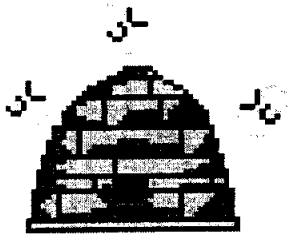

The BEE CAUSE

The Official Publication of the Red River Apiarists' Association

April 2001 | Free to Members | Volume 3: Issue 4

important Dates:

Next Meeting Date is:
10 April 2001
7:30 PM Upstairs Meeting Room

Speaker 1: Mr. Don Dixon will do a presentation on "Beekeeping History in Manitoba".

Speaker 2: M. Rhéal Lafrenière will do a mini-workshop on AFB Detection.

Meeting Location:
River Heights Community Centre
1370 Grosvenor St.
(Intersection of Oak & Grosvenor
Door Prizes will be offered, Guests are welcome and free coffee will be available.

The Bee Cause Newsletter is published by the **Red River Apiarists' Association** eight times per year excluding June, July, August and December.

Membership in the **Red River Apiarists' Association** is $20.00 per year and includes a subscription to the **Bee Cause.**

President's Comments

It is great to see a good turnout at our meetings. We have had about 30 attending the last few meetings, including several guests. For those of you who attend regularly, it is a time to touch bases with our friends for some casual conversation. Then we can find out what each other is doing with the Bees. Then we move on to seeking advice on how to improve the way we get things done. Sometimes I feel that perhaps we should forego the official meeting and just let everyone talk! In any event, the social aspect of our meetings is what we are known for, so keep on talking, and I will let you know when the meeting will "officially" start.

As we move along into April, we are very anxious to see the sun shine and again check our colonies for successful over wintering. As Rhéal advised us, Spring treatment is critical to get the upper edge on the health of our colonies. Hopefully you have already begun to treat with Terramycin. Treatment recommendations were issued by Don and Rhéal in January 2001. Make sure you follow these plans, as there has been some evidence that medication resistant AFB may be transported from the USA in empty honey barrels. Manitoba, along with Saskatchewan and Ontario have banned bee equipment from Alberta and BC, where this problem has surfaced.

Thanks to David Osterman for his review of the analysis underway to verify if there are linkages between the various pests within our hives. The key is still to keep treating each problem with the

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visit www.geocities.com/vetg

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recommended substance.

Thanks also to Dennis Ross and Ron Rudiak for our March meeting door prizes.

Watching for AFB

At the February MBA Annual Convention, concern was expressed at the developments of AFB in Alberta and BC. Mr. Adony Melathopoulos, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Beaverlodge, Alberta, identified the need to get the "Foul" out of our brood. The identification of oxytetracycline hydrochloride (OTC) resistant American Foulbrood (AFB) in western Canada is causing concern. Most beekeepers in other areas of Canada are reticent to use other antibiotics for fear of resistance and residues. Work continues however, with Tylosin, yet this product has a half-life of 180 days compared to 8 days for oxytet. This could cause beekeepers problems if feeding was not done early enough in the spring.

Adony stressed the continuance of Integrated Pest Management. New tactics could include AFB resistant stock, comb sterilization, and new antibiotics. A major part of this program is to remove affected comb. He noted Denmark has a program of replacing 1/3 of the comb each year. Work continues in Guelph on developing resistant bees.

"An OTC resistant strain of AFB has plagued U.S. beekeepers for years and has recently been discovered in bee colonies in BC and Alberta" wrote Bud Robertson, in the February 10 Winnipeg Free Press, after covering the MBA convention.

Kathy Lloyd, McGregor, MB, assured the conference that in their wax rendering facility, several steps were in place or underway to protect the beekeeping industry. She noted that wax was processed at about 180 degrees minimizing the potential for AFB spores surviving. Dr. Shiminuki and Dr. Knox tested the wax for spores and reported that no viable spores were found. In addition she noted the drum cleanup method using steam and caustic soda, plus the restriction of not receiving product during bee robbing times.

Don and Rhéal are recommending that if we find anything unusual in the hives, such as severe population dwindling, or a foul smell, remove the frames.

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After inspecting the frames and discovering sunken cappings, or black scales in the upper edge of cells, they recommend sending samples in for analysis.

As we talked about this issue at the March meeting, it became evident that about half our members may not be able to detect AFB problems. The group requested the Executive to present a workshop at the April meeting, to provide the necessary training. We are more than happy to respond to this request. Come to the April session to see more.

Ted Scheuneman describes Screen Board

At the February MBA Convention, guests on the Producer Panel consisted of Ted Scheuneman, Rod Boudreau, Ted Turnbull, and Michael Lewis. These people represented the industry across the southern half of Manitoba. This panel was struck to speak on a management decision that successfully impacted their business.

Ted Scheuneman identified problems encountered with the common bottom board. He desired improved ventilation, a way to prevent extra feed from pails collecting at the bottom of the hive, and a way to help reduce Varroa from latching onto the bees. He has developed a "Screen Bottom Board" that seems to fit the bill. With his design, he can manage the hives from the rear, easily pull out a tray to check for Varroa, and it seems to reduce chaulk brood too. The screen lets Varroa drop through it while letting the bees easily walk out the hive.

Michael, on the other hand, looked at diversification with "Hybrid Canola Pollination".

In Rod Boudreau's operation, he and his wife manage over 400 colonies. Their key to surviving has been the "Billet Easyloader". This is mounted on a trailer to enable them to haul 10,000 pounds of equipment while meeting the Highway Traffic Act load restrictions. It also permits Rod to check brood at any time, plus quickly move entire colonies to another flower source.

Meanwhile, Ted Turnbull planned to talk about removing honey using the "Tip Up" method.

Jim Campbell—RRAA President

Important News Item

Manitoba has placed an embargo on bees and hive equipment coming from Alberta and British Columbia. This embargo was put in place to reduce the risk of transporting antibiotic resistant AFB, which is currently found in AB and BC, into Manitoba. Accordingly, the RRAA will not carry classified ads on its Website or Newsletter for bees and/or hive equipment coming from AB and BC. The RRAA strongly encourages its members to decline purchase of any bees or equipment from these provinces until further advised by Provincial Authorities.

Sweet science (Eat Honey—No Hangover)

USA WEEKEND - Jan. 26-28, 2001

Two studies suggest honey may keep cancer from spreading, as well as prevent a hangover. Interestingly, honey has been used as a medicine for millenniums, often rubbed on cuts and wounds. Why? The concentration of sugar is so great it actually prevents bacteria growth, and it's been shown to speed the rate at which wounds heal.

Turkish researchers say applying an ointment of honey on instruments used to operate on cancerous tumors in mice prevented secondary tumors that often grow along the instruments' path in such operations. Their early studies hint that substances in the honey may help dissolve the cancer cells.

In a less serious study, a group of American scientists say honey can prevent hangovers. The Chicago-based National Headache Foundation says fructose, the sugar that makes honey sweet, competes with alcohol for the enzymes that help break it down in the liver. So a spoonful of honey before you drink might fend off a hangover.

RRAA Executive Meeting Minutes

Executive meeting Minutes are unavailable at Press Time. They will be available at the door at the April monthly meeting.

NEWS FROM CANADA

Bee Culture - January, 2001
CALGARY - Alberta provincial apiarist Doug Colter said an increasing incidence of American foul brood is beginning to be found in the Canadian province.
Analysis of samples from hives sent in by 28 Alberta beekeepers found evidence of AFB in eight that it's becoming resistant to the current antibiotic treatment.
"I'm afraid this fall when I start inspecting colonies it will be just the tip of the iceberg," he said.
The eight samples came from beekeepers with a combined 26,000 hives - 15 percent of Alberta's total.

Red River Apiarists' Association

Minutes of the Regular Meeting - March 13, 2001

The regular meeting of the Red River Apiarists' Association was held at the River Heights Community Club on March 13, 2001. Jim Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM with 33 members and guests present.

Minutes of the Feb. 13 meeting were approved (February *Bee Cause*). No errors or omissions were noted.

Jim noted that Wayne Proudlove had returned from a recent trip to Egypt and had brought samples of Egyptian honey for the members and guests of the RRAA to take home and enjoy. At this time Jim also introduced David Osterman, a graduate student who is currently doing research projects, at the U of M, which will benefit beekeeping.

Charles Polcyn gave us an overview of the one week Master Beekeeping Course which he just completed at Simon Fraser University. Students were kept busy for full days by a wide range of topics presented by speakers from all over North America. Some noteworthy things discussed were that screened bottom boards can take up to 40% of the Varroa mites out of production. "Defensive bee" is a better term to use rather than "Africanized bee" or "killer bee". Apparently their temperament mellows as they move into higher latitudes. There is a possibility of Terramycin being no longer effective for use against American Foulbrood. Saskatchewan currently allows no bee importation from other provinces. We are urged to use medication properly and be vigilant for any signs of AFB as we work our colonies. Discard any combs that have signs of active disease. In extreme cases the bees can be saved by shaking onto new foundation and destroying the old combs.

Committee Reports:

Financial Report:
Dennis Ross reported that the RRAA bank balance was $3439.00 on February 20, 2001.

Combined RRAA & MBA Annual Picnic and Field Day:
Jim reported that the picnic and field day will take place on May 26th (last Saturday in May) at the U of M Apiary site. No auction is to be held at this time.

Honey Show:
Jim Campbell reported that the space has been reserved at the St. Vital Shopping Centre for the Manitoba Honey Show. Date of the Honey Show will be October 26, 27 & 28, 2001. Jim is looking for new ideas for the layout and needs everyone's ideas. If anyone has seen something in a display which they found appealing, let Jim know. It could be the information we need to make our show even better than last year.

A honey promotion & mini show will be held at Kildonan Place October 12 to 14.

Program:
In May we will include a discussion on Honey Show displays. Charles suggested that we have a workshop on AFB. The object of the workshop would be to train participants to recognize the disease in all of its stages by using real combs with disease in them. Herb suggested that we need a hands-on workshop to familiarize us with all of the different methods of using the recommended medications now available.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

Program:
Rhéal Lafrenière gave the audience a presentation on spring management and feeding, what to look for when colonies die out.

David Osterman gave us information on one of the current projects which is looking to see how much mites affect the transmission of other pathogens within bee hives.

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The **door prizes** (Loonie Draw) were won by:

Murray Porter - Honey Bear Honey Pot
Nella Schewfelt - Chocolate Bunny (home made by the Ross family)

Ron Rudiak (Secretary - RRAA)

Building Reliable Bear Fences

By Ron Rudiak

Correctly designed and constructed electric fences are an effective method for preventing bear damage to beehives. The fencer unit, sometimes called a controller or energizer, connected to the fence wires must produce a painful shock of short duration whenever a bear makes contact with the fence.

To be effective, the fencer unit must produce a minimum of one Joule of energy at a high enough voltage to follow the contact path to ground. The higher the Joules of energy produced the greater the shock felt by the animal and therefore the greater the deterrent effect.

The mathematics of calculating fencer stored energy (in Joules) is as follows, the voltage stored in the storage capacitor squared is then multiplied by the capacity in Farads and the result divided by 2. This equation yields a theoretical number of Joules of stored energy. One Joule of energy is one Watt per second.

To get to the fence, the energy stored in a capacitor, at typically around 450 volts, must be switched by a thyristor (electronic switch) into a step up transformer that in turn outputs the stepped-up voltage to the fence wires. The impulse duration is 3 - 5 microseconds.

One thing to consider is that the fencer industry is very competitive and as buyers of components, the most costly being the output transformer, a few dollars saved here means their equipment might sell for less than the competition. A poor quality transformer is like an extension cord which is not heavy enough to carry the load of larger appliances. Much of the energy is lost by heating the cord, the result being that there is less power to run the appliance. Some manufacturers state, emphatically, that Joules are unimportant and their advertisements stress miles of fence which may be energized. However, in actual tests, I have found that an energizer with a 2 Joule output produces a stronger electrical pulse than a 1 Joule unit and makes these numbers a meaningful yardstick for obtaining a fencer with adequate capability. For long haired animals, such as a bear, the output should be between 5 to 6 thousand volts in order to break over the barrier of insulating hair. Once this happens the air is instantly ionized, creating a blue spark. This ionization process causes the small column of air to become very conductive therefore the bear receives a nasty shock. It is possible to produce a high voltage, in the order of many thousands of volts, by walking across a carpet. When this happens, during our dry Canadian winters, we often see a spark jump from our bodies to a grounded surface. This spark tingles but is neither a painful or memorable incident.

For powering these fencers most beekeepers will be using a storage battery which is regularly replaced with a fully charged unit as required. Solar cells are quite common for keeping the internal fencer battery charged in some units. This works OK but can leave the energizer out in the open for all to see, so we need to be aware that some individuals might feel that they need the solar panel more than the beekeeper who owns the equipment. We "hide" our energizers and battery in a bee hive box and so far we have not had a theft problem.

A solar panel big enough for a 1 - 2 Joule fencer may cost between $200 - $250 but will last indefinitely. We change our deep-cycle batteries on a biweekly schedule. It is better for the battery if it is not fully discharged in the field and as well we don't ever want to find a dead battery in a system that is supposed to keep predators out. Deep cycle batteries are more forgiving if they are accidentally fully discharged whereas a dead car battery will be much reduced in capacity through sulfation of the plates. We load test our batteries when they come in from the field and again when they are fully charged. Any that fail outright or are somewhat marginal are sent off to the recycler and never used again.

For bears the fence need not be higher than 4 feet. We use either 3 or 4 strands of Baygard fibreglass "wire" on fibreglass posts or steel T-bar posts equipped with insulators. Insulated gate hooks complete the fence perimeter. All the wires are connected together using a length of wire or some Baygard "wire". All connections must be made according to the manufacturers directions to ensure continuity. It might seem like overkill to connect all the strands together when the wire could be a single piece anyway but the reason for this is that some-

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times a predator may break a strand which would open the electrical path from that point. Connecting all strands together prevents this from happening and ensures continued protection.

We now know what to look for in a good fencer, a reliable battery supply and an adequate fence. One more thing that needs careful attention is the grounding system. A good ground is important to complete the return path from the animal to the fencer. Because animals don't use insulating footwear they are electrically well connected to the earth (ground) for most of the time. Our job is to make sure that the animal's feet become electrically connected to the ground terminal of the fence energizer by providing an adequate system of electrical grounds.

In damp or wet clay soil a single 4 foot ground rod is usually sufficient but in drier sandy soils it is often necessary to drive in 3 or 4 six foot (or longer) rods about 10 feet apart. These rods are electrically connected together using a #10 copper wire and ground clamps which in turn connects to the ground terminal on the fencer. In special cases when it is impossible to obtain a proper ground using rods it may be necessary to bury a bare ground wire around the perimeter of your fence. It is not advisable to mix the ground wines between the fence strands because a broken strand will often make contact with the next current carrying wire effectively causing a short circuit of the fencer output. We become aware of the this mistake the next time we visit the yard and clean up the broken hives.

By following these guidelines beekeepers can ensure that they have done their best to protect their bees from bears and in this case only your best is good enough.

Mead Recipe

Now that the honey harvest has come round once more, it would be a good time to try making some mead. If you are pleased with your results, remember to save a bottle to enter into the club's annual mead competition in July.
Ingredients: **Honey, Water, Nutrient Salts, Tannin, Yeast.**
Initial proportions are **2 litres** of water to **1 Kg** of honey (or any multiple of these quantities).
Heat the water and dissolve honey. Stir constantly while adding honey to avoid honey burning on bottom of receptacle. Bring mix to simmer. **DO NOT BOIL!!** Skim off any impurities what rise to surface and discard. This can take some time, but it is essential to ensure the best quality of the finished product.
When all impurities have been removed, cool some of the mix and check specific gravity with a hydrometer. The reading should be 1120 - 1130. If lower, add more honey to the mixture (called the "must"). Only add small amounts, checking the s.g. after each addition. When desired s.g. is obtained, allow must to cool to 20C - 25C. Add tannin at 1 teaspoon per 4.5 litres (mix it first with a small amount (50 - 60 ml) of hot water, add nutrient salts at 2 teaspoons per 4.5 litres (also easier if first dissolved in small quantity of warm water). Start yeast as per instructions on packet and add to must.
Fit airlock to fermentation vessel and place in warm place. (I use a wardrobe with a small thermostatically controlled fan heater to maintain a constant 24C). Fermentation time will depend on temperature, with lower temperatures taking longer. Yeast becomes dormant at 10C. At completion of fermentation (i.e. when there are no more bubbles passing through the airlock, check the s.g. again. The drop in s.g. between the original reading (1120 - 1130) and the reading taken after fermentation, divided by 7.5 will give the alcohol content. For example, if the first reading was 1130 and the second was 1010, the difference of 120 divided by 7.5 indicates an alcohol content of 16%.
After fermentation, if mead is considered too dry to suit individual palate, honey may be added to obtain the degree of sweetness required. Mix honey and water 50/50 and simmer to remove impurities as before. Ad in small quantities to mead, taste testing as you go, until acceptable taste is obtained. A further s.g. reading at this point will give you the level that you can work towards obtaining in any mead that you produce in the future.

Mead can now be left to clear naturally, which may take some considerable time, or finings can be added to the mead to clear the drink in 1 - 3 days. If mead does not clear, it is probably because not all the impurities were removed from the initial honey/water mix, or from the mix used to increase s.g. after fermentation.

Mead can be drunk at any time after fermentation has stopped, but will improve with age. Yeast (Gervin Wine Yeast Varietal E Strain K1), Tannin, Nutrient Salts, hydrometer, fermentation vessel and airlock are all available at a reasonable price from "Great Expectation" in Wellington or Petone, or from any other brewers supply outlets.

Editor's note: copied from Wellington NZ Beekeepers Web Site

Screened Bottom Boards, A Useful Mite Management Tool
By Ron Rudiak & Ted Scheuneman

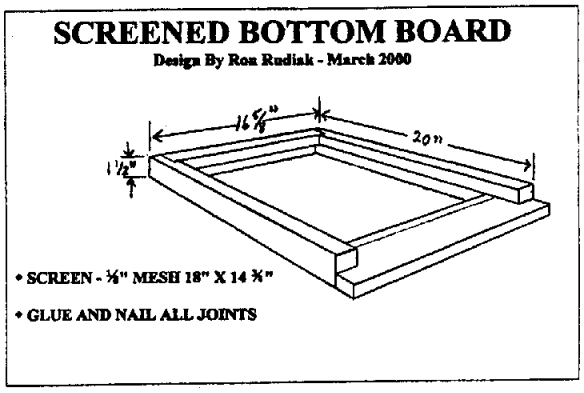
The screened bottom board consists of a wooden frame, fitted with a screen, which is placed between the brood chamber and the bottom board. The screened bottom provides the bees with a new front entrance as the original bottom board is reversed so that the old entrance now faces to the rear of the hive. The original entrance slot is blocked during cold weather to keep drafts at a minimum and stray bees from wandering in. The space of about 1 1/2 inches between the original hive floor and the screen of the screened bottom board allows some mites to fall through and because the bees walk above the original bottom the mites are no longer able to attach themselves to a passing bee. Mites do not climb and seem unable to find their way back to the combs in the brood chamber and will die within several days.

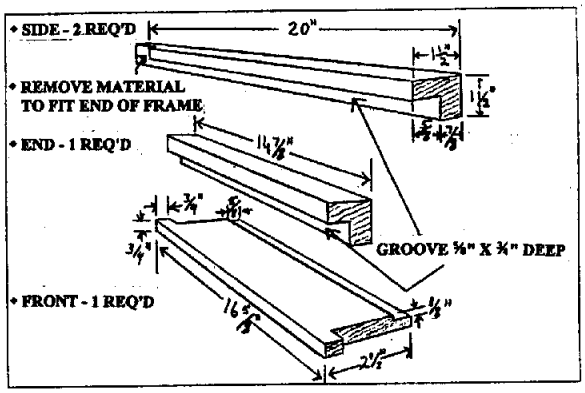
To use the screened bottom for a mite survey, a piece of cardboard, metal sheet or plastic material is placed underneath the screen. It is optional to coat the material with Crisco or other vegetable oil to make it sticky. Any mites, or hive debris, which falls through the screen, becomes trapped on the greasy surface. It is important to check the sticky board in 5 days or less because hive debris accumulates quickly in the spring without any bees to remove it. Normally the bees have access to the bottom board and will clean everything off of it. If the observation material is not coated with oil, the fallen mites have been observed remaining motionless on the bare cardboard, plastic or metal sheet. These mites would be able to attach themselves to bees if they were not isolated by the screen. An Apistan strip can be used to check for mites. The strip is placed within the cluster of bees for 24 hours and any mites which fall can be counted. With a screened bottom, any mites which fall down land on the sticky board, and remain there until cleaned off by the beekeeper. If one fallen mite is counted during a 5 day observation period (no Apistan strip), it can be assumed, with a high degree of certainty, that there are 500 which are still alive in the hive. Three fallen mites equals 1500 in the hive, and so on. Mites which fall during Apistan treatment are not dead but continue to live for up to 7 days. In a hive with only a standard bottom board, these fallen mites go back up with a passing bee which may, in time, build up resistance to the chemical used to control them. In the spring and fall a large amount of hive debris will fall through the screen making observation periods longer than 5 days difficult.

Sometimes bees will clean mites off of themselves or other bees and if a screened bottom is used these mites are put out of production. Screens should have no less than 8 squares per inch. While 6 squares to the inch will work, often the screen is unevenly woven and bees will go through. They cannot return because it is unlikely that they can find the large square again and will become trapped underneath the screen.

Drone combs are effective in attracting female mites and many mites can be destroyed by removing capped frames of drone brood. Even though screened bottoms and drone comb traps are used to remove mites it is still not enough to maintain viable colonies without the use of Apistan or formic acid.

One chemical treatment per year in addition to the continuous use of a Varroa screen and two cycles of drone comb trapping is sufficient to maintain Varroa infestation at a low level. One Varroa mite at the beginning of the beekeeping season can produce enough mites to cause collapse of the colony in the late fall. Mites only need 12 days to complete a reproduction cycle. Parasitic mites in wintered colonies of bees can also be devastating.
May 6, 2000





Australian Beekeeper Seeks Contacts

I am a beekeeper's wife and am interested in talking online to others like myself about the trials and tribulations of being married to a beekeeper (only joking!). I was thinking of starting a **"Mere Male"** section on the honeybee web site except it would be called the "Bumbling Beekeepers" page and would contain true stories, anecdotes and jokes about beekeepers and some of the things they get up to. Aliases will be permitted to protect one's identity (and/or pride!).
A handy hints section is another possible inclusion. Any easy-to-make recipes using honey would be much appreciated, especially in cakes and biscuits. I am also interested in any recipes for skin, hair or health care products using honey. Karen, karen@honeybee.com.au

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Honey Raisin Bread

2 1/2 cups plain flour
3 teasp baking powder
1/2 teasp bi-carb soda
1/2 cup bran cereal
1 cup raisins - chopped
1/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1/2 cup walnuts - chopped
1 cup milk
2 eggs
1/3 cup honey
2 tablesp melted butter Mix together flour, baking powder, soda, bran, raisins, sugar and nuts. Combine milk, eggs, honey and butter.
Stir into dry ingredients and beat until smooth.
Pour batter into greased 22 x 12 cm loaf pan.
Bake in moderate oven approx. I hour or until done when tested.
Serve sliced and buttered.

Uses for beeswax in the home and shop

1. As a lubricant.

Use on nails and screws to make them drive more easily; on sticking drawers, doors, windows, and the like; on needles and on thread to allow them to penetrate heavy material more easily and to add a degree of waterproofing to the thread. To use, simply rub the object to be lubricated with the wax; with nails and similar objects, push them into the wax.

2. As a metal preservative.

Screws, nails, or metal parts will not rust readily if immersed in molten beeswax and left until the temperature of the metal reaches that of the molten wax. The metal will absorb some of the wax and become rust resistant. For this to work, it is important for the metal to remain in the molten wax long enough to attain the proper temperature. Otherwise there will be only a surface coating of wax, which will wear off quickly.

3. As a metal polish.

To make a protective coating and polish for metal, mix turpentine (8 parts), beeswax (1 part), and boiled linseed oil (1/2 part)*. This mixture also makes a good lubricant for saw blades and table saw tops.

4. As a wood polish.

There are various proportions of beeswax with boiled linseed oil and/or turpentine that make a good polish. It may take some experimentation to find a consistency that you like. To make a paste, mix 1 part beeswax, 2 parts turpentine, and 2 parts linseed oil. A larger proportion of beeswax will make a mixture that is stiffer, perhaps too stiff.

5. Leather treatment.

To make a conditioner and waterproofing for leather, combine equal parts of beeswax, tallow, and neatsfoot oil. Before applying, warm the mixture slightly and have the leather at room temperature or higher.

6. Candles.

Candles made from pure beeswax are special. They are superior to candles made from paraffin in that they burn longer, are pleasant smelling, and are virtually drip free when made from well cleaned, yellow beeswax. To make good candles it is also important to use proper candle wicking, not just string. As a guide in making candles, three pair of 10" molded or dipped tapers can be made per pound of wax. Size 2/0 wicking is appropriate for these.

NOTE: Beeswax should always be melted in a double boiler arrangement for safety. It is highly flammable in contact with direct heat. When other ingredients are to be added to beeswax, they may be added to the cold way and everything heated together, or pre-warmed materials may be added to molten wax. Beeswax melts at approximately 60C

University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension System Beekeeping

The Story of the Ligurian Bee

The Ligurian bees on Kangaroo Island in South Australia are believed to be the last remaining pure stock of this bee found anywhere in the world. In the early 1880's Ligurian bees were imported by the South Australian Chamber of Manufacturers from Bologna, in the province of Liguria in northern Italy.

Due to the efforts of Mr. A.E. Bonney, secretary of the South Australian Beekeepers' Association, these bees were introduced to the Island and the bee population rapidly expanded in the mild climate and plentiful pollen and nectar sources.

Kangaroo Island was declared a bee sanctuary in 1885. No other bees have since been imported to the Island. The geographic isolation from the mainland has also enabled the Island to remain free of several bee diseases present on mainland Australia and to maintain this protection all honey, pollen, used beekeeping tools and equipment are prohibited from being brought to the Island unless these have been certified disease-free by the Department of Primary Industries.

The Ligurian bee produces a superb range of honeys from the various floral sources including sugar gum, pink gum, white mallee and other Australian and introduced flora. The geographic isolation has also enabled the bees to remain free of bee diseases present on the mainland, so no antibiotics or other chemicals are used in apiary management.

The breeding of queen bees for sale both on mainland Australia and internationally is also now expanding options for Island apiarists, as the pure Ligurian bee is much prized for its docility and productivity. The pristine environment and disease-free status of the Island bees are of increasing importance in developing markets for queen bees and Island honey.

Editor's Note: this story copied from the Hog Bay Apiary Web Site.

Beekeeping Humour

A beekeeper walks into a pizzeria to order a pizza. When the pizza is done, he goes up to the counter get it. There a clerk asks him: "Should I cut it into six pieces or eight pieces?" The beekeeper replies: "I'm feeling really hungry right now. You'd better cut it into eight pieces."

A woman hears from her doctor that she has only half a year to live. The doctor advises her to marry a beekeeper and to move with him to Minnesota. The woman asks: "Will this cure my illness?" The doctor replies: "No, but the half year will seem pretty long."

A traveler wandering on an island inhabited by cannibals comes upon a butcher shop. This shop specialized in human brains sorted out according to source. The sign in the shop read:
Artists' Brains $9/lb
Philosophers' Brains $12/lb
Scientists' Brains $15/lb
Beekeepers' Brains $100/lb
Upon reading the sign, the traveler noted, "My, those beekeepers' brains are expensive - they must be very powerful!" The butcher replied, "Not really. They're expensive because it takes so many beekeepers to get one pound of brains!!"

Mite Resistant Bees??

Beekeepers in southern US states are reporting a resurgence in feral bees. Sightings of high densities of bees far removed from commercial apiaries have been noted by a substantial number of beekeepers in the southern US states. Whether this represents an emergence of mite resistant bees or is just an ebb and flow variation of mother nature remains to be seen. Varroa mites first infected US bee populations in 1987 and have wrecked havoc in the beekeping industry ever since. The mites are now reported to have developed immunity to treatment from common pesticides.

Items for Sale

For Sale: Honey Bee Nucs or complete hives and miscellaneous equipment.
Contact Charles Polcyn at 284-7064

For Sale: Limited number of healthy Nucs for sale from 15 April to end of May. Bees on 4 very good frames with brood on at least two of them. Comes complete with own year 2000 over wintered Queen. Only $100.00
Contact Ted at 338-6066 between 1800 and 2100 hours.

For Sale: 4 frame Nucs, some with proven queens, available approx. May 15. New supers, assembled , painted, with steel rests. $8.00, Overhead feeders $15.00
Phone: Dennis Ross 878-2924
Email: rosskr@mb.sympatico.ca

For Sale: Honey Bee Nucs for sale, ready for approx. 15 May. Dry Marine containers 20' x 8' and 40' x 8'. The forty foot container can hold 1200 supers plus.
Contact Ron Boudreau at 885-3344

Editor's Comments

The RRAA Web Site is back on line. The URL is: http://www.geocities.com/ve4tg/. It is still under development with new material being added continually. Please check it out and let us know your comments.

This month sees the reprinting of lasts year's article on Mite Management using screened bottom boards and the Drone Comb method written by Ron Rudiak and Ted Scheuneman. Both these techniques help in control of Varroa and avoid the use of chemicals. It is an excellent article and well worthy of reprinting. It will be posted on the web site as well.

This is the last call for a reminder to pay your annual membership dues. If you haven't already done so please forward your payment to Dennis Ross using the form printed on the bottom of this page.

Well that's it for another month. I hope your bees made it through the winter OK. I'm concerned about mine, I was seeing a lot of them on the snow around the hives but now they are fewer and fewer each day. It doesn't look good. See you in April.

Doug

RED RIVER APIARIST'S ASSOC. 2001 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL
Please complete and mail with your cheque, for $20.00, payable to: The Red River Apiarists' Association.

Mail to: **Red River Apiarist's Association**
Dennis Ross, Treasurer,
Box 10 Group 125, RR#1,
Vermette, Mb,
R0G 2W0

NAME: _____ PHONE NO._____

MAILING ADDRESS:_____E-MAIL_____

_____

POSTAL CODE:_____ NEW MEMBER[ ] RENEWAL [ ]

❀ THANK YOU ❀