

KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS

www.kbanh.org

JUNE 2014

NEXT MEETING:

SAT., JUNE 14, 2014

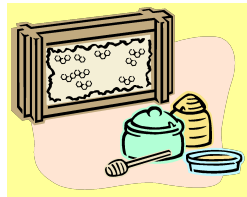
9:00 A.M.

**PILLSBURY LIBRARY
WARNER**

Agenda: Reports, Updates, Let's Get Acquainted, In the Hive with Troy Hall, Old & New Business: Summer Picnic, Bee School, Mentoring.

Speaker: Martin Marklin presenting "Mind Your Own Beeswax: The Other Gift of the Bee."

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President's Message

Heating Up...

It seems that Mother Nature is finally sending us some warm weather, so things will certainly be busy in the bee yards.

This is the season that beekeepers anticipate: keeping exploding colonies in check, preventing swarms, and preparing for the upcoming honey flow. It is also that time of much activity for bee clubs.

Here are three items to put on your agenda:

New Hampshire Beekeepers Association will host its annual summer workshop at the Musterfield Farm on Saturday, June 28, from 9am – 3 pm. This is a great venue to network and learn about beekeeping in a relaxed, hands-on atmosphere. And the cook-out is certainly something not to miss.

Our own club is having its summer potluck picnic on Sunday, July 20, at Marklin Candle in Contoocook from 1-4 pm. Come and join us for an afternoon of good food, convivial conversation, and lawn games. The candle shop is located on the

Contoocook River, so feel free to bring your own canoe, kayak, or row-boat (please, no motor boats). For those interested, a tour will be given of the candle shop. Also remember that we will be having a raffle at the picnic. We will have a sign-up sheet to indicate what food you would like to bring at the June meeting.

The Eastern Apiculture Society will host its annual meeting this year in Richmond, KY from July 28 – August 1. I recommend this conference whole-heartedly. I attended the previous two conferences, and I will be attending this summer's conference as the NH delegate. The primary mission of EAS is education, and to that end it brings talented presenters from around the world. Whether you are a novice or professional beekeeper, this is the conference to attend.

So, we'll "bee" seeing you around, I'm sure.

Martin

Kearsarge Beekeepers' Association Meeting Minutes Saturday 5/10/14

Vice President John Chadwick brought the 9 o'clock meeting to order and handed out copies of the meeting agenda. Robin Gray gave the Treasurer's report. As of 5/10/14, we have 38 paid up members and a balance of 4434.27 in the checkbook. Last year we had 72 paid up members so we need to send a reminder to those who haven't paid their 2014 dues. The Secretary's and Treasurer's reports from April were accepted.

'In the Hive' with Troy Hall: Troy talked about Randy Oliver's column "Scientific Beekeeping" in the American Bee Journal. Troy does not treat his hives for mites but that is based on starting out with stock that shows some mite resistance. It has been a 'cold spring' so it hasn't been easy for stocks to build up – they are always stressed. If you have a strong colony now, you can expect a strong colony later in the summer if they don't swarm. Likewise, if you have a weak colony now, there is no reason to expect differently this summer unless some action is taken. Beekeepers need a basic management scheme including making nucleus colonies on the honey flow to combat winter losses. If you provide packages with drawn comb, the queen can begin laying immediately. If you are starting a package on foundation, you especially need to Feed, Feed. Troy reverses his hives on the dandelion flow at which time he counts frames of brood to assess colony strength. A hive with 9 frames of brood is a strong colony. You cannot get northern mated queens until the first few weeks in June. He is taking orders for queens for July. When you buy queens now, don't assume they are from Georgia. Alden Marshall and other NH queen suppliers may have queens from Kona, Hawaii, for example.

Old business: Sharing contact list- Robin Gray created a spreadsheet of members that indicated on their membership/renewal form if they were okay with having their contact information shared. We will only share the contact list on paper within the club. Barbara Burns or Robin Gray will create the list which they can bring to meetings with the name, phone number, and town of members who indicated that their contact info can be shared.

We discussed our new Sat. meeting schedule again at the request of members who are unable to make the current Sat. morning meetings. An unofficial poll was taken and as the majority of the members present wished to continue with the new Saturday schedule, we decided that a new vote was not needed.

New business: John Chadwick will look into selling the club's old laser copier that required a service contract. It has been stored at the O'Neil's for a couple of years now as it is no longer used to produce the newsletter.

Scott Call (son of former member Buzz Call) gave an interesting presentation on the art of Beelining. His bee running boxes are from his grandfather's time or older. He also gave out plans to build your own beelining box. His equipment to find a feral hive included the bee running box, a little wooden paddle, 2 different colors of chalk, anise, flagging tape, and a stand. Scott says bees are easy to run this time of year as they are out foraging in pastures. In times gone past, a beekeeper's would claim a bee tree by carving their initials into it. When his family would try to recover a feral hive, they

would attempt to drop the hive tree into another tree to reduce damage. They would knock on the hollow cavity to find the top and bottom so they would know where to make the cut to preserve the hive as intact as possible to bring home.

Next meeting is Sat. June 14 Warner Library 9:00 a.m. Submitted by Kim Tuttle, Secretary.



Scott Call speaking at May 10, 2014 meeting

LOCAL AND STATE

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

CONNECTIONS. As noted in the May meeting minutes, a membership list has been compiled so that members may get in touch with others in the club. The names on the list are only those who have indicated they wish to have information shared, but please respect that this is intended for club matters and bee related information only. The list will be available at meetings and by request from Robin Gray, Treas. or Barbara Burns, Newsletter Editor.

DUES. Our paid memberships for 2014 now total 37. In 2012 we had 60 members and 72 in 2013. Even adjusting for the fact that we usually have an increased membership in bee school years, it seems that some of you may have forgotten to send in your check for \$15 to Robin (or to bring it to a meeting). If you are reading this and it could pertain to you, please check your records. Please support the KBA and our expanded schedule of speakers and activities. Thanks!



THANK YOU SO MUCH.....

TO RICHARD BREWSTER AND HIS HELPER, CHRIS BRALEY WHO MADE 2 TRIPS TO HUDSON NH RECENTLY AND TRANSPORTED A TOTAL OF 23 PACKAGES OF BEES FOR KBA MEMBERS. THINK OF ALL THE

GAS THAT WAS SAVED BY **THIS SUPER VOLUNTEER EFFORT**, NOT TO MENTION THE MAN-HOURS IN DRIVING TIME FOR SO MANY OF US. WE CAN'T THANK YOU ENOUGH!!! **Xoxoxox**

CALLING ALL KIDS

Do you have kids between the ages of 5 and 18? How about neighbors and friends whose children are curious about your bees? Did you know that 4-H now has a “New Hampshire Bee Project”? Thanks to Richard Brewster for pointing this out and sending me the clipping from the NH Weekly Market Bulletin. Here’s the page on the UNH Extension website. You can find out all about 4-H and its many great programs at <http://extension.unh.edu/4-H>

4-H Bee Page

New Hampshire 4-H Bee Project

The New Hampshire 4-H Bee Project is an valuable project that focuses on raising honey bees and harvesting bee products. Bees are an essential component of agriculture and without them, many fruits and flowers would not be in existence today! The New Hampshire 4-H Bee Project focuses on the care and maintenance of honey bee hives as well as the production of honey bee related products such as honey products, beeswax products, arts and crafts, and cooking with honey. You don't have to have your own bees or hives to participate in the New Hampshire 4-H Bee Project. You can lease a hive and/or participate in a variety of the activities and events that the New Hampshire 4-H Bee Project has to offer.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

KEARSARGE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

2014 POT-LUCK PICNIC

July 20, 2014 (weather permitting)

1 – 4 pm

Marklin Candle Design

28 Riverside Drive

Contoocook, NH 03229

Schedule:

1:00 pm	Gather
1:30 pm	Lunch is served
2:30 pm	Raffle
3:00 pm	In the bee yard (optional)
3:30 pm	Tour of Candle Factory (optional)

We will start a sign-up sheet of foods to bring at our June 14 meeting. After the meeting, Christine Marklin (Christine@marklincandle.com) will coordinate RSVP's and food items.

There will be plenty of open lawn for games (badminton, bocce ball, soccer, etc.) Bring the whole family. Please bring lawn chairs for yourself and family.

The candle shop is located on roughly 5 miles of the Contoocook River between two dams. There is no public boat launch on this section of the river. If you wish to bring a non-motorized vessel, you can put in at our property and enjoy the beauty and serenity of this protected river. (You are welcome to stay after the picnic for boating).

Remember we will have a raffle at this picnic.

And if interest permits, we can explore the bee yard and watch Troy Hall split a hive and make a nuc. Bring your veil.

NH BEEKEEPERS SUMMER MEETING

June 28, 2014 – 9am -3pm Musterfield Farms – Harvey Rd, North Sutton, NH 03260

NHBA Summer workshop (NOT June 21st as mentioned at the Spring workshop)



This is a free workshop with presentations and hands on opportunities and picnic for paid members of NHBA. Not a NHBA member? Join before by sending your check and membership form to Heather Achillies, treasurer, NHBA or join at the event. Burgers, hot dogs and chicken supplied by NHBA - soft drinks and water donated by Pawtuckaway and Seacoast Beekeeper clubs. Bring a dish to share, your lawn chair, your standard sized non-electric, non-battery operated smoker if you will be competing in the smoker contest and a veil for all live hive activities. John Chadwick has graciously offered for Ben Chadwick of Chadwick farms (no relation) to use his hives on site.

The Farm Museum & Matthew Harvey Homestead is a bicentennial working farm and restored 18th century home-stead and farm buildings. Set on 250 acres of fields, woods, fruit, flower and vegetable gardens. This is a great venue and always good workshops.

EAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2014

July 28 - August 1, 2014

Eastern Kentucky University, Richmond, Kentucky



The Eastern Apicultural Society of North America, Inc. (EAS) is an international nonprofit educational organization founded in 1955 for the promotion of bee culture, education of beekeepers, certification of Master Beekeepers and excellence in bee research. EAS is the largest noncommercial beekeeping organization in the United States and one of the largest in the world.

Every summer EAS conducts its Annual Conference consisting of lectures, workshops, vendor displays, short courses for beginning and advanced beekeepers, Master Beekeeper examinations and an annual business meeting in one of its 26 member states or provinces in the eastern U.S. and Canada. Over 400 people generally attend the conference each year. EAS publishes its newsletter, *The EAS Journal*, four times a year; sponsors awards to deserving bee researchers and graduate students; and offers research grants for applied research projects.

BEE INFORMED

The following article is from the "Bee Informed Blog", another great source of articles of interest to beekeepers that you may want to add to your store of beekeeping links.

THE PYGMY SHREW: A LITTLE MAMMAL THAT IS CAUSING BIG PROBLEMS IN CANADIAN OVERWINTERING COLONIES

APRIL 18, 2014 • [BLOG](#)

Typically when critter infestations come up into beekeeping conversation these common mammals come to mind: bears, skunks, mice, opossums and raccoons. Just like their size, pygmy shrews often fall under the radar. However, Fletcher Colpitts, Chief Apiary Inspector of New Brunswick, Canada, is working to make information about the pygmy shrew more available. He recently posted an info sheet about the pygmy shrew that every beekeeper should read:

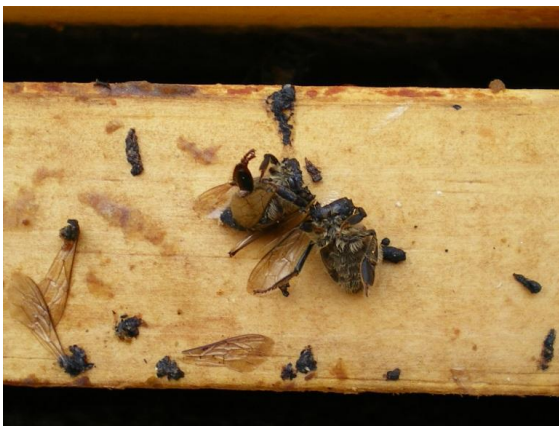


http://www.nbba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/shrew_screen.pdf

Pygmy Shrew. Photo from the mammal society:
<http://www.mammal.org.uk/pygmymshrew>

The pygmy shrew is the smallest mammal native to North America. It can fit through a hole in a honey bee hive as little as 1 cm, and surprisingly only weighs an average of 3 grams. Although they are tiny, pygmy shrews are also extremely fast, and consequently have a high heart rate of 800 bpm. In order to support their high respiratory rate they must eat on a constant basis (at least every 15 or 30 minutes) during the day and night. If they go more than an hour without eating they are at risk of dying of starvation.

They are generalist insectivores, but in northern climates (eastern Canada) they have learned to seek out honey bees for nourishment. Shrews become a problem in the early spring when bees are still tightly clustered due to low temperatures. They feed on colonies by grabbing a bee from the outside of the cluster where it's colder. Bees on the outside of the cluster are sluggish and unable to defend themselves against the shrew invader. The shrew will then carry its prize away from the cluster and move to the bottom of the frame or sometimes near the top under the inner cover. There it will remove the head and tunnel into the thorax using its pointed snout to consume the contents.



So, how do you identify if a shrew has invaded your colony? And how do you tell shrew damage apart from mouse damage? To answer these questions I contacted Fletcher Colpitts, and I was fortunate enough to interview him over the phone. He told me that pygmy shrews can be identified by the mess they leave and their feces which differ from mice. The shrew will leave a "trash" pile as Fletcher called it (appropriately named) of heads, wings and legs. At first

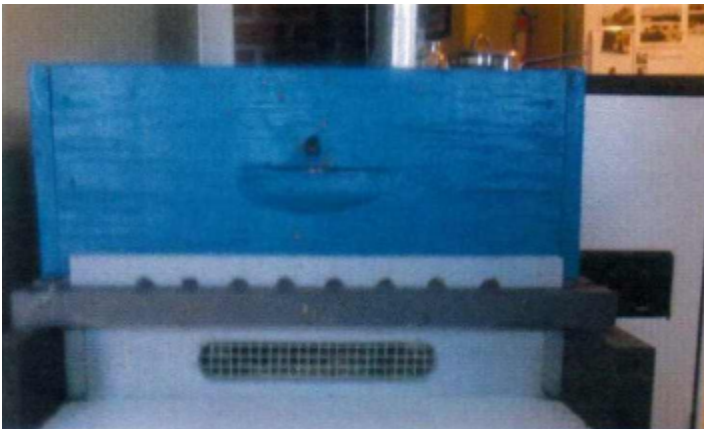
glance, shrew feces looks very similar to mouse feces, however it is much different if inspected more closely. Pygmy shrew feces are elongated with irregular diameters (rough looking).

Pygmy Shrew feces. Photo by NB Provincial Apiarist Chris Maund

It is also important to note that shrews will never nest in hive boxes and will never be found during the summer months as mice sometimes are. As temperatures rise honey bees begin to be able to defend themselves so shrews will leave. The primary food source in the hive for mice is pollen and honey; however shrews will only target the honey bees themselves. On occasion, shrews will die in the hive, which is the best evidence you will find.

Occasionally, shrews will become immediately apparent as Fletcher Colpitts discovered. While watching his colonies very intently, he noticed a shrew (not so much a form, more like a gray flash). These little creatures move so fast, much faster than a mouse, that it is very difficult to spot them, but definitely possible. Further confirmation was observed in the form of a headless bee walking out of the entrance of the hive.

Last year was one of the worst years for shrew damage for a major blueberry producer in Prince Edward Island, Canada. Fletcher Colpitts inspected their colonies for a winter loss insurance claim last year. Over the winter of 2012-2013 this particular producer lost approximately 700 out of 1000 colonies (70%)! Shrew damage contributed to a large portion of this loss, although not entirely (there were some other management problems). Fletcher said that on average 2 hives out of every pallet of pollinators displayed evidence of shrew predation.



It's glaringly evident that pygmy shrews pose a large risk to beekeepers (at least in Canada), but there is still good news to be had. It's very easy to build a modified entrance system to block them from entering your hives. The system has a screen with holes 3/8th's of an inch. This allows bees to enter without losing pollen from their baskets while also being small enough that pygmy shrews cannot get in. Fletcher has had a 100% success rate with his system and has since kept shrews out of his hives for 30 years.

Shrew Entrance System by Fletcher Colpitts

After researching this topic for nearly a week, there is one thought at the front of my mind: Is shrew damage possible in the northern United States? Some species of pygmy shrew are in the northern US (ME, NH, upper state NY and the Appalachian mountains). It's just a matter of whether they have learned to seek out honey bees or if perhaps beekeepers have previously mistaken shrew damage for mouse damage. So I ask anyone who may be reading this: Have you seen evidence of shrews in your hives? If so, please share!

LINKS: Here you will find some interesting reading on current bee topics:

- 1) 2 sites with stories about the dangers of certain pesticides to honey bees

<http://radiooutthere.com/blog/science-technology/> (this should connect to an article from "Mother Jones" magazine)

<http://www.care2.com/greenliving/bee-killing-pesticide-more-dangerous-than-previously-believed.html>

- 2) Kim Flottam's email "Catch the Buzz" has been very active lately. Here's a link he sent regarding the USDA and their study of varroa mites: <http://blog.usda.gov/2014/05/13helping-honey-bees-health> and one about the US National Pesticide Center and their mobile apps: <http://npic.orst.edu>
 - 3) Mike Bellino has a couple of new articles up on our own website, so don't forget to check there on a regular basis: www.kbanh.org
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HERE ARE TWO RECIPES FOR HONEY-SWEETENED GRANOLA. I HAVE TRIED THEM BOTH AND THEY ARE YUMMY. The first one is chewier than the second. I like to enjoy them with plain kefir, if possible, for some probiotics and tangy taste that it adds.

Honey Almond Granola from the National Honey Board

3 c. oats
¾ c. sliced almonds
½ c. coconut
½ c. honey
¼ c. coconut oil, melted
2 tbsp. warm water
1 tsp. vanilla

Preheat oven to 325. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray. Combine oats, almonds, and coconut in a large bowl and set aside. In another bowl combine honey, coconut oil, water, and vanilla. Pour over oat mixture and stir well. Spread mixture onto cookie sheet. Bake about 15 min. stirring every 5 min. Remove and let cool.

Low-Fat Granola from cooks.com

In a large oven proof skillet or 9x13 pan, melt ¼ c butter. Then, stir in ¼ c honey. Add 3 c. rolled oats, 1 c. shredded or flaked coconut, 1 cup sunflower seeds (or use pumpkin seeds or a combination of the two), and 1 ½ tsp cinnamon. Bake in a preheated 350 oven for about 15 min, stirring several times during the baking period. Then stir in ½ c. wheat germ and bake an additional 10 min or until the mixture is lightly browned. Remove from the oven and stir in 2/3 raisins or craisins. Let the granola cool completely before storing in an airtight container.

Enjoy,
Barbara Burns