



SEMBA NEWS

Volume 16 Number 1 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association
January 2006

Upcoming Events

Oakland Bee Club Meeting:

Tuesday, January 3, 2006 (see below for details)

SEMBA Planning Meeting:

Tuesday, January 10, 2006 (see below for details)

68th Annual SEMBA Beekeeping Conference:

Saturday, February 18, 2006 (see page 1 for details)

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OAKLAND BEE CLUB MEETING

When: Tuesday, January 3, 2006 7:30 p.m.

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

Program: A video highlighting how several SEMBA members got started in beekeeping will be shown. Also, we will videotape Oakland Bee Club members with their stories about how they got started in beekeeping. **Refreshments are welcome**

SEMBA PLANNING MEETING

When: Tuesday, January 10, 2006, 7:30 p.m.

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

Nature of Business: Agenda for the Beekeeping Conference and a Seven Ponds Bee Club proposal will be discussed.

JUDY SCHMALTZ WINNER AT APIMONDIA

SEMBA vice president Judy Schmaltz was awarded first prize for her creamed honey at Apimondia, the international beekeeping conference that was held in Dublin, Ireland this past summer. Both Judy and her husband Lloyd attended the conference that is held every other year. The next Apimondia will take place in 2007 in Melbourne, Australia.

~ Roger Sutherland

68TH ANNUAL SEMBA BEEKEEPING CONFERENCE

When: Saturday, February 18, 2006

Where: Schoolcraft College, Livonia, MI

Featured speakers: Larry Connor, PhD and Zachary Huang, PhD

Program: Concurrent workshops, demonstrations, bee-supply vendors and much more.

Registration Fee: \$10.00 for non-members. This year there will be no registration charge for members of SEMBA.

In January, you will receive a SEMBA Newsletter with full details about the Beekeeping Conference.

BOOK DONATED TO THE SEMBA LIBRARY

The Beekeeper's Pupil by Sara George has been donated to the SEMBA library and is available on loan to SEMBA members. A complete list of books and journals available is listed on the sembabees.org Web page or Roger Sutherland will mail you the list if you do not have an Internet connection.

This book chronicles many of the famous experiments performed by the blind scientist Francois Huber in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The London *Sunday Herald* wrote this review:

"In 1766, at the age of fifteen, Francois Huber learns he is going blind. As the darkness descends, however, his scientific curiosity develops, and he became obsessed with an extraordinary inquiry – into the violent and sexually competitive world of the bee. He teaches his manservant to observe in his place and together they document their astonishing findings, with painstaking persistence and insight. Set against the scientific discoveries and libertarian ideals of the Enlightenment, and the dramatic and bloody events of the late eighteenth century, it is a story of human limitations, trust, and revelation."

~ Roger Sutherland

HONEY PLANT DATA BASE

Dr. George Ayers, MSU in collaboration with Dr. Zachary Huang has developed a Website data base of nectar forage plants. The address is plants.bees.net

HONEYBEE OR HONEY BEE? Should the name of the bee, *Apis mellifera*, be written as one word or two - honeybee or honey bee? Actually honey bee is correct (even though the computer spell check disagrees) and here is the reason why: The word honey is describing a particular species of bee just as the word bumble describes another bee species – the bumble bee. For some other insects, such as a butterfly or a dragonfly, a one-word spelling is proper because neither one describes a specific species of

fly. Tsetse fly, because it is a specific species of fly is, therefore, spelled with two words.

LARRY AND SUE YATES – VOLUNTEERS SUPREME

In the last two SEMBA newsletters, we have recognized SEMBA members who volunteer their services to educate the public about the value of honey bees. In this issue, we feature Larry and Sue Yates for their many contributions to both SEMBA and the Oakland Bee Club.

Larry started keeping bees in 1982 when one of his friends, who had bees in the city, had to move a colony of honey bees. Larry agreed to have the friend move the hive to his property. He and Sue decided that beekeeping might be interesting so Larry enrolled in Dr. Byberg's beekeeping class at Cranbrook Institute. In addition to the Cranbrook beekeeping class, Dr. Byberg also organized the Cranbrook Bee Club which attracted the attendance of Larry and Sue. Also, they attended beekeeping programs at Michigan State University and Schoolcraft College to learn more about keeping bees.

Starting with two hives, Larry has increased his colony numbers to 35 in 3 Oakland County locations. In addition to honey sales, Larry makes beeswax candles and does some apple pollination. For 41 years, before his retirement, Larry was employed by the Detroit Edison. Sue, (now somewhat retired) is a postpartum nurse at Beaumont Hospital.

For several years, Larry served as SEMBA's vice-president and has been the leader of the Oakland Bee Club (formerly called Cranbrook Bee Club) for the last 10 years. Sue and Larry are regular presenters at the SEMBA Beekeeping Conference. In addition to programs for beekeepers, they present beekeeping programs to Master Gardener Clubs and other groups. Larry also assists with the mailing of the SEMBA Newsletter.

In spite of a heart attack and several other medical complications, Larry still manages the heavy work of hive manipulations. In telling about a recent event, Larry says, "I unloaded 5 hives of bees in world-record time. It was 9:30 p.m. when I reached my destination only to find police cars blocking the entrance. A police helicopter was overhead. I persuaded the police to let me unload the honey bees with the promise that I would do it as quickly as possible. I did it to their satisfaction".

Thank you Larry and Sue for all your efforts.
~ Roger Sutherland

SURVIVORS

Since I returned to beekeeping as a hobby three years ago, I soon discovered that there are new words now used in beekeeping that were not used in the 70's and 80's. Words like Varroa, resistance, hygienic behavior, SMR trait, P.M.S. and a host of others. Another word I believe we will be hearing more about in the near future is "Survivors".

As we all know, almost all the wild honey bees died with the advent of the mites in the 90's. Most

managed hives died within a couple of years without treatment. Notice I said almost all. In some places a small remnant of wild honey bees hung on, such as the wild bees found in the Arnot Forrest near Cornell University, discovered by Dr. Tom Seeley. I believe even Michigan may have some as well.

This last summer, I have been assisting Ed Nowak with the SEMBA bee school at his home bee yard in Livonia. This past September, he took the class on a field trip of sorts. It seems a retired beekeeper had some hive bodies stacked in his backyard and as can happen, two swarms moved in. That was 4 years ago. He said they have lived there ever since with no treatment whatsoever. In fact, one of the colonies had fallen on its side 3 years ago and stayed that way until we came to pick them up. The city had wanted them out of his yard. Can you imagine? Two strong colonies with no management of any kind for four years, one on its side with exposed frames at the bottom being the strongest. I think it is safe to call them survivors. In fact Ed plans to make queens from these hives in the spring.

Other queen breeders like Don Purvis of Georgia, Paul Mazur, and James Littlely of Michigan are using survivor bees for breeding stock. This is the first time I have come across bees with survivor traits. I wonder what makes them survive. Could it be the lack of stress to not opening the hive in years? Was the large amount of propolis in the hive protecting the bees from disease? The genetics of the bees, they look like a cross of Carniolans and Italians. One thing I noticed was that the old comb had regressed to a small cell size, which could give the bees an advantage. Whatever the reason these bees have survived, it seems there is a lot that bees can still teach us.

~ Mike Siarkowski

FDA APPROVES TYLAN SOLUBLE FOR THE CONTROL OF AMERICAN FOULBROOD IN HONEY BEES

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved TYLAN (tylosin tartrate) Soluble for the control of American foulbrood (*Paenibacillus larvae*) in honey bees. This is the first approval for the use of TYLAN Soluble in a minor species (honey bees).

According to Michigan State Apiarist Mike Hansen here are the next steps to be taken in Michigan:

"The manufacturer (Elanco) needs to put a properly labeled product, suitable for use on honeybees, on the market. The product needs to be properly registered with the State of Michigan as an Animal Remedy.

These steps are taken by the manufacturer and should not be a hindrance in getting this product to beekeepers. However, it is not legal for beekeepers to simply purchase a different Tylan product and use it without proper directions, i.e.: Honeybee Label".

Mike goes on to say, "This is exciting news, and we've been waiting a long time for it. Beekeepers are reminded that this is a tool, and if used properly should protect honeybees for years to come. Don't abuse the tool".

~ Roger Sutherland

SEMBA ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 16, 2005

The SEMBA annual meeting was held at Schoolcraft College and was preceded by a potluck lunch at noon. President Ron Forfinski opened the meeting at 1:45 p.m. Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance. An attendance sheet was signed by 31 people.

Ann Kerwin read the minutes of the SEMBA winter meeting held on February 13, 2005. They were approved as read.

Mary Sutherland read the Treasurer's report for the year-10/1/04 to 9/30/05. Balance forward - \$9188.99 and final balance -\$4784.31. Report attached. It was approved as read.

Election of officers was next on the agenda. The nominating committee of Ann Kerwin and Roger Sutherland recommended candidates as follows:

President - Keith Lazar
1st Vice-Pres. - Judy Schmaltz
2nd Vice-Pres. - Ted Hysen
Secretary - Susanne Sadik

Ron conducted the election beginning with the office of president. There were no nominations other than Keith Lazar and he was elected by a unanimous voice vote.

1st Vice-President - Judy Schmaltz was also elected by a unanimous voice vote.

2nd Vice President - Ted Hysen was also elected by a unanimous voice vote.

Secretary - Susanne Sadik was also elected by a unanimous voice vote.

It was pointed out that we actually have three other officers: Nancy Schliebe who coordinates the 7 Ponds Beekeepers' Club; Larry Yates who coordinates the Oakland Beekeepers; and Roger Sutherland who coordinates the Schoolcraft Club.

There was a resolution of appreciation and thanks for Ada & Ed Nowak's generous hospitality during the Bee Classes.

Roger Sutherland reminded us that he has SEMBA Bee caps for sale for only \$8.50 today, and also copies of the booklets "Starting and Keeping Bees in Michigan" for beginning beekeepers for \$2.00; by mail these booklets are \$5.00. Also that we now have a Bargain Corner on our Website—Sembabees.org
Roger presented three proposals:

#1 – That at the 2006 Beekeepers' Conference on Feb. 18, 2006 we would admit SEMBA members free and charge non-members the \$10 admission fee. This would be a one-year only trial. M & S and passed unanimously.

#2 -That Membership be given to the instructor of the bee classes, the Web Master and the Newsletter Editor. M & S and approved.

#3 - That the Schoolcraft Bee Club Scholarship for tuition for bee classes be given to new member Brian Neumeyer for 2006. Brian was introduced and spoke briefly. He is almost 12 years old and has been interested in beekeeping since he was 8 or 9. He has

read books on bees and has been in the wasp exterminating business. M & S and approved. Sinad Livadic is donating a hive to Brian.

Ann Kerwin suggested that the president appoint a committee to update and clarify our constitution. Roger Sutherland and Ann Kerwin agreed to serve with Keith Lazar on a constitution revision committee.

Ed Nowak reported on the Bee Classes that now have a fee of \$175. Ed gave his services and only charged for expenses. The numbers of students have declined. Ed also suggested that we bring in major speakers or a panel of speakers for our fall meeting. It was agreed to discuss this at the planning meeting.

Speakers for SEMBA's 68th Annual Beekeepers' Conference on February 18th will be Larry Connor and Zachary Huang.

Keith Lazar made an appeal for a volunteer to coordinate the State Fair activities for SEMBA. He also appealed for people to submit entries to the Fair. There was some discussion and it was stated that the honey or wax could be from the previous year. Ann said members do respond favorably to requests to staff the booth.

Keith then introduced our speaker, Kent Stiles, who spoke about his Urban Apiculture Project.
Submitted by Ann Kerwin, secretary.

CONSERVATIONISTS ARE ALL ABUZZ ABOUT HONEY BEE HAVENS

Untapped conservation zones for bee and other creatures may hide in plain sight underneath the nation's power lines, a team of biologists reports.

More than 5 million acres of land nationwide are taken up by high-voltage power lines, says biologist Kim Russell of the American Museum of Natural History in New York. These strips of land, usually acquired by right-of-way or easements from property owners, are generally mown every few years and trimmed to prevent tree growth.

"Biologists have long known that hard-to-find species of bees, dragonflies and even small mammals turn up in these often semi-wild pieces of property," Russell says, "but not many have considered the slices of land as possible conservation sites."

"Traditionally, conservation biologists focus on pristine areas and look at how to protect them," Russell says, "but power lines might let us make the best of a developed situation to create refuges. They're everywhere; they cover a huge area, and power companies are already using a lot of resources to pretty intensively manage them."

Russell and other researchers compare the diversity of bees that inhabit power line strips with bee populations in fields that are mowed annually. Their findings were published in a recent edition of the journal *Biological Conservation*. "Bees serve an important role as crop pollinators, and they are good indicators of the presence of other insects," she says. "In addition, some studies suggest that honey bees have suffered a population drop over the past few decades, making measures to preserve them of special interest."

At the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Laurel, MD, the researchers four years ago placed pan traps called "bee bowls" in regularly mown fields and along the 9 miles of power lines in the reserve. Those strips are preserved as scrub land instead of mown. From April to June, the team collected 2,924 bees. While both areas turned up roughly the same numbers of bees, the scrubby power strips turned up many more species, more than 32, compared with the mown fields, about 23.

The scrub land appears to be a home to a much richer bee community, the researchers concluded in their study, calling on conservationists to encourage power companies to stop mowing and let strips return to a scrubby state.

"I think it makes a lot of sense," says Helen Howes of the Chicago-based power company Exelon. "Not only are there a lot of preservation benefits, but it also reduces the cost of right-of-way management."

Exelon has allowed controlled burns, previously forbidden, on its power-line strips, part of a series of endeavors to return these strips to a more natural state.

Turning power lines into refuges often draws volunteers from local conservation groups, who take over some of the costly maintenance tasks the power companies usually perform. "About 500 acres in Illinois are now managed this way," Howes says, "and more progressive utilities look at (conservation) as a real opportunity."

By Dan Vergano, USA Today, August 18, 2005

SEMBA Bargain Corner

Free:

- 45 frame galvanized extractor. **Call John Wrosch, 734-678-2706, jpwrosch@att.net.**

For Sale:

- Bottom boards, inner covers, also new design bottom boards with screens for Varroa mite separation and inspection. Other equipment also available. Competitive prices. CLOSING OUT. **Call or e-mail Michael Kolodziej at 734-425-1396, Mziejwood@aol.com.**
- 1891, 1901, and 1905 editions of ABC and XYZ of Bee Culture. **Call Theodore Helzerman, 517-223-9710.**
- New Medium and deep supers, frames, screened and regular bottom boards, inner and telescoping covers, 5 gallon buckets w/ lids and other wood items. **Call Keith Lazer, Cell 248-361-1710, Home 248-626-2483.**
- Bee blower and package bees from Wilbank's Apiary, April 2006. **Call Blanche Barber, 248-634-7017.**
- Honey for Sale: **Donna Laws, 248-698-6908; Mark Megel, 586-216-2056; J. Brown Honey Farm 734-422-0296.**
- Package Bees arriving in April 2006 this year from California. Source is Koehnen and Sons in Glenn California. Their web Site is "koehnen.com". If interested **contact Jerry Dunbar, ASAP, 586-770-9953.**

Wanted:

- Electric uncapping knives that no longer work - **Call Larry Yates at 248-649-5078.**

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

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

Oakland Beekeepers' Club



Schoolcraft Beekeepers' Club



Seven Ponds Beekeepers' Club

