Kurt Bower, *President*
Emerson Heatherly, *Vice President*
Martha Boren, *Secretary*
Norman Faircloth, *Treasurer*
Jim Bennett, James Brown, Dan Wiggers, *Directors*

GUILFORD COUNTY BEE KEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Guilford NEWS

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER, 2005

a local chapter of NORTH CAROLINA STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

MEETINGS & PROGRAMS:

- **Tuesday, October 11**, 7:00. No meal. *Dr. David R. Tarpy, Assistant Professor and Extension Apiculturist* is our speaker tonight. His topic is "Differences Among Honey Bee Stocks." Get the up-to-date information from one our state's top authorities on honey bees.

- **Tuesday, November 8**, 6:30. Covered dish meal. *Don Moore, former NCSBA President*, likes (or maybe liked) to recover bees from houses, buildings, etc. and will share some of his techniques and experiences. Don't miss it.

- **Tuesday, December 13, 6:30** This year's Christmas Banquet will be held at the same place as last year. We have arranged to meet at Parkwood Baptist Church located at 2107 Penny Road (just off W. Wendover @ Hwy. 68 crossing). We plan for Carter Bros. BBQ to cater our meal. Being left with a lot of chicken to eat after last year's party, we plan to have BBQ only this time. As in previous years, MEMBERS of GCBA may eat at no charge. Other guests must pay for their meal. The amount will be determined by the menu selected (about $10-$12.).

NEEDS YOUR ATTENTION:

- **A Nominating Committee** consisting of Diana Galloway, James Brown and James Bennett has been appointed to select a slate of officers for next year. If you have an interest in serving as an officer, please contact one of these members.
- **Web site HELP WANTED:** We are in need of individuals who would be interested in helping manage our web site. Specifically looking for someone who might be willing to put together a beginner FAQ section.

REVIEW: The following is a segment of a recent article by Dr. Tarpy et al. from the NCSU web site. The complete article may be viewed at this address <http://www.cals.ncsu.edu:8050/entomology/apiculture/> Look under Extension/Articles and scroll down the listing. This addresses concerns I have heard several of you mention. ndf

This begins page 2 (see preceding note)

Management of Russian Bees

Russian bees are quite different from standard Italian stocks in several ways (Table 1). While Russian bees can vary in color, they are generally darker than Italian honey bees. Russian bees do not build up in population until pollen is available and they shut down brood rearing whenever pollen is scarce. This characteristic makes them suitable in areas where the main honey flow occurs later in the year (i.e., the mountains of North Carolina). Their frugality with resources is in sharp contrast to Italian bees, which maintain a large brood area and worker population regardless of environmental conditions. This trait can lead Italian colonies to early winter starvation, and also explains the Italian tendency to rob other colonies of their honey stores.

One peculiar characteristic of Russian colonies is that they maintain active queen cells throughout the brood-rearing season. In Italian colonies, the presence of queen cells is interpreted by beekeepers as an attempt to swarm or supersede the resident queen. This is not the case with Russian colonies, as the workers often tear down the queen cells before they fully develop.

Requeening Italian hives with Russian queens is often challenging (see side bar), and as a result many beekeepers have lost newly introduced queens. Russian queens have a different "odor" than Italian queens, and parent colonies must be acclimated to this odor in order to accept them. It is recommended that beekeepers who intend to go from Italian to Russian bees requeen a colony in the fall by splitting it into two halves with the use of a double screen so that the odors will mix but at the same time prevent the workers from interacting. The Italian mother queen should be kept in the lower half, and a caged Russian queen should be placed in the upper half. By providing a separate entrance to the upper half, the older foraging bees will return to the lower hive and leave only young nurse bees in the upper hive. The Russian queen should be released from her cage after 7-10 days and permitted to lay eggs for four weeks. During this time, the odor of the Russian queen will co-mingle with that of the Italian colony. After this acclimation period, the parent Italian queen can be removed and the colony reunited.

Hybrid bees tend to lose their initial desirable traits over subsequent generations. Since many commercial Russian bees are hybrids, it is recommended to mark them with paint and to monitor the queen's presence. If

the colony contains an unmarked queen, it should be replaced with a new queen as soon as possible. When requeening a Russian colony with a Russian queen, it may not be necessary to have an extended acclimation period as outlined above.

Conclusions

Russian honey bees can be valuable by reducing, but not necessarily eliminating, the need for chemical treatments to varroa and tracheal mites. However, it is necessary to fully understand how to properly manage bees of this new stock, since they are quite different from the traditional Italian honey bee.

Suggested Readings

De Guzman, L. I., T. E. Rinderer, G. T. Delatte, J. A. Stelzer, L. Beaman and C. Harper. (2001). An evaluation of far-eastern Russian honey bees and other methods for the control of tracheal mites. American Bee Journal 141: 737-741.

Harris, J. W. and T. E. Rinderer. (2004). Varroa resistance of hybrid ARS Russian honey bees. American Bee Journal 144: 797-800.

Rinderer, T. E., L. I. De Guzman, G. T. Delatte and C. Harper. (2003). An evaluation of ARS Russian honey bees in combination with other methods for the control of varroa mites. American Bee Journal 143: 410-413.

Rinderer, T. E., L. I. De Guzman and C. Harper. (2004). The effects of co-mingled Russian and Italian honey bee stocks and sunny or shaded apiaries on varroa mite infestation level, worker bee population and honey production. American Bee Journal 144: 481-485.

Table 1: A comparison between Italian and Russian honey bees for various colony characteristics.

Character	Italians	Russians
Varroa mites	More susceptible	More resistant
Tracheal mites	More susceptible	Highly resistant
Color	Light	Dark
Brood rearing	Continuous throughout the summer	Usually only during times of pollen availability
Robbing	High	Low
Queen cells	Only during swarming or queen replacement	Present most of the time

Requeening non-Russian colonies with new Russian queens.

This procedure has frustrated many beekeepers, because standard introduction techniques often result in colonies rejecting the queens.

Step 1: Split colony in half, with two halves separated by a double screen

Step 2: Place old queen in bottom half and a caged Russian queen in the upper half

Step 3: Release the Russian queen from her cage after 7-10 days

Step 4: Once the Russian queen has been accepted and has laid eggs for one month, kill the old queen and reunite the two halves.

ARTICLE OF INTEREST:

Medicinal TEAS for Colds & Flu

Try these herbal blends the next time your throat gets scratchy or your nose stuffs up.

by Deborahann Smith

Alternative Medicine "Food As Medicine" fall 2005

Long before the advent of antihistamine tablets and specially formulated cold remedies, cold and flu sufferers turned to herbal teas to relieve their symptoms. Those homemade infusions were rich in vitamins, minerals and medicinal compounds. You can find commercial versions of these old-time remedies in most health food or natural grocery stores, or you can take a page out of the past and make your own. In the herbalist's pharmacopoeia, specific herbs address particular symptoms, so we asked the experts to share their favorite blends.

Sweeten Your Tea ... Naturally With Honey

Made from flower nectar by the honey bee, honey takes on the color and flavor of the plant from which it was gathered - with alfalfa and clover honey being the most common. Like blackstrap molasses, honey is considered a nutritive sweetner because it contains vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and amino acids. Plus, it has antibacterial properties and is soothing to the throat. Note: Honey is not recommended for children less than one year old because it may contain harmful bacterium not easily assimilated by infants.

Like to join Guilford County Beekeepers Association?

Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. (Odd months @ 6:30 p.m. with a covered dish meal, even months @ 7:00 p.m.)

Just come to our next meeting at the Guilford County Agricultural Center and join in. Dues are $25.00 per year (that's $10.00 for GCBA and $15.00 for expanded membership in the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association).

- Don Hopkins, State Inspector: (336) 376-8250
- Guilford County Beekeepers Association web site http://www.guilfordbeekeepers.org
- North Carolina State Beekeepers Association web site http://www.ncbeekeepers.org

Guilford County Beekeepers Association

A LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Norman Faircloth, editor (nfaircloth@northstate.net)