

October 2005

BOULDER COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOC. NEWSLETTER

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Colorado Beekeepers Association Winter Meeting

The winter meeting will be held at the Longmont Radisson Hotel and Conference Center (formerly The Raintree) at 1900 Ken Pratt Blvd. on December 9th and 10th. The agenda is tentatively scheduled to be a round table discussion at 7p.m. on the 9th and speakers Kim Flottum and Dr. Marla Spivak on the 10th starting at 9a.m. Kim Flottum, the editor of Bee Culture magazine will speak about his new book, The Backyard Beekeeper and Dr. Spivak will discuss the Minnesota Hygienic Bees in development for the past decade in relation to varroa mite resistance. The cost of the program is \$20 which includes lunch and for beekeepers with fewer than 12 hives, membership in the Colorado Beekeepers Association with a subscription to Bee Notes. For questions, call (303) 702-0202, mailbox 1.

Boulder County Fair Results

This year's honey competition was dominated by Ruth McGaughy. The first

place awards in Light/Varietal, Amber/Varietal, Comb Honey Square, Half Comb Honey Cassette, Decorative Beeswax and Pollen classes, and the Judge's Choice Award were all won by Ruth McGaughy. Patricia Butler won first place in the Naturally Granulated Honey Mix class.



Ruth McGaughy with some of her 1st Place ribbons

Ruth McGaughy, 9 attends Longmont Estates Elementary School where last year she won the Discovery Science Fair with her bumblebee project.

This year she did all the work to win the fair awards, from tending the hive, pulling the frames, uncapping, extracting and bottling. Her father, Miles McGaughy said his only assistance was to drive her to the bee yard. The 2003 and 2004 fairs were dominated by her sister Ann, 7. Next year her youngest sister, Karen, 3, hopes to become a beekeeper. Congratulations to some very accomplished young beekeepers!

Beth Conrey's Bee Yard Visits

In June, Beth held an informative bee yard visit in her apiary BeeSquared for the BCBA that was attended by 9 beekeepers. She also held a tour through the Denver Museum of Nature and Science during which she taught 16 people about queens, workers, drones and their respective roles in the hive, diseases and the benefits of bees. She will have a bee display at the Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs Show in February at the Denver Convention Center.

Hive Location (Spray Map) Information Conversion

There has been some discussion about converting our hive location information from the current pins on a printed map to a digital format. There are advantages to the digital format that include easier reproduction and analysis of disease or pesticide misuse patterns. However, many beekeepers are also concerned about confidentiality issues. The information we collect associated with the location of the hives could be the number of hives, the owner of hives, contact information of the owner, and owner provided hive information such as yield, pests, and pest treatments. Insecticide spraying information could be correlated to hive health. Alternatively, we could include any subset of this

information and limit the dissemination of each of these categories of information. In other words, we could collect information but not distribute the information outside of the BCBA organization. An example of a use of the digital information could be to create and distribute printed maps showing areas with and without honey bee pollination. If gardeners were made more aware of the importance of pollination we may create more support for local beekeeping. This is a topic that will likely come up for discussion at our winter meetings.

Boulder County Cooperative Extension Beekeeper Program

This year's program will be held Tuesdays 7:00 to 9:00 pm. from October 11th through December 6th with no class during Thanksgiving week. The cost is \$50 and classes will be held at the extension office, 9595 Nelson Road in Longmont. Course topics include the history of beekeeping in Colorado, honey bee biology, the importance of pollination, and beekeeping hardware. Call (303) 678-6238 for more information.

EPA Required Bee Caution on Pesticide Warning

Pesticide misuse has caused harm to honey bees and other pollinators essential to our food supply and ecosystems.

Federal law requires the addition of this warning on all pesticide products that are highly toxic (acute LD₅₀ (kills half) of 2 micrograms/bee or less) to bees. *“This product is highly toxic to bees exposed to direct treatment or residues on blooming crops and weeds. Do not apply this product or allow it to drift to blooming crops or weeds while bees are actively visiting the treatment area.”* The words 'or residues' are required if Extended

Residual Toxicity information is also displayed. In other words, pesticides toxic to bees cannot be sprayed when bees (not just honey bees) are foraging. Because of the perceived need for mosquito spraying requirements for west Nile virus, the bee caution labeling has been suspended for some pesticides.

The issue of pesticide regulation, enforcement and poisoning will continue to be a threat to beekeeping for the foreseeable future. Carbaryl is highly toxic to bees and information about the review for reregistration of this pesticide and mosquito spraying can be found on our website at www.BoulderCountyBeekeepers.org.

Volunteers Needed

Our Treasurer, Carol Streamer is looking for one to three volunteers who are interested in auditing the 2005 records and helping her prepare for the February and March 2006 meetings. She has all the records in order but is looking for help in reviewing back records that are no longer valuable in order to toss some. Please call her at her cell phone number (720) 323-6838 or e-mail faststream@livewirenet.com. Also, when Carol can't be at an event, the BCBA needs a back up official Treasurer to collect the money for deposit.

Making homes for solitary wood-nesting bees

Providing habitat for native pollinators can help conserve some of Boulder County's insects and offset some of the reduction in biodiversity that we cause by development and elimination of native habitat. Some ideas, adapted from the Xerces Society, are to build nesting blocks from preservative free lumber or logs, especially those with existing beetle tunnels. Drill holes ranging in size from

3/32" to 3/8" (2.5 mm to 10 mm) in diameter on the south east side (after placement). The holes need to be smooth inside, as deep as possible, and closed at one end.

Another option is to use a naturally hollow plant like bamboo, teasel, or some grasses. Cut these in 6 to 8 inch lengths near a node so that one end is closed. Tie in bundles of various internal diameters so that the closed ends are together. Attach the bundle firmly to something with the stems horizontal to the ground.

These nests should be placed in a sunny location and fixed firmly (so they don't shake in the wind) to a stake, fence, building or tree 4 to 6 feet off the ground. The idea is to mimic standing dead trees and vegetation, providing a dry location out of the worst of the weather.

Order Queens Early

Check with your queen and package suppliers early for your bees. Demand is expected to be high in 2006 for a variety of reasons.

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BCBA Newsletter

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To place a notice, ad or article, send to Sara McGimsey. Contributions are welcome. Next issue is December 2005 and the deadline for submissions is November 23.

