



LANE COUNTY BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

130 HANSEN LANE, EUGENE, OR 97404

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April 2009 NEWSLETTER

<http://www.lcbaor.org>

NEXT MEETING:

April 21, 7:30 PM

(room opens at 7:00 for early bees)

New Beekeepers' Q and A

This meeting is always a lot of fun—we spend our whole time on questions! If you are a new beekeeper, we NEED your questions. If you are an experienced beekeeper, we NEED your insight and experience. And whoever you are, you are absolutely guaranteed to learn SOMETHING. Join us!

**LOCATION: EWEB Meeting Rooms
500 E. 4th Ave, Eugene**

Got a question or just want to "talk bees"?
Remember, the room is open at 7PM and it's a great time to mix and chat with other members!

Directions:

EWEB is located at the river end of E. 4th Ave. in Eugene. The entrance to the parking lot is on the right JUST BEFORE E. 4th Ave merges onto the Ferry St. Bridge.

Meeting rooms are to the left as you face the fountains. Look for the club sign!

EWEB furnishes public meeting rooms as a community service and does not sponsor or endorse activities of LCBA

Meeting Highlights:

Jonathan Loftin:

Package Bees: Installation and Establishment

Nancy Ograin, fill-in-secretary

President Katharine Hunt welcomed our new beekeepers to our meeting. The following announcements were made:

Treasurer Nancy Ograin gave a report on Bee School. Cascade Raptor Center - Annual open house Sunday, April 26th

from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. We will be putting together a honey basket for their fund raiser. Please bring your donations to our April meeting. Oregon County Fair - Currently we have two members interested. If you would like to help out please contact Katharine Hunt. Paul Gordon was featured on the local news as the new coordinator for the City of Eugene Community Gardens. LCBA member Annie Dochnahl wrote an article on honey bees for the first printing of the "Eugene Living" magazine. She



Bee School package winner Les Benoy gets a new generation interested at the Glorybee Package Day. Photo—D. Caron

interviewed Ken Ograin and Judy Scher for her article. Katharine received a nice note regarding our newsletter.

Our April speaker was Jonathan Loftin and the topic was "Installing & Maintaining Package Bees". Package bees usually come via post office, or can be purchased and picked up locally. Either way you will get a screened box with 3 lbs. of live bees, the queen in a queen cage, and a can of syrup. The queen is mated and fertile. Be sure to have all your equipment assembled and ready to go. You need at least one hive body and 10 frames with foundation, a feeder, entrance reducer, sugar syrup, mist bottle, rubber band and a little nail. When you pick up your package and bring them home keep them in a dark and medium-cool place until you are ready to put them in the hive. Try to install them as soon as possible. Late in the afternoon is a good time. To transfer bees into hive first take out 5 frames from your hive box and set them aside. Next, mist the bees with sugar syrup through the screen, and gently bounce the cage against the ground to shake the bees to the bottom. Now you can quickly take off the lid and remove the syrup feeder and queen cage. Replace the lid. Perforate the candy plug in the queen cage with the nail. A twisting motion is best so as not to poke too far and injure the queen. If you get your package from GloryBee, it may not have a candy plug. Remove the cork carefully and replace it with a soft candy like a marshmallow or gummy bear. Now take one of the frames with foundation and put the rubber band around it. Position the queen cage under the rubber band with the screen facing out and the candy plug facing upward. Put back the frame in the middle. Then remove the cover from the screen cage and put the box with the bees in it into the hive box, in the open space where the 5 reserved frames will normally go. You may wish to use an entrance reducer to encourage bees to stay in the hive the first week.

The next day, toward late PM slide the cover back to just expose the cage. Pull out the shipping box and put it near front of hive. If there are any bees left in the box, they will eventually come out and join the rest in the hive. Then put the other 5 frames back in your hive box. Avoid going into the hive for the first week as the bees need to bond with the queen. After a week, expose the frame with the rubber band. Make sure the queen is out of the cage. If queen is not out of the cage, pull off the screen wire on the queen cage and put the cage on top of the frames. Let the queen walk out.

After another week open the hive and inspect it. The main things to look for are that the comb is being drawn out, the queen is laying eggs, and there is normal brood. Take out a frame and stand with the sun over your shoulder. You should be able to see down into the cells. Eggs look like a small grain of rice. If you see eggs, you don't need to see the queen to know that she is on the job! If you do not see any eggs, you may have a bad queen. Call your package supplier and discuss a replacement. As a member reminded us, the bee population will decline during the first weeks or even months after your package is installed. Your colony will not grow until brood begins to hatch out—and some population decline is inevitable.

You **MUST** feed your package bees to get them established! A package has no reserves of food to draw on. In our spring climate, with its chilly spells and frequent rains, a package can starve before it is able to feed itself. Use sugar syrup to feed them - 1 part water to 1 part sugar by weight. 1 Pint of water weights 1 lb., so use 5 pts water to 5 lbs sugar. Use white refined sugar to feed your bees. It's simple, pure, and cheap. Feeding honey to your bees is expensive and can expose them to disease—don't do it unless you know and trust the source of the honey.

There are many different kinds of feeders you can use. Jonathan talked about using a plastic bag to feed them if you don't have a feeder. Take a zip lock bag, put in the sugar syrup and lay it on the top bars of the hive. Take a sharp razor or knife and make one or two slits on top 2" to 3" long. You will need to cover the hive when you are feeding like this—it's easy and effective to position an empty hive body over the bag of feed.

Jonathan gave us lots of tips and advice. If you have any questions please be sure to contact him or one of our other members—and come to this month's New Beekeepers' Q and A!



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Dale Beam of Springfield picks up a pair of packages at Glory-bee! Photo—D. Caron

MENTOR LIST

The following club members have agreed to be mentors for new beekeepers. Have a question? Puzzled about something you see in your hive? Want some advice? These experienced beekeepers will help you find answers.

Ken Ograin	Elmira	935-7065	woodrt@pacinfo.com
Morris Ostrofsky	SW Eugene	685-2875	Ostrofsky@pacinfo.com
John Eichorn	Lorane	942-5149	jeichorn@efn.org
Judy Scher	Eugene	344-2114	
Jonathan Loftin	Thurston/Springfield	736-1870	Jonathanloftin@hotmail.com

Seasoned Members! Did a mentor help you out when you were getting started? How about returning the favor? You don't need to know everything, by any means! Just have a few years experience under your belt and a willingness to help set beginners along the right track. If you can help out as a mentor, please contact the newsletter editor (lcbnewslettereditor@hotmail.com) to be added to this list.

President's Corner

Katharine Hunt, LCBA President

Most people will have installed their packages by the time of our meeting. Bring your stories, questions, and suggestions for a group discussion of spring management.

We have been invited by Cascades Raptor Center to take part in their Annual Earth Day Celebration to be held April 26th from 10 to 5 pm by providing items for a "Bee Basket". They host a raffle at this event which helps support the Raptor Center a nonprofit wildlife rehabilitation and nature center in South Eugene. We will have a basket for members to place donations of honey, by-products of the hive and other bee related items in at the next meeting to be held Tuesday, April 21st.

See you at the meeting!

Katharine Hunt
LCBA President

Welcome New LCBA Members!

Dale Beam	Springfield
Dr. April DeLaurier	Eugene
Pat Downey	Eugene
Dan Kalamas	Eugene
Marcia Koenig	Springfield
Benjamin Linzy	Eugene
Erica Mitchell	Creswell
Conni Moore	Albany
Ed Nielson	Florence
Stephen Petty	Springfield
John Rice	Pleasant Hill
Stephen Sly	Cottage Grove
Allen Hancock & Audrey Schwartz	Eugene



Could it be?

Notice the two wings on one side of the body; bee-like feet and abdomen and hairy legs (seen under strong magnification). This fossilized insect, about 1 cm, is enclosed in amber. It was found among pieces of amber containing gnats, as seen in the 12 o'clock position, and other small insects. This piece of amber was the only one with something larger than a gnat. We tested it to rule out the possibility of a plastic fake; it passed the test. According to Jim Cane at the U.S.D.A. it may be a stingless bee belonging to the genus *Meliponini*. All of this for the price of a fossil gnat!

Morris & Rita Ostrofsky

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Ken Ograin's Notes and IPM Update



Ken Ograin, LCBA Member

IPM Update: Finally I have been able to do complete hive inspections. Brood buildup is very slow for this time of year but bees have been bring in some fresh nectar and have slowed down on taking syrup, I was told that the maples are blooming in town, maples are the best spring nectar source, so there should be lots of nectar coming into these hives.

If you plan to do yellow jacket queen control now is the time to put out pheromone traps.

As you make that hive inspection look for a good strong brood pattern. Strong hives will be good candidates to swarm so keep this in mind doing brood box reversals as necessary.

This is also a good time to cull out some of your old brood frames or ones that have damage.

The April issue of American Bee Journal has a good article written by a backyarder "Wax Working 101". Don't forget to read that sample board--there is more information than just mites to look for. Is there pollen on it, wax scales, dark wax? *Ken Ograin*

Great Sunflower Project: My seeds have arrived.

There is still time for you to get involved, you will need to go to the project website and confirm your mailing address or sign up in order to get the seeds for this season. This year we will be using the annual Lemon Queen sunflowers (*Helianthus annuus*) as the target flower for your observations.

www.greatsunflower.org/

Beekeeping Tips—April 2009

Chuck Hunt, LCBA member

1. April is the month for heavy build-up of bees. Look out for swarms and avoid them by giving the bees plenty of room: an extra super may be in order. Other swarm control measures, including splitting hives, may be important at this time. Keep a look out for swarm cells that are positioned at the edges or bottoms of the frames. Make sure that entrance reducers are removed so that bees can fly freely and not have congestion at the entrance to the hive.
2. Monitor mites in your hives using screen bottom boards and sticky boards to see if mite treatment is necessary. Those who put on their strips early this year may be able to take them off early. This means that some of the early honey flow may be extracted if there is sufficient time between removal and the spring flow.
3. Keep an eye on the honey stores of your hive. Bees can starve in bad weather in April and May. Make sure that your bees always have at least 15 pounds of honey (three western or two deep frames of honey). Feed your hives if they are light using sugar syrup, fondant candy or honey.
4. Check your queens at least once every ten days or two weeks to make sure your hive is queenright. Make sure your hives have eggs in some cells. Also, pollen coming in the front door is a good indication that your hive is queenright. The heavy demands of spring buildup can cause the queen to fail. Re-queen if necessary.
5. A practice that is helpful to every beekeeper is to keep a diary or notebook. Record the condition of the hive, any special observations that you made as well as any manipulations you used. You might want to include in the diary the weather, including temperature, and the development of the bloom and honey flows. It is interesting also to note the color of incoming pollen. Keep such a notebook every year and you will not only learn more about beekeeping but also learn a great deal about your local plant life (and the variations from year to year).



LCBA Calendar-at-a-Glance

April 21—Meeting: New Beekeepers' Q and A

April 25—PMBA Bee Day (info on p. 4)

May 19—Meeting: "Don't Bug Us"/ M. and R. Ostrofsky

June 16—Requeening: When, Why, and How/M. Ostrofsky

June 27—Pollinator Panel at Sustainable Lifestyles fair.

Book Review

Bees: nature's little wonders, by Candace Savage, 2008, Greystone
This is an appealing book that considers the biology of bees, enriched by archival drawings, photographs, and quotes from our centuries long love affair with bees. Beyond the first chapter that introduces and explores the thousands of species of bees, the bulk of the book carries the reader through the discoveries scientists have made about the remarkable lives and behavior of honeybees. The author describes how the scientists made their discoveries, from marking 599 individual bees in order to discover the age-based sequence of tasks each bee undertakes in her short life, to just happening to notice dirty bees dancing on a swarm, which lead to the discovery that they were communicating the location of a potential new home. Not much in the book will be news to a serious beekeeper, but the presentation is charming and many of the quotes are delightful. Recommended for all your friends who wonder about your fascination with this insect.

Kate MacQueen

Swarm List

As a service to members and the public the LCBA maintains a 'swarm list' of beekeepers who are willing to collect swarms. If you would like to be on this list, and you have not been in contact with Ken Ograin yet this year, please call him at 935-7065. He'll need to know your general area, and whether you are willing to help folks with bees in buildings as well as those with free-hanging swarms. The club shares its swarm list with GloryBee and the Lane County Extension service. If you would prefer NOT to have your information shared with them, let Ken know

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CLASSIFIED ADS

Bee-related classified ads cost \$5.00 for non-members, and are free to members. Classified ads run for three issues and may be renewed by contacting the editor. Business ads cost \$35 a year. To place an ad contact the editor by the 1st of the month. (541-736-1870) or e-mail lcbanewslettereditor@hotmail.com.

BEES FOR SALE

Limited Supply of 5 frame starter colonies, Available mid May through July. Dependable Carniolan stock. Call or email to reserve. LeRoy 541-937-4323 or email artally@usa.net

FOR SALE:

3-pound packages of bees with 2009 queens, available April 2009, \$70, \$5 of which is a refundable deposit on the cage. Please call early and before April 1 to reserve your order. For details please contact Wild Harvest Honey in Blodgett, OR at (541)456-2631.

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T-shirts and Hats!

LCBA t-shirts, are available in a variety of sizes and colors. There are also two spiffy designs now! New style shirts are \$20, and the familiar club t-shirts are a bargain at \$12. We also have caps with the club logo. Club shirts (and hats) are a great way to start conversations about bees and beekeeping. Show your club spirit!

LCBA MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Lane County Beekeepers Association costs \$12.00 yearly. **2009 Dues are now due and payable.** Dues are pro-rated after March for new members ONLY! Plan on bringing your renewal dues to the meeting, or remit them to LCBA Treasurer Nancy Ograin, (address in box at right).

Discounted Publications Subscriptions
American Bee Journal & *Bee Culture*

See Nancy Ograin, Treasurer, to get a 25% discount form. Forms are needed for new subscriptions and renewals.

NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFORMATION

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