

Lewis County Beekeepers' Association: *May 2010 Newsletter*

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Upcoming Events:

Weds, May 12, Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m., WSU Extension Classroom, Old Chehalis Courthouse

Speakers: Norm Switzler & Dave Smith.

Topics:

First & Second Year Beekeeping & Springtime Issues:

- *How do you know that your colonies are thriving?*
- *What should you do if one swarms?*
- *Q&A!*

LCBA Swarm Removal Program:

- *Norm, Dave, Bob Harris, Jason Sherwood, and other intrepid members remove honeybee colonies from Lewis County residents' structures as a free public service. Norm and Dave will explain how it works.*
- *Want to get involved? They'll tell you how!*

LCBA Member Wish List: *What would you like to hear about at upcoming meetings?*

Weds, June 9, Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m. WSU Extension Classroom, Old Chehalis Courthouse: Speaker & Topic TBA

Weds, July 14: 6 p.m.: 2nd Annual LCBA Summer Potluck at Bob Harris' Rose of Sharon Farm! Watch for our June Newsletter for details & directions.

Weds, August 11: Monthly Meeting, 7 p.m. WSU Extension Classroom, Old Chehalis Courthouse: Speaker: Dr. Tim Lawrence, County Director, WSU Extension, Island County. Topic: Human Dimensions of Colony Collapse Disorder and Their Impact on Honeybees.

Tim knows Dewey Caron's and Jim Bach's work, and he will add to our growing understanding as he brings his own research-based perspective to the issue. Prior to taking his position in Island County, Tim was a post-doctoral research associate leading

the Honey Bee Health Program in the CAHNRS Department of Entomology in Pullman. Tim worked with beekeepers, growers, and others to identify issues related to the health and viability of honeybees and their pollination efficiency. In his new position, he will be working on honeybee-related topics regularly.

*August 30 – September 2: Washington Apicultural Society of North America
Salem, Oregon: Annual Conference. Dewey Caron, President. For
Information, visit <http://groups.ucanr.org/WAS>*

May Lyceum Lectures at Centralia College:
<http://www.centralia.edu/news/lyceum-schedule.html>

The 3 events below are not LCBA events, but I'm posting them in case members might be interested. All Lyceums are Wednesdays from 1-1:50 p.m. and are free & open to the public.

May 12: Mike Peroni, Boistfort Valley Farm, "Faith in the Soil": Mike will describe the challenges & opportunities of work as a certified organic farmer. Washington Hall 103, 1-1:50 p.m.

May 19: Lisa Weasel, Professor of Biology, Portland State University: "Food Fray": the pros and cons of genetically modified organisms in food, based on her research and recent book of the same title. 1-1:50 p.m. in Washington Hall 103.

May 26: Tom Mulder, Director, Mt. St. Helens National Volcanic Monument: Tom will speak on the pros and cons of the proposal to make Mt. St. Helens a full-fledged national park. 1-1:50 p.m., Corbet Theatre.

Minutes from our April 2010 Meeting

President Bob Harris welcomed 40 beekeepers, including some new visitors (please let Susanne know if your name is not spelled correctly here): Gary and Kathy Felsner, Winlock; Don Hershey, Winlock; Todd Beaty, interested in top bar hives; Steve Howard, Centralia; Ernie Hitchcock, Centralia; Tim Walker, Chehalis; Doris Weaver, Centralia; Polly Wolf, Toledo; Terry & Theresa Columby. Welcome!

In news from members, Tim & Sharette Giese have purchased a bee company (everything but bees). They bought Richard Biginsky's place on Route 508 in Onalaska.

Speaker: Dr. Dewey Caron. Apiary scientist and President of the Western Apiary Society, Dewey Caron, retired from University of Delaware and now lives in Portland OR, where he is affiliated with Oregon State U. He spoke on his recent research into Colony Collapse Disorder. His talk was very well received, and Susanne (who had a conflict and missed the meeting) has his PowerPoint: it will be posted on our new website this summer (see below), but if you would like the PowerPoint sooner, please email Susanne, or bring a thumb drive to the May meeting to download it!

Dewey Caron's Lewis & Cowlitz County Beekeeper Survey Results: Dewey sent these results from the surveys he did with our group and in Cowlitz County. I'm here pasting in what he sent to me:

SURVEY OF WASHINGTON BEE LOSSES by Dewey M. Caron
carond@hort.oregonsate.edu

"I circulated an overwinter loss survey at the April 14 Lewis Co and April 15 Cowlitz County bee meetings – 8 Lewis Co individuals filled in the form and 8 backyarder Cowlitz beekeepers did likewise total n=16. The respondents number of years of beekeeping experience was 1-2 years=12 and >10 years=4. The 1-2 year experience group started winter with 27 colonies (largest number of colonies of any one individual=5) and reported losing 10 = 37% - while the 4 individuals with more than 10 years of bee experience overwintered 35 colonies but lost 28 of them = 80% loss rate (NOTE: one individual reported the majority of the losses – subtracting this outlier, the loss rate of the remaining 3 individuals with more experience years was still 60%). Overall 16 Lewis/Cowlitz Co beekeepers starting winter with 92 colonies lost 38 colonies or 41%.

"Of the 16 beekeepers, only 1 individual used Apistan (individual lost 80% of the colonies overwinter), 4 used an essential oil (Apiguard or ApiLifeVar) , with 2 of 4 having heavy (50%) losses, 0 used Coumaphos. Additionally, 7 of the 17 individuals used Honey Bee Healthy, 1 fed Fumidil B and 2 supplied grease patties. For questions of IPM methods, 85% indicated they were using Screen bottom boards, 5 used powdered sugar , 2 indicated they had resistant queen stock and 0 used drone brood removal.

"Ramesh Sagili (OSU) and I sent mail surveys (return envelope postpaid) and 12 Washington commercial beekeepers (>300 colonies) responded. The 12 WA Commercials started winter with 70719 colonies had losses of 17,278, for loss rate of 24.4%. Four WA semi-commercial beekeepers starting winter with 348 colonies reported losses of 140 = 40% . WA beekeeper number of years range was 15-41 (Mid 30-35 yrs experience) and average bee ownership size was 5893 colonies (range 300 to 15,000 colonies owned). Semi-commercial beekeepers managed an average of 116colonies (89-159). 18 backyarder small scale beekeepers (<50 colonies) also responded to the mail survey They began winter with 346, lost 164 for 46% rate. Median years of experience for the small scalers was between 17 and 25 years.

"In the March 2010 WSBA newsletter Eric Olsen and Paul Lundy shared other survey numbers of losses for Washington State beekeepers. Eric found loss rate of 38.7% for 29 beekeepers (started winter with 87,384 colonies and lost 33,783) for commercial and semi-commercial beekeepers (smallest operation = 194 colonies).

"Paul Lundy in hi survey found the lowest level of losses. He wrote the following in reporting his results (See March 2010 newsletter for complete report):

‘In general, Washington State hobbyists had losses of approximately 25%. 80% of respondents normally keep 1-20 hives. Only 32% treated for Nosema in the fall. Most beekeepers used fumigants such as Thymol, essential oils or formic acid, to treat for mites. Most fed with either a combination of pollen substitute patties and sugar syrup, or sugar syrup alone.’

“It appears the 16 SW of cascade beekeepers (Lewis and Cowlitz Counties) and the backyarders responding to the mail survey had heavy losses (40% or more) compared to the hobbyists surveyed by Paul (25%). Lewis and Cowlitz small scale beekeepers has loss numbers close to the larger beekeepers of the state as reported by Eric (38.7%). I do not know why the mail survey respondent commercial beekeepers reported considerably lower losses (24.4% in my survey vs. 38.7% in Eric’s for about the same numbers of colonies (70719 in my survey vs. 87,384 colonies in Eric’s) – in both cases losses are too high. The reason for such losses remains elusive. Preliminary analysis of national losses this spring was 33.8%.”

Many thanks to Dewey for sending us his report!

LCBA Website update: Coming this summer, hopefully in the 2nd half of June. Susanne is gathering materials (like Dewey Caron’s and Janet Brisson’s Power-Point presentations from our March and April meetings) to post on a webpage that Sheila Gray, Lewis County WSU Extension agent and our LCBA liaison to WSU Extension, is getting ready on the WSU Extension website. The page will include a brief description of our mission, when/where we meet, and contact information for our officers. The site will be linked to www.sherwoodbees.com, where LCBA will have more detailed information, including an archive of past newsletters, links to other sites with bee information, photo galleries, and more. Please email Susanne with ideas about what you’d like to see on our website!

General information items that we post in every newsletter ☺ :

- ***Need Help with Your Bees? Call LCBA Secretary Susanne at 360 880 8130 or email Susanne.beekeeper@gmail.com, and she will put you in touch with a mentor in your area.***
- ***Want Bees & Equipment?*** [see website for beekeeping supply options]
- ***Join the LCBA Bee Team for Swarm / Colony Removals!*** Soon the LCBA “Bee Team” will start getting calls from Lewis County residents who’d like bees removed from structures on their properties. LCBA does this for free: Norm, Bob Harris, Dave Smith, Jason Sherwood, and others have been the team leaders. If you’d like to join, or simply ride along and see how it’s done, contact Susanne (see signature line, below, for contact information). Norm is planning to do more documentation on how the removed swarms over-winter, hoping to figure out what the best dates are to remove swarms and hive them.

- ***LCBA Swap Meet—real or virtual!*** Got bee equipment to sell, swap, or give away? Email Susanne (see below). Have a “bee wish list”? Email that, too.
- ***LCBA T-shirts and caps:*** Queensboro has lowered their prices on LCBA T-shirts, long-sleeved shirts, caps, etc. They offer an unconditional 10 year guarantee and will replace items if they get torn or broken. To order online, visit <http://www.queensboro.com> and use our LCBA logo number: **11342127**.

Respectfully reported,
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