 8, 2005 (See page one for details)

Schoolcraft Bee Club Meeting:

Tuesday, September 13, 2005. (See below for details)

Seven Ponds Bee Club Meeting:

Tuesday, September 27, 2005. (See page one for details)

Oakland Bee Club Meeting:

Tuesday, October 4, 2005. (See page one for details)

SEMBA Annual Meeting:

Sunday, October 16, 2005. (Details to follow in next newsletter)

Seven Ponds Bee Club Meeting:

Tuesday, October 25, 2005. (See page one for details)

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SCHOOLCRAFT BEE CLUB MEETING

When: Tuesday, September 13, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

Where: Schoolcraft College, Lower Waterman Center, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia, MI

Program: "Practical Queen Rearing in Michigan" by Paul Mazur

"How I Got Started in Beekeeping"
(See program note)

A refractometer will be available to check the moisture content of your newly extracted honey.

Refreshments are welcome

Program Note:

For several years, SEMBA member Paul Mazur of Blanchard, MI has been rearing queens on a large

Editor: Susanne Sadik souxsieg2@msn.com <http://www.sembabees.org>

scale and supplying queens to Michigan beekeepers. Also, he's been working with commercial beekeeper David Anthony in Swartz Creek, MI to expand and perfect his operation. Since many beekeepers throughout the country are expressing concern about the quality of queens being raised in the south, perhaps we should be rearing our own queens or purchasing them from Michigan queen breeders.

During the May Schoolcraft Bee Club meeting, videos were made of several SEMBA members telling us about how they got started in beekeeping. These videos will be included in SEMBA's historical archives. At the September meeting, there will be an opportunity for others who wish to have their experiences videotaped.

OAKLAND BEE CLUB MEETING

When: Tuesday, October 4, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

Where: E. L. Johnson Nature Center, 3325 Franklin Road, Bloomfield Township, MI.

Program: "A Review of Current Beekeeping Research in the United States", Zachary Huang, Ph.D., Apicultural Specialist, Michigan State University.

A refractometer will be available to check the moisture content of your newly extracted honey.

Refreshments are welcome

SEVEN PONDS BEE CLUB MEETING

When: Tuesday, September 27, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.
Tuesday, October 25, 2005 at 7:30 p.m.

Where: Seven Ponds Nature Center, 3854 Crawford Road near Dryden, MI.

Seven Ponds Bee Club meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of each month. Call Nancy Schliebe, 810-395-7379 for more information.

SEMBA PLANNING MEETING

When: Thursday, September 8, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

Where: Schoolcraft College, Lower Waterman Center, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia, MI.

Agenda: Planning for October 16th Annual Meeting and setting meeting dates for 2006 events.

INTRODUCING NEW LIFE MEMBER- STEPHEN BURT

Recently, a check was received from Walt Lysenko in payment for a SEMBA Life Membership for Stephen Burt of Roseville, MI. Mr. Lysenko noted that Steve should be honored in this way because he has helped so many beekeepers and done so much for beekeeping.

This summer, when SEMBA received a request from the city of Detroit to help locate a beekeeper that would help maintain a new observation hive at the Belle Isle Conservatory, Stephen Burt responded immediately saying he would be interested. Mr. Burt is now helping with this endeavor.

When asked to provide us with information about his beekeeping activities, Steve responded as follows:

"I always had a fascination for nature and the outdoors, and really loved the taste of honey. As a kid I used to catch bees in a jar and then loosen the cap and dump the jar over to let them all go, while running away as fast as I could. This was big stuff when I was a twerp. So becoming a real beekeeper was a logical progression for me.

I usually keep 4 producing colonies and a few seasonal nukes right in the back yard in Roseville, just down the street from the Macomb Mall. This is my 31st year with the bees. Mites have sure made things harder, but we are hanging in there every year.

My marketing plan is to give honey to friends and neighbors and sell it at work and to a few serious customers. I have never rented bees for pollination but have not ruled the idea out, either. The queens in the yard are almost always of my own breeding, a mixture of gray and yellow bees that I select for gentleness, low swarming, and decent honey production.

True, I have encouraged several beekeepers to get a start, giving them back issues of Bee Culture and loaning bee books, plus some hands on demonstrating.

I enjoy and occasionally contribute to Bee Culture. My articles have included such subjects as queen rearing, swarm prevention, assembling equipment, keeping bees in the suburbs, using computers for beekeeping, and making beer with honey.

So far, I am the only family member currently in beekeeping. My great grandfather, Nile Burt, kept bees successfully in the Laingsburg area 100 or more years ago, making section comb honey.

On a regular basis I give safety talks at work about avoiding stings and also speak to school children about the biology of the honey bee. When possible I bring a one-frame observation hive.

I enjoy photography, including bee photography, keep a big garden and orchard, breed and graft fruit plants,

and like to go fishing or muzzle loader hunting--all outdoor stuff.

My sincere personal thanks to member Wally Lysenko for this true honor."

SEMBA welcomes Stephen Burt as a Life Member.
~ Roger Sutherland

BEE HIVE THIEVES ARE ON THE LOOSE

After hearing about stolen hives in California, we now have learned about colony thefts in Michigan. About the first week of June, 68 hives were stolen from a beekeeper in Edmore, MI, Montcalm County. His hives were painted blue, but by now the thief probably has them repainted. In the same area, another beekeeper had several frames taken from 64 hives, apparently to make nucs.

Beekeepers must be vigilant and check their hives for possible theft. (You may want to brand something on the supers and frames so that ownership can be proven.) Usually we trust beekeepers, but unfortunately there are those who will take advantage of our trust. If you suspect any theft of hives or frames let our web master know immediately so that an e-mail alert can be sent to those with e-mail addresses. (There are now about 160 names on SEMBA's e-mail roster.)

~ Roger Sutherland

SEMBA PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Using Honey to Deal with the Itch of Poison Ivy
By: Ron Forfinski

Over the last few years allergy sufferers have sought me out to buy honey. They've read that taking a teaspoon of local honey full of the pollen that afflicts them each day during the season may relieve their runny noses and sneezing without costly medications or medical treatments. In theory this honey is said to work the same way as an allergist injecting a small amount of the allergen into your body which results in your body building up immunity to it.

Well I thought I don't suffer from allergies but I'm plagued with poison ivy rash from June to November due to the fact that parts of my six acres resemble a Philippines jungle, with hairy stalks of poison ivy as thick as your wrist winding up the oak trees. When my two dogs wander through these woods, they come greet me, I pet them, and BAM, I start itching.

I've researched poison ivy and in southeastern Michigan it's one the first plants to bloom. So this year I'm marking the first supers I put on my hives and extracting them separately. This honey will be my "Poison Ivy Honey", and hopefully next year I will be able to roll in the stuff with it having no effect on me at all.

SEMBA VOLUNTEERS AT MICHIGAN STATE FAIR

Many thanks are due to those individuals who volunteered to work in the SEMBA educational booth

at the Michigan State Fair. Special thanks are extended to Bill Sirr, Ann Kerwin, Dan and Joyce Guthrie, Dick Miller, John Herndandez, Dyanne Tracy and Fritz Sanders for their assistance in organizing the SEMBA booth and providing educational materials.

Volunteers who worked in the booth are: Dick Conlin, Patrick Murad, Larry Yates*, Larry Heidrich, Ted Hysen, Keith and Jelinda Molnar*, Arlene and Archie Souvatzidis, Ron and Judy Forfinski, Ray Nemeckay, Alfred and Barbara Luperico, Senad Livadic, Florence Reaume, Rick Sirr, Kevin Hardy, Mike Kay, John Hernandez*, Candyce Sweda, Mike Kolodziej, Fritz Sanders, Bill Lockwood, Hank Semczak, Keith Lazar, John Wrosch, Tom Jenkins, Ed and Ada Nowak, Ken Krawczyk, David and Heather Gable, Paul Lukasiewicz, Brian Frol, Chuck Bartkus, Rich Wieske, Paul Wiertz and Ann Kerwin.

* Individuals who volunteered for more than one session.

RESULTS OF INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES IN THE STATE FAIR HONEY- BEESWAX COMPETITION

Creamed Honey: 1st Blanche Barber, 2nd Dyanne Tracy.
Shallow Frame: 1st Bill Sirr, 2nd Dick Miller.
Deep Frame: 1st Bill Sirr.
Amber Honey: 1st Dick Miller, 2nd Dyanne Tracy.
White Honey: 1st Dyanne Tracy.
Chunk Honey: 1st Dyanne Tracy, 2nd Dick Miller.
Section Honey: 1st Dyanne Tracy, 2nd Blanche Barber, 3rd Dan and Joyce Guthrie.
Wax: 1st Dyanne Tracy, 2nd Bill Sirr, 3rd Dick Miller.
Observation Hive: 1st Bill Sirr, 2nd Dick Miller.
Educational Poster: 1st Ann Kerwin.

SEMBA MEMBERS ATTEND EAS

SEMBA members David D'Agostino, Carol and Earl Hoffman, Joan Kimata, Fred Paepke, John Piette, Hank Semczyk and Mary and Roger Sutherland were among the over 500 in attendance at the EAS Beekeeping Conference held August 3-6, 2005 at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.

The following two articles by Mary and Roger Sutherland are reports from programs presented at the conference.

AFRICANIZED BEES FOUND IN LOUISIANA

On Sunday, July 31, 2005, several news sources reported that Africanized bees (AHB) were found in Louisiana. Quoting from the Ann Arbor News, July 31, 2005:
"Bees trapped in June near the northwest Louisiana town of Rodessa, about 35 miles northwest of Shreveport, were confirmed as the Africanized variety Friday by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's bee research center, State Agriculture Commissioner, Bob Odom."

The Africanized bees entered Texas in October, 1990 and have been moving west since that date. They are

now reported near Los Angeles, California. Texas has reported 11 deaths in 15 years from AHB's. While they have moved west in the same time period, they have only moved east to an area around Houston, Texas. Apicultural specialists have never fully understood this lack of eastward movement. Changes in rainfall, the presence of fire ants, and more European honey bees have been advanced as possible reasons for the non-movement.

At the EAS Beekeeping Conference, we asked Stanley Schneider, Ph.D., University of North Carolina, Charlotte, a leading authority on AHBs, whether or not the finding of Africanized bees in Louisiana meant that the bees were moving east or was this an isolated case caused by bees being moved in on equipment from an area known to have Africanized bees. His lab is looking into this find along with investigations of a possible AHB find in Florida.

In Dr. Schneider's excellent talk entitled "The African Honey Bee in the Americas", he reported that in areas now occupied by AHB, 70% of the traits are African with only 30% European. Therefore, he believes that these bees should be called African honey bees in America rather than Africanized. In summary, he outlined several reasons why African honey bees are so much more successful than European honey bees.

- 1) African bees are programmed for reproduction, not honey production. More bees are produced so swarming is 4 times greater than European bees. This enables them to move into new areas.
- 2) African traits are dominant over European traits.
- 3) In queen replacement:
 - a) AHB queens emerge before European (2 to 1 advantage).
 - b) AHB queens show more piping activity.
 - c) AHB queens are better queen killers.
 - d) Worker bees perform more vibration signals on AHB queens so that more of them are selected to be the laying queens (83% AHB compared to 17% European queens).
- 4) AHB drones are more successful in mating with both AHB and European queens.
- 5) AHB are more adept at nest usurpation (take over of European hives).

If you wish to find out more about Dr. Schneider's research on AHB go to Google on the Internet, type in African honey bees in America-Stanley Schneider, and read his articles on the subject

NECTAR PRODUCING PLANTS

George Ayers, Ph.D., Professor of Entomology, Michigan State University, presented several programs at the EAS Conference involving several aspects of nectar-producing plants. In his program entitled "60 Years of Vacuum", Dr. Ayers outlined a possible plan, (at the urging of the American Bee Journal's Editor), for writing a new book on nectar producing plants. It has been 60

years since Frank Pellet's book on honey plants was published and nothing substantial has been produced since then.

Dr. Ayers is starting (what may develop into a book) with his series of articles on the major nectar-producing plants that are published in the *American Bee Journal*. Then in collaboration with Zachary Huang, Ph.D., Michigan State University, a web site data base of nectar forage plants is being developed. The web address is: plants.bees.org. This web site will show photos of major honey bee forage plants with accompanying information. Plant families covered presently are: Aceraceae (maples), Aquifoliaceae (Holly), Asclepiadaceae (Milkweed), Asteraceae (Asters-Goldenrods), Ericaceae (Heath), Fabaceae (Pea), Lamiaceae (Mint), Magnoliaceae (Magnolia), Rosaceae (Rose), Rubiaceae (Button Bush), and Salicaceae (Willow).

SEMBA WEBSITE UPDATE

By: *SEMBA Web Master, Tom Lisk*

With our newsletter being published bi-monthly, it is becoming increasingly important to have your correct email address on our web site mailing list. If you did not receive three emails from SEMBA Bees in the last 30 days, you are not on our mailing list. You can sign up at www.sembabees.org/signup.html. This is a two step process. After you sign up, you will be sent a confirmation email which you must acknowledge to show you are the owner of the email account - this will validate your subscription.

If you signed up in the past and are not receiving the SEMBA emails, understand the system will mark your address as invalid if it receives three bounce messages. A bounce message can be generated by an improper email address, a mailbox full error, or a spam filter only accepting white-listed email addresses. Mail will be sent from SEMBA Bees with an address of admin@sembabees.org.

If you think you are doing everything right and are still having problems and want to know what error messages are being generated by your ISP, contact Tom Lisk at tosk@sembabees.org.

SEMBA Bargain Corner

Free:

- Retiring: Free 5 gallon buckets. **Call Alex Bzenko, 248-651-0928.**

For Sale:

- SEMBA caps and Tiara comb-honey dishes. Available at meetings. **Call 734-668-8568 to order.**
- Honey Sticks: 6 cents each for MBA members, 10 cents each for non-members. **Contact Ann Leonard, 810-688-7387.**
- Honey Straws; Have your special Honey transferred in straws. The Honey can be transferred Raw - unfiltered thereby preserving its nutritional value. **Contact Jerry Dunbar for details 586-770-9953.**

Services:

- Honey bee removal service. **Call Jeff Brown, (734) 422-0269.**

Notice:

- Honey for sale or honey wanted: **Send your name to the Sutherlands, 5488 Warren, Ann Arbor, MI 48105, or rsuther@hotmail.com** Names will be printed in the next newsletter and posted on the sembabees.org web pages.

Note: ads in the Bargain Corner are free to SEMBA members. To place an ad, contact Susanne at souxsieq2@msn.com, or phone 248-476-4991 or Roger Sutherland rsuther@hotmail.com.

Southeastern Michigan
Beekeepers' Association
Organized April 1, 1934

Oakland Beekeepers' Club



Schoolcraft Beekeepers' Club



Seven Ponds Beekeepers' Club



SEMBA Membership
5488 Warren Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105-9425