

 *Beekeepers Guild of the Eastern Shore* 

*The Shore Swarm
Newsletter*

August 2017

BGES Leadership

George Brown --president.

Ann Snyder-vice-president.

Carol Zuccarino -secretary

Phil Harris -treasurer

Tara Southard- Outreach Coordinator

Estelle Spachmann- Newsletter Editor



A Message from Our President

Greetings All!

As the newly elected President of the BGES, I am looking forward to an exciting year of learning and fellowship with my fellow Eastern Shore beekeepers. For those who don't know me, I'm a "Come Here" having moved permanently to the shore in May of 2015 from Pittsburgh, home of the back to back Stanley Cup winning Penguins. I brought two honey bee hives with me from my 25 acre camp in Venango County, Pennsylvania where I had been keeping them for several years prior to my move. I live in Schooner Bay here in Accomack County and currently manage 4 hives. I have been associated with the BGES since my move and cannot state that I have ever found a more friendly and knowledgeable group of people. As your new president, I hope to continue the mission of the guild, hopefully making it even better with the help of all of you.

I recently was part of a very productive planning session with several members of the guild including most of our club officers. Our goal this year is to provide the tools for all beekeepers in the guild to be able to sustain their respective number of bee colonies and to do so without having to buy bees from off the shore providers. I believe we have put together a comprehensive calendar of programs for our monthly meetings, realizing nothing is etched in stone as we all have commitments outside of the BGES. As you will see on the proposed calendar below, we

have a fantastic opportunity to hear Mr. Mel Disselkoen speak at our October meeting. Mel is the advocate for On-The-Spot (OTS) queen rearing (www.mdasplitter.com) and has agreed to attend our meeting in October to present the OTS method including a live demonstration.

Proposed 2017-2018 Meeting Calendar:

Tuesday, September 5th, 2017 Barrier Islands Center at 6:30 PM. Kick-off Meeting for Our New Year. Topics to include upcoming events, member input, and an Eastern Apiculture Society conference summary by Russell Vreeland who attended on behalf of the BGES. Don't miss this important meeting where we will discuss all the upcoming events we have planned for the year!

Saturday, October 7th, 2017 –On the Spot (OTS) queen rearing/splitting. We have invited Mel Disselkoen (www.mdasplitter.com) to lead this topic and he has agreed to drive in from Michigan to attend. Virginia State Beekeepers Association will help make this meeting a regional event. You will not want to miss the opportunity to hear Mel speak and to see him demonstrate the OTS method!

*Little Italy Restaurant - Sinatra Room
10227 Rogers Drive
Nassawadox, VA 23413*

Tickets:

Non-BGES members are welcome and encouraged to attend. [Tickets are available here.](#)

Agenda:

10:30 - 11:15 Speaker Mel Disselkoen.

11:15 - 11:30 Break

11:30 - 12:15 Speaker Mel Disselkoen

12:30 Lunch (pizza, salad and soft drinks) will be served. Networking with Mel.

Tuesday, November 7th, 2017 Meeting up north towards Chincoteague, time (probably 6:30 PM) and location to be determined. W.T. Wilkins will lead a discussion about the method he uses to raise queens and split hives.

December - No meeting

Saturday, January 6th, 2018 Ag Station (Painter) at 10 am. Queen rearing.

Tuesday, February 6th, 2018 Barrier Islands Center at 6:30 pm. Raising Nucs, guest speaker Dave Kvello.

March 10th and 17th, 2018 will be our **Beginning Beekeepers Class** at the Ag Station in Painter. Volunteers are needed to help put this together. Contact me or any other officer if you

would like to assist. This is a wonderful event that has allowed us to educate many on the importance of the honey bee and to evangelize beekeeping in general.

Tuesday, April 3rd, 2018 Barrier Islands Center at 6:30 pm. We will review the three methods of making splits (OTS, Walk-away, and Nucs) that were discussed in prior meetings because this is the time of year, depending upon the weather, to begin implementing the split methods before natural swarming occurs. This presentation will review the methods but focus more on the steps required to actually get out and do it!

Saturday, May 5th, 2018 Ag Station at 10 am. Control and removal of unwanted bees. This will focus on yellow jackets, hornets, and other types of bees and wasps not including honey bees.

Finally, I want to thank our former president, Ann Snyder, for all her tireless efforts leading the guild and helping to make it the successful organization it is today. Ann will be continuing to provide input as the vice president in order to keep yours truly in line during the upcoming year.

George T. Brown Jr.



The first annual [Mite-A-Thon](#) will take place Saturday, September 9, to Saturday, September 16, and we invite you to participate!

YOU - Local beekeeping clubs and associations are key to making Mite-A-Thon a success!

The Mite-A-Thon is a national effort to collect mite infestation data and to visualize Varroa infestations in honey bee colonies across North America within a one week window. All beekeepers will be asked to participate, creating a rich distribution of sampling sites in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. Their Varroa monitoring data will be uploaded to www.mitecheck.com.

Mite-A-Thon OBJECTIVE: 1) Raise awareness about honey bee colony Varroa infestations in North America through effective monitoring methods. 2) Management strategies will be made available for discussion within bee organizations utilizing Mite-A-Thon partner developed information and outreach materials.

****DATA COLLECTION:** Participants will monitor the level of mites (number of mites per 100 bees) using a standardized protocol utilizing two common methods of assessment (powdered sugar roll or alcohol wash) and then enter data, including location, total number of hives, number of hives tested, local habitat, and the number of *Varroa* mites counted from each hive. The

published information will not identify individual participants.

COST: There is no cost. You can create your own test materials or kits can be purchased online. Some scholarships are available (js@pollinator.org) for materials.

CONTACT: Miteathon@pollinator.org or [415-362-1137](tel:415-362-1137)

Learn more and stay up to date at www.pollinator.org/miteathon

**** Sampling instructions with recommendation for making a sampling jar are available from the Honey Bee Health Coalition:**

(<http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/HBHC-Guide-Varroa-Mgmt-6thEd-7April2017-c.pdf>).

Hive Beetles Treatments

Contributed by Jim Crunk

When I was a boy growing up on a farm in Tennessee, beekeeping was much simpler than it is today. There was no wide spread use of insecticides & herbicides, Varroa mites, which hitch-hiked on honey bees imported from Asia, did not appear until the 1970s, and small hive beetles, of African origin, were not present in the US until 1996. The only worry beekeepers had was Mother Nature.

In this article, I will discuss small hive beetles and some of the treatments that I use. I will also say, as in most of the mysteries of beekeeping, there is NOT only one way of approaching beekeeping techniques. Beekeepers who think that there is only one way of approaching a problem are in for a rude awakening.



What is a Small Hive Beetle?

wikipedia.org Says that “The small hive beetle is a beekeeping pest. It is endemic to sub-Saharan Africa, but has spread to many other locations, including North America, Australia, and the Philippines. The small hive beetle can be a destructive pest of honey bee colonies, causing damage to comb, stored honey and pollen. If a beetle infestation is sufficiently heavy, they may cause bees to abandon their hive. Its presence can also be a marker in the diagnosis of Colony Collapse Disorder for honey-bees. The beetles can also be a pest of stored combs, and honey awaiting extraction. Beetle larvae may tunnel through combs of honey, feeding and defecating, causing discoloration and fermentation of the honey.”

“The adult small hive beetle is dark brown to black and about one-half centimeter in length. The adults may live up to 6 months and can be observed almost anywhere in a hive. Female beetles

lay irregular masses of eggs in cracks or crevices and in cells in a hive. The eggs hatch in 2–3 days into white-colored larvae that will grow to 10–11 mm in length. Larvae feed on pollen and honey, damaging combs, and require about 10–16 days to mature. Larvae that are ready to pupate leave the hive and burrow into soil near the hive. The pupation period may last approximately 3–4 weeks. Newly emerged adults seek out hives and females generally mate and begin laying eggs about a week after emergence. Hive beetles may produce 4–5 generations a year during the warmer seasons.”



Comb slimed by hive beetle larvae. Hives infested at this level will drive out bee colonies.

Most of us have experienced small hive beetles and their destruction. It is said that small hive beetles can smell honey 15 miles away. So, if you start the year with no small hive beetles and suddenly they appear in your hives, their sense of smell led them to your hives. The consensus seems to be that a strong hive can keep hive beetles under control. But, I’m not so sure. I have seen a strong hive with horrific infestation and destruction, with the hive next to it having few small hive beetles. I have yet to figure this out.

Treatments

There are many treatments for small hive beetles. I have listed only the ones that I have used. You must decide which one or which combination of treatments that you are going to use. I use all the treatments below, but am especially inclined to use beneficial nematodes as a preventive treatment:

1. Beneficial Nematodes, *specific to small hive beetles*. Beneficial Nematodes must be obtained from an insectary. I use Southeastern Insectaries, Inc. in GA the owner is Phil Tedders <http://www.southeasterninsectaries.com/> or (478) 988-9412. Your order will be based on the number of hives you wish to treat. Combine your order with a fellow beekeeper(s) to keep the cost down. Mix the treatment with water and sprinkle under and around hives. *Nematodes kill small hive beetle larva in the ground by entering the larva, releasing bacteria and consuming it from the inside*. Cost: Approximately \$3.70 per hive and lasts up to 3 years. Also see <http://nematodes.com/>
2. Beetle traps with mineral oil or diatomaceous earth. Insert the trap between 2 frames. Beetles run into the trap to hide from the bees. Once in the trap they fall into the oil or are coated with diatomaceous earth and die. Cost: less than \$2.00/trap.
3. Large Bottom Board traps. The principal is the same as above but these traps are inserted under the hive. Cost: \$20.00/trap.

4. Diatomaceous Earth. Sprinkle on the ground under hives. Diatomaceous earth has many barbs and gets on beetles and larva and irritates/repels the beetles. If diatomaceous earth becomes wet its barbs are lost and it must be reapplied. Cost: \$15/5 lb.
5. Static clothes dryer sheet. I find that used sheets work the best. Insert in the top corners of the brood box. Beetles fleeing from bees get their legs tangled in the sheet and die. Cost: \$ 0.00.
6. Freezing. Place infected frames in plastic bags and freeze the frames for 3 days. This kills the beetle larva. Cost: \$0.00.
7. Moth balls (PDB ([paradichlorobenzene](#)) put them in plastic bags when storing frames. DO NOT USE Moth balls made with naphthalene. Bees do not like naphthalene.

I hope that this benefits you in your battle with small hive beetles. If you have any question contact me at jimcrunk@verizon.net or (703) 863-6992



From The Lower Eastern Shore Beekeepers Association (Maryland):

We are hosting a Fall Honey Harvest Festival on Saturday September 30 from 10AM-4PM at Wright's Market

[9300 Old Railroad Rd](#)

[Mardela Springs, Maryland, MD 21837](#)

[\(410\) 742-8845](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/WrightsMarket/>

The success of this event falls heavily on beekeeper participation! We would like to reach out to other "local" clubs and encourage you and your members to not only attend but to participate!



Meetings



BGES meetings alternate locations between the Barrier Island Center(BIC) in Machipongo and the Eastern Shore Agricultural Research and Extension Center located in Painter, VA.

To learn about what happens at the AG Center, visit their website:

<http://www.ares.vaes.vt.edu/eastern-shore/>

Meeting Reminder:

Tuesday September 5 at the BIC at 6:30 PM

Outreach

We have an outreach opportunity for the 3rd graders of Accomack County on Tuesday Sept 19. This would require 6-7 volunteers; we could take shifts so we would each be there for one or two hours. The children will enter the booth for 15 minutes with their set questions. We answer the questions show the display then the next group comes to the booth. This is a fast moving busy day, lots of fun for the children and volunteers.

Please Let Tara know if you can volunteer for this event.

On-line Opportunity through Ohio State University:

OSU Bee Lab webinars are free, and registration is not required.

The recording-as well as previous presentations- is posted and can be viewed at your convenience: <https://u.osu.edu/beelab/webinar-recordings/>



Membership DUES:

BGES dues \$20 State dues \$10 Membership runs from June 30-July 1. Application is on BGES website. IF you have not yet paid your dues for this year, please mail your check to our treasurer Phil Harris at 20496 Seaside Road Cape Charles, VA 23310

The BGES has a Facebook page. Log on to see some of the latest escapades of fellow BGES.

The official website for the BGES is <http://www.bgesva.org/index.html>

Any news worthy items-feel free to forward to emspachmann@gmail.com for possible inclusion in future newsletters.

The Cape Charles Farmers Market is open every Tuesday with opportunities to sell honey and other hive products. Contact WT Wilkins(yeardley@verizon.net) for more information.

Did you know?

The USPS is issuing a series of Protect Pollinators Stamps and this includes honey bees!



