

Mountain Empire Beekeepers Association

Minutes

November 29, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Anthony Ellis in room 122, Smyth Hall Wytheville Community College. 27 members were present.

Minutes and Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve minutes—Kirk Burkett, seconded by Gary Tolley. Minutes approved. Mickey Cunningham presented the treasurers report. The report was filed for audit.

Speaker: Tim Service

Presentation: Honey Bee Biology: Preparing Your Bees for Winter

- Bees can live for months on a diet of just honey. (60 lbs. to 90 lbs. – less for Carniolans or Russians)
- Bees grow with protein. Pollen is a source of protein.

Factors that Affect Pollen:

- Viruses- Transferred from other plants i.e. tobacco
- Fungicides

Fungus is in the pollen, but the fungicide kills the fungus and bees do not get the benefit of the fungus.

Pollen is the basis of the brood food. It is responsible for the production of royal jelly.

Effects of Insufficient Pollen on Brood Feeding

- Bees store vitelogenin in a liver-like mass called the **Fat Body**.
- Summer bees have little fat. It is not needed. They need to be light weight in order to fly.
- Winter bees have an abundant amount of fat. This is needed to get through the cold winter months.
- Overwintering mites consume the bee's **Fat Body**. This shortens the life span of the bee by 2 to 3 weeks!

Dr. Samuel Ramsey – discovered that mites live off of the **Fat Body**. He is also now the new head of the Maryland Bee Lab.

<http://beekeepingtodaypodcast.com/dr-samuel-ramsey-the-varroa-fat-body-rediscovery>

What Can Be Done? Check for Mites. Can do this even as late as November.

Three Common Methods for Checking for Mites

1. Sticky Boards – Spray boards with grease, Pam cooking spray, etc...
2. Sugar Shake
3. Alcohol Wash (fatal to the bees) – University of Minnesota has a Varroa Mite Testing Kit
<https://www.beelab.umn.edu/bee-squad/resources-beekeepers/varroa/mite-kit>

Choices for Treatment:

HOPGUARD® II, Apistan, ApiLifeVar, Formic Acid (may be hard on queens), Check Mite, Oxalic Acid (only works on phoretic mites- Those on the bee; not in the capped brood. Also use a respirator- not a dust mask), MiteZapper Control Box -

<https://www.mannlakeltd.com/mitezapper-sup-reg-sup-control-box>

Another Pest: Small Hive Beetles (SHB)

Methods of SHB Control

- Disposable trays with oil or reusable trays filled with oil or apple cider vinegar –Mann Lake sales oil with peanut butter to trap SHB.
- CD Trays
- Diatomaceous Earth –Placed under the hives with screened bottomed boards or below entrances of affected hives
- Instant gratification – smash them quickly

Another Pest: Mice

- Mouse guard at entrance
- ½" mesh hardware cloth stapled across the entrance

Wrapping Hives for Winter

- Tar paper - <https://mudsongs.org/roofing-felt-hive-wrap-attached-with-thumb-tacks/>
- Mann Lake – black plastic with insulation – Bee Cozy Winter Wraps <https://www.mannlakeltd.com/2-storey-bee-cozy>

Old Business:

- There will be no December meeting. Next meeting will be January 24, 2019.

New Business:

2019 Election Results:

President – Anthony Ellis

Vice President – Herman Hearn

Secretary – Connie Armentrout

Librarian – Theresa Hearn

Treasurer- Gary Tolley

- Mickey Cunningham will teach the next new beekeepers class starting mid-February 2019, but this will be the last class he will teach. If anyone is interested in teaching this class in the future starting mid-February 2020, please let Anthony Ellis know. Many thanks to Mickey Cunningham for all of his years teaching and serving as treasure for MEBA.
- A motion was made by Gary Tolley to raise the fee of the new beekeepers class from \$42.00 to \$43.00 to help cover increased costs. It was seconded by Connie Armentrout.
- A motion was made by Eurel Clippard to give all future new beekeepers class members a MEBA membership for the 1st year. It was seconded by Kirk Burkett.
- Coalfield Beekeepers Conference Saturday December 8, 2018 9:00a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap Goodloe Center 3441 Mountain Empire Road Big Stone Gap, VA.

Hive Report: What Should You Be Doing with Your Hives?

- Switch to sugar block or fondant.
- Bees have stopped eating liquid 2:1-too cold, it freezes them.

Raffle:

10 unassembled frames – Fred Williams

Unassembled medium honey super – Eurel Clippard

Hive tool – Eurel Clippard

Kombucha tea – Kirk Burkett

Adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Armentrout, MEBA Secretary