



# SEMBA NEWS

Volume 22 Number 5 Newsletter of the Southeastern Michigan Beekeepers' Association  
August/September 2012

## SCHOOLCRAFT BEEKEEPERS' CLUB

(Chapter of SEMBA)

**When:** Sunday, Sept. 16, 2012 at 2:30 p.m.

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

### Program:

Over wintering Nucs and other beekeeping information learned at the July 2012

Heartland Beekeeping

Conference.....Winn Harless

Year Around Insulation System.....Bob Williams

**Note:** A refractometer will be available to check the moisture content of honey. Bring a small sample of your newly-extracted honey.

**Refreshments are welcome**

## A MESSAGE FROM SEMBA'S PRESIDENT

I am looking for input from the membership regarding changes in the By Laws, meeting dates and items that should be considered at a future SEMBA Board meeting.

Please send your suggestions to me:  
Clay Ottoni, at [ceottoni@gmail.com](mailto:ceottoni@gmail.com)

## CFAA HOSTING GUNTHER HAUKE

**When:** Sunday, Aug. 12, 2012, 3:00 p.m.

**Where:** UM SNRE Bldg., off UM main Quad

**Donation:** \$10 - \$50 requested.

Gunther Hauke, biodynamic farmer and beekeeper extraordinaire, will present the movie, *Queen of the Sun*, and give a lecture as a gift to the Community Farm Ann Arbor (CFAA).

(The funds raised by his talk will be donated to the Community Farm.) Please come, and invite your family and friends to this event! Contact person: Eileen Dickinson, [edickins@umich.edu](mailto:edickins@umich.edu)

## MICHIGAN BEEKEEPING ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Did you know that Michigan used to be the center of queen rearing in this country? That more clover honey was produced in the Thumb than anywhere else? That the MBA is the oldest continuous bee association in the country? That the Hogg half-comb cassette, a widely used

system for comb honey production, was developed by John Hogg here in Michigan? Indeed, these and many more interesting facts place Michigan in a very unique spot in the history of beekeeping in North America. And with each of these there is a story. As so often is the case with our early cultural heritage, the history and beginnings of Michigan beekeeping mists away as the early pioneers fade into history. Capturing this heritage is the goal of the Michigan Beekeepers' Association (MBA) new Oral History Project headed by Rich Wieske. The Project was funded with a \$3,000 grant from MBA's general fund. This first phase of the Project is expected to run 14 months. What can you do to help? Contact Rich at [rich@greentogardens.com](mailto:rich@greentogardens.com), or call 248-585-5558.

(We are often asked why one should become a member of the MBA. Well, we can proudly point to this project as one of the activities supported in part by membership dues.)

~By Stephen Tilmann

## NATIVE BEE PUBLICATION

The United States Forest Service and the USDA Pollinator Partnership combined forces to produce a beautifully illustrated, 48-page booklet that depicts the various fundamental life histories of quite a few of our most common native bees. The text for each group covers their life cycle, their favored foods, their nesting habits, and peculiar behaviors of some of the family members.

As beekeepers, or those with an interest in honey bees, you should become familiar with other bees and bee mimics that you or your neighbors are likely to see in your gardens and yards. You probably can "snow" any non-beekeeper you meet with all your knowledge about honey bees, but is that your instant limit on bee knowledge – one species? One of the best things about this publication is that it is a print-for-free. To access, go to a search engine and type in Native Bee Publication, United States Forest Service.

~Source: University of California Apiary Newsletter, May-June 2012.

## AMAZING SHOT



This amazing shot shows a honey bee's abdominal tissue being torn away after stinging the photographer's pal. 'As far as I know, nobody's been able to record anything like this,' the photographer and bee enthusiast told a California newspaper. ~Courtesy, Bill Sirr

### **NEW DRUG TO TREAT AMERICAN FOULBROOD**

In March 2012, FDA approved [LINCOMIX Soluble Powder](#), sponsored by Pharmacia and Upjohn Co., a Division of Pfizer, Inc. (NADA 111-636). Studies to support the drug's approval were done by the Bee Research Laboratory, part of USDA's Agricultural Research Service, in Beltsville, Md., in cooperation with NRSP 7. Based on the results of these studies, FDA concluded that LINCOMIX Soluble Powder is safe and effective to control American foulbrood in honey bees when used according to the label.

~Source: Stephen Sutherland, D.V.M., Senior Director of Pfizer Animal Health's Regulatory Affairs Group in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

### **IN MEMORIAM**

We are saddened to report that two SEMBA Life Members have passed away recently – George Tobias and Jack Turner.

George Tobias died on April 19, 2001 at the age of 91. George joined SEMBA in 1964 and was awarded a Life membership in 2008 for his many contributions to the organization, making him the SEMBA member with the longest tenure. From 1953 to 1964, he was a member of Wayne County Beekeepers, the forerunner of SEMBA. His interest in beekeeping began in the early 1950s when he read a book on beekeeping. He ordered bees and all the beekeeping equipment from Sears and Roebuck for which he paid the whopping sum of \$15, and placed the hives on his father's farm in Oakland

County. George graduated from University of Detroit, College of Law and as an attorney he assisted beekeepers in court cases and by giving legal advice. He was a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II and Korea, rising to the position of Operations Officer aboard the U.S.S. Forrest Royal. Survivors include wife, Genevieve and son, Thomas J. Tobias, Ph.D., M.D.

Jack Turner, age 87, died on July 16, 2012. Born in Cornwall, England, he came as a young boy with his family to Detroit, where his father became employed by the Ford Motor Company. Jack attended the Henry Ford Trade School, and following graduation in 1943, he volunteered for the Marines. In World War II, he served in the Pacific Theatre and Japan, was honorably discharged and then worked for Ford until his retirement in 1992. Jack joined the Henry Ford Trade School Alumni Association in 1953, served on its Board of Directors and became President in 1974. In retirement, Jack volunteered as a tutor in an elementary school. Even though Jack and his wife never maintained any honey bee colonies, they were very supportive of SEMBA's activities and joined the organization in 1987. Life membership was awarded to them in 2010. Jack is survived by his wife Ruth.

### **RESEARCHERS SEARCH for VIRUSES to SAVE HONEY BEES**

"Our food supply depends on the actions of millions of insects such as the common honeybee. Due to the importance of honey bees as pollinators in the agriculture of the United States and therefore the current and future food supply, honey bee health is of great concern," says Diane Yost, a researcher on the study. American Foulbrood Disease (AFD) is the most widespread and destructive brood disease affecting honey bees. It is caused by a bacterial pathogen, *Paenibacillus larvae*. Young honey bee larvae become infected when they ingest the bacterial spores in their food. Infected larvae normally die after their cells are sealed. The bacteria eventually die as well but not before producing millions of spores.

While there are some chemical treatments that can be used to hold AFD in check they must be continued indefinitely. Once the treatment is suspended the American foulbrood spores germinate successfully again leading to a disease outbreak. Because the spores can survive up to 40 years, many states require diseased hives to be burned completely.

Yost and her colleagues are researching an alternative treatment for AFD. They are focusing on using bacteriophages, viruses that infect and kill specific bacteria, to target the bacteria responsible for AFD and eventually treat the disease.

"If an effective remedy for the disease could be developed, hives that are infected with the pathogen could be treated rather than burned, which is currently the only effective treatment," says Yost.

The researchers conducted an extensive search for phage from environmental sources including samples from desert and garden soils, beehives, flowers, compost and cosmetics containing beeswax. Nearly 100 samples were tested for the presence of phages. A total of 31 phages were isolated and each was subsequently tested against 8 different strains of the AFD pathogen.

The researchers identified 3 phages that had activity against all 8 strains of the bacteria.

"These results demonstrate that bacteriophages capable of infecting *Paenibacillus* larvae are present in the natural environment, and these phages may represent the first step in developing a potential treatment for AFD," says Yost.

~Source American Society of Microbiology, June 18, 2012

### TOP-BAR HIVE REPORT

In the June/July 2012 SEMBA newsletter, we reported that the top-bar hive presented to us at the SEMBA Conference on March 17, 2012 was doing well. By May 23<sup>rd</sup>, seven full combs 17" X 10" were drawn, four of which were solid with brood. An inspection on June 8<sup>th</sup> revealed only capped brood but no new eggs nor any young larvae, and a supersedure cell was being formed. (Queen loss is being reported by a number of beekeepers this Spring and Summer. You may be interested in reading a four-part series entitled "*2012 Spring Queenless Hives: What's Happening to Our Bees?*" by [Stephen Tilmann](#), published on the [michiganbees.org](http://michiganbees.org) web site.)

By June 15<sup>th</sup>, the single supersedure queen cell in the top-bar hive was capped. Sometime between June 15<sup>th</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup> the new queen hatched and was successfully mated. Inspection on June 25<sup>th</sup> revealed new eggs and larvae. New comb development had slowed considerably and they were working on the eighth comb. Due to the lack of incoming nectar

we began feeding a one to one sugar syrup, and by early August, two quarts were consumed.

~By Roger and Mary Sutherland

### NECTAR REDUCTION ALERT

The unusually warm weather in March, frost-bitten fruit bloom in April coupled with the extended drought in May, June and July, is playing havoc with nectar production in flowering blossoms. Currently, blooming flowers may not be providing honey bees with adequate nectar for production of honey. In much of the Ann Arbor area, frost damaged both fruit tree and Locust blossoms. Therefore, little nectar was available to honey bees that had wintered over in large numbers. In June and July there were many flowers blooming but little nectar produced, due to drought conditions, to attract bees. It may be wise to check your honey stores and consider feeding bees earlier than usual.

~By Roger and Mary Sutherland

### MOVING BEES ACROSS THE US-CANADIAN BORDER

Honey Bees and the Canadian Border  
Questions about the legality of moving honey bees over the border between the U.S. and Canada come up every so often. Between Canada and the U.S., we accept queens and bulk bees from Canada, with proper certification. Canada accepts queens from the U.S., with proper certification. Canada also accepts queens and packages from New Zealand, Chile, Australia, and Denmark (specific shipments of queens, only, in the case of Denmark), while the U.S. allows certificated queens into the country from Canada and New Zealand. Honey bees on comb, and used beekeeping equipment, cannot be moved across the U.S./Canadian border in either direction, legally. This information was provided by Amy Snow, the national veterinarian charged with overseeing the importation of live animals and germplasm into Canada. Amy can be contacted by phone at: (613) 773-7471 or [Amy.Snow@inspection.gc](mailto:Amy.Snow@inspection.gc)

~Source: University of California Apiary Newsletter, March-APRIL 2012

### ITEMS LEFT AT THE SEMBA/MBA PICNIC

A plate and a container were left at the July 22 SEMBA picnic. Contact Clay Ottoni, 248-454-9800.

**COMPUTER SYSTEM TO TRACK THE BEEHIVES**

ApiNews 54/2012, June 2012. Written by [Nestor Rodriguez R.](#)

James Wilkes and Mark Henson—who are computer science and beekeeping professionals—made the web application ‘Hive Tracks’ to help beekeepers keep all their information up-to-date in an online database. ‘Hive Tracks’, which was first released in 2010, uses cloud-based services. That means ‘Hive Tracks’ users can enter their data and have it saved to secure and remote online servers and access it with ease. For the complete article, go to Seedstock Online, *Data Management Tool Helps Beekeepers Track Hives, Doesn’t Miss a Buzz*, by [Jessica Vernabe](#) / June 25, 2012. If you are using the ‘Hive Tracks’ application, we would like to hear from you. Contact R. Sutherland at [rsuther@sembabees.org](mailto:rsuther@sembabees.org)

**ANN ARBOR BACKYARD BEEKEEPERS (A2B2)**

A2B2 meets the second Tuesday of each month at the Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 North Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor, MI. If you wish to be on the e-mail notification list, contact the group’s leader, Richard Mendel, [brescue@att.net](mailto:brescue@att.net) or 734-660-8621.

**SEMBA LEADERS**

President.....Clay Ottoni	Beginning Bee Class Leader.....Mike Siarkowski
1st Vice President.....Winn Harless	SEMBA Hosts..... Donna & Howard Laws
2nd Vice President.....Richard Mendel	Historian.....Ron Forfinski
Secretary..... Randy/Sandy Graichen	SEMBA Representative to MBA.....Rich Wieske
Treasurer .....Mary Sutherland	SEMBA Director.....Fritz Sanders
Past President..... Roger Sutherland	SEMBA Director.....Don Schram
Web Master.....Tom Lisk	

**BARGAIN CORNER**

**FOR SALE:**

- ~2012 Michigan spring honey for sale. \$140.00 per 5 gallon bucket or less if you buy a larger quantity. The Honey is Raw, Unheated and Unfiltered. Call Kussmaul Honey Farm, [517-456-9966](tel:517-456-9966) for more info.
- ~5 gallon plastic honey pails like new - \$2.00 each. Contact Alex Bzenko, [248-651-0928](tel:248-651-0928).
- ~ Royal jelly. Contact Ada Nowak, [734-422-0508](tel:734-422-0508).

**WANTED:**

- ~Three pounds of beeswax. Contact Casey Olson at [casey.m.olson@gmail.com](mailto:casey.m.olson@gmail.com)
- ~Beeswax. Contact Sarah at [810-599-7690](tel:810-599-7690).
- ~Bees wanted on a farm on Maple road in Ann Arbor. The owner will only plant part of the property and leave a lot natural for honey bee forage. Contact Bob Williams, [248-388-0465](tel:248-388-0465) or [xharpspah@aol.com](mailto:xharpspah@aol.com)

**FOR RENT:**

- ~Two-frame motorized extractor for rent at \$25 a day. The baskets which hold the frames are ten inches wide. Two shallow frames will fit in each basket. I will be extracting my honey on Labor Day weekend (9/1/12-9/3/12). Anyone wanting to extract honey at my place can call me at [313- 999-3180](tel:313-999-3180) or e-mail me at [m7mav@yahoo.com](mailto:m7mav@yahoo.com)

Note: Ads in the Bargain Corner are free to SEMBA members. To place an ad, contact Roger Sutherland at [rsuther@hotmail.com](mailto:rsuther@hotmail.com).

Southeastern Michigan  
Beekeepers’ Association  
*Organized April 1, 1934*

Oakland Beekeepers’ Club



Schoolcraft Beekeepers’ Club



SEMBA Membership  
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