

Red River Apiarists' Association

NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING:

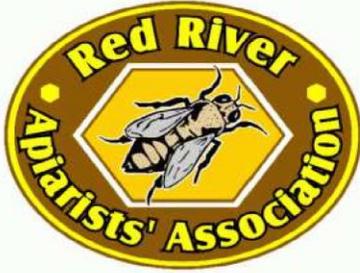
TEUSDAY November 24th /7:30 P.M.

Mechanisms of Honeybee Grooming Behavior, and the Control of *Varoa Destructor*”

With Derek Micholson



Zoom invites will be emailed shortly!



57 Years

November 2020

2020 Issue 9



The Bee Cause

Winter hives protected from North wind while snuggled under a blanket of snow. - Photo by Jim Campbell

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October: Pages 20-22**

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More information and a downloadable package can be found at honeyb.ca

Or call John at 204-612-2337 for more information.

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Friendship during COVID-19 By Jim Campbell

How have you adapted to the re-introduction of the novel coronavirus disease (covid-19) Health Measures?

The “Code Orange” and now “Code Red” for Winnipeg and other communities means masks are mandated in public spaces, and gatherings limited to 5 people. Is surviving easier than when the province first implemented health safety measures in early March 2020? We may be in the centre of this pandemic, yet can still be active, socialize and learn.

Beekeepers, fortunately, usually work outdoors where catching covid-19 is less likely. Indeed, managing colonies this past season became a major diversion from stressing over daily life. Despite this diversion, many felt stressed by interrupted routines, unmotivated feelings, and being isolated from friends and family.

Over 100 years ago, during the influenza pandemic of 1918-19, beekeepers in California almost had their

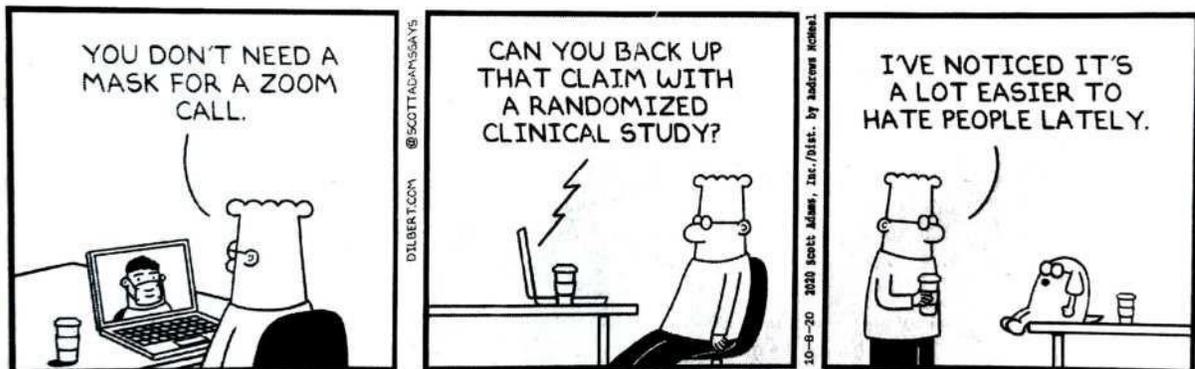
Short Course (*what we now call Field Day*) interrupted. They planned 4 gatherings (education sessions by E.F. Phillips, US Extension Apiarist), between 25 November and 5 December 1918. The January 1919 edition of American Bee Journal (vol59 no2 pp43-46) reported the following: "Considering the fact that an epidemic of influenza was raging all over the country, and that the ban was only lifted the week previous to the San Diego meeting and clamped down again the last day, it seemed very fortunate that even three of the courses could be held." In fact, all four 1918 sessions took place, meanwhile in Manitoba, Dr A.J. Douglas, Winnipeg Health Official, banned all public meetings as of Saturday 14 October 1918. Apparently isolation restrictions relaxed later, as Manitoba Beekeepers Association held their February 1919 convention with about 75 attendees (Tribune Wed Feb 19 pg2, 1919).

Now in 2020, being isolated from each other is repeated. We have more technology today than in 1919 to keep us connected. Thanks to John Russell, Brad Hogg, and our executive team of Red River Apiarists' Association (RRAA) for keeping us connected, as our face-to-face meetings terminated soon after our March 10th general meeting.

For the first time in RRAA history, we connected via the internet for an education presentation in April, given by Rheel Lafreniere. Later, a Special Edition of "Bee Cause" newsletter appeared in June. Next, the 1st general meeting via internet was held in September. Meanwhile, periodic video conference Education Sessions brought RRAA members together to learn and socialize.

Could we use this connection model to encourage a friend, or an acquaintance from a RRAA meeting? We have ways to help each other survive the current event by extending our friendship through phone calls, e-mails, video conferences, or at least, sending texts. What encouraging words could you offer someone this coming week?

DILBERT



Sharing the Season

by Tim Kennedy

Editors Note: *One of the activities we preach as mentors is note taking, and recording events and statistics. Referring to these as a tool for the seasons to come is an undervalued practice. Recognizing smart choices and poor decisions allows us to grow as apiarists. Knowing how you came to those good yields or low winter losses allows you to duplicate successful programs. Tim graciously gave permission to publish his as an example and to offer insight to those in their first few seasons. True to form you will find a little of his humor in the mix.*

Thank you for helping us learn through your experiences this season, Tim. -J.R.

In my discussions with various bee keepers throughout the seasons, the question of note taking comes up in its various forms, from I don't bother with it, no time, don't care, I wish I knew what to write down etc. In recent years, I don't have as much time to write down many details, so I make bare notes take a few supporting PHOTOS on my cell phone, and later review with more objectives. The following is an exert example of several hives where the tracing of its origins and or path lead to an end result. This is not scientific, not research, but simply chronological notes of observations, and identifying points where more attention should have been observed and acted upon. I hope it offer a little insight into the mind of a simple bee keeper.....

2020 Hive Assessment:

St Mary's Yard: A very productive highly varied food source (foraging) for bee habitat. I classify this yard as my best and most productive. Centered near the Garden Centre strip, bees can access all the floral sources provided in the heavy treed areas and on the floodway, to include Hay, alfalfa, lots of clover, multitude of other small flowers, fruit trees from the garden centers, Basswood/Lynden and many other tree sources:

Hive # 2: Started out with an over wintered W Black Queen 2019 a new nucleus hive, produced in that season 160 lbs of honey. Notably this hive had a late summer high Mite count (17), reduced to zero by early October.

Early Spring, 2020 inspection Mar. 23: had 7 full frame covered with bees, greatly in need of extra food source: 2.5 lb bagged honey pollen mix. Apr 6, fed ½ gallon pail of syrup consuming and building rapidly. April 23: 2 full + ½ of solid brood – larva pattern. NOTED Drones in hive already. (Estimated about 13,000 to 15,000 bees)

May 16: an attractive normal and nice hive build up; 10 frames fully covered with bees top and bottom, with approx. 7 frames of brood. May 20: added a 2nd brood box needing room planned to do a hive split: Placed queen excluder May 30.

Brood split in both boxes

June 8: (Critical mistake) 2nd top brood box lots of capped brood frames, but no new larva. Assumed queen is below, and purchased another queen to place in empty box.

June 12: FORGOT to do the split by moving the 2nd box, instead added honey supers above.... Continued adding honey super until July 20: produced approx. 132 lbs for the season.

Aug 1: I discovered my mistake (embarrassed in front of John S.) However it was a massively populated hive large volumes of bee. Made me think and inquire about double queening hives...(another topic of interest) Following my split...assumed I may have killed the queen upon discovery, the hive remained queen less through Aug 27: Noted a week before, no queen, no larva, no eggs, tested for mites non.

Aug 27, placed a queen from D Queen (Healthy black good size) ensured no other queen present and used a Q excluder to drop bees through, ensure no other Queen present.

By Sept 11, noted queen had not been taken, no evidence of a queen, could not be spotted

Panicked: Picked up a W Queen. Sept 22: (as I was going to simply wait and see) had difficulty in placing the new queen, left it alone for 3 to 5 days, manually released, did not seem comfortable with the release.... I suspect a queen was present all along stopped laying early Sept, and the new queen..... well! A disaster! - BK error! I Must stop drinking VODKA!

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T&T Seed Yard: West side of city: back of property, surrounded by crop fields, but situated on a hay field and plenty of clover diversity. My first year at this location, was very dry, slow to produce, extremely windy NW direct. The East side of the property are large homes and golf course with first class gardens, lots of forage diversity

.....Continued on the next page:

Sharing the Season: -Continued.**Hive tracing and chronological path:**

Hive # 3: An overwintered hive transferred from my home yard. After initial struggles to install the K queen, the hive produced 100 lbs of honey in 2019 and had very low mites (4) but plenty of bees (a Black attractive med size Queen) Overall hive looked great through season, very active hive, low production in city. [Notably the hive next to it in the city back yard produced 184 lbs, an early season caught large swarm]

[History of hive #3] March 23 had 8 frames of solid and covered with bees, feeding. April 24: Had 3-4 (3/4 full) frames of brood. April 27: Mite check found 4. May 9: DURING AT HOME Yard: Took 1 frame of nurse bees to create a new nucleus. Added several other hive resources from the back yard.

May 16: 10 frames covered solid with bees, and 8 Swarm Cells, (kept 2 cells for replacing queen) little eggs/larva low laying pattern, decreasing in production. May 21: **Installed an Olivarez**, on top brood box... <not found previous queen>. {Noted new queen was very small petite hard to differentiate with workers} Moved to Dugald Yard – See below:

May 31: Lower brood box installed **Pope Canyon:**

June 10: Hive #3 moved to T&T Seed Yard, had lots of larva and re building nicely, 4 full brood frames of larva and 5 full covered frames of adults. June 16: Small dead cocoon larva (Chalkbrood) at entrance bottom. Hive inspection reveal all is fine, brood larva all seem healthy and fine. June 24: 4 – 5 frames of brood in various development stages. Little to no evidence of a nectar flow, but placed a honey supers. **June 29: Very low volume of bees present** in the honey super: Did not see queen cells or replacement, questioned had they swarmed... something is not right. Bee production slowed down!!!!

Aug 29: Mite count 50/300 treated 2 FA treatment, Apivar, and **replaced the queen with DQ**

Sept 11: no sign of Queen right, no eggs/larva fed 5 pails of syrup, bees happy hive content. She shut down early or ?

Area was extremely dry, hay harvested early and quickly, no 2nd crop, field wheat mainly. Never the less produced 2 lrg and 1 med super of fine honey Maybe 70lbs each.

Hive # 4: An **overwintered W Queen** from the Cook's Creek yard. Mar. 23 Began with 7 frames covered with adult bees, struggling to maintain almost lost through spring. Re position to T&T June 10 after rebuilding at home yard. Had 4-5 frames of brood, larva very healthy now. In June 16 to July 15 produced honey with a dearth in middle loaded up honey supers. Aug 7: Old queen showed signs of failure, replaced on Aug 29: DQ, by Sept 11 signs of good queen right but lower bee volume.

I've quit drinking VODKA and Praying more!

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Dugald Yard: a farm yard located in the heart of agriculture crop middle of the prairies field, large cattle farm. Crops nearby, Canola, Sunflower, and Hay field, farm yard forest.

Hive #4: Originally a nuc made up this spring in my back yard, June 13, Moved and had nicely built larva frames, and super-ceedure cells (7). June 23, Found the queen, laying solid patches of eggs and larva, nice brood pattern. Aug 20, all brood hatched, no brood, no new eggs/larva. Aug 27: Mite wash check 3/300 mites, no queen assessed, the hive produced 165 lbs, old queen replaced with a DQ Sept 9: hive was calm, not aggressive, no sign of a laying queen, however she is there! FAITH





Recommended Reading:

Top Bar Beekeeping

By Less Crowder & Heather Harrell

Farmers who seek a guide to hive maintenance told through a thoughtful personal narrative will benefit from the discussion of this topbar style of beekeeping. The first-person style of the book allows a window into the practices of the topbar beekeeper while conveying a wealth of knowledge and a well-researched comparison of hive practices. The book is appropriate for beginning beekeepers as well as those experienced but looking for information on natural and organic beekeeping practices.

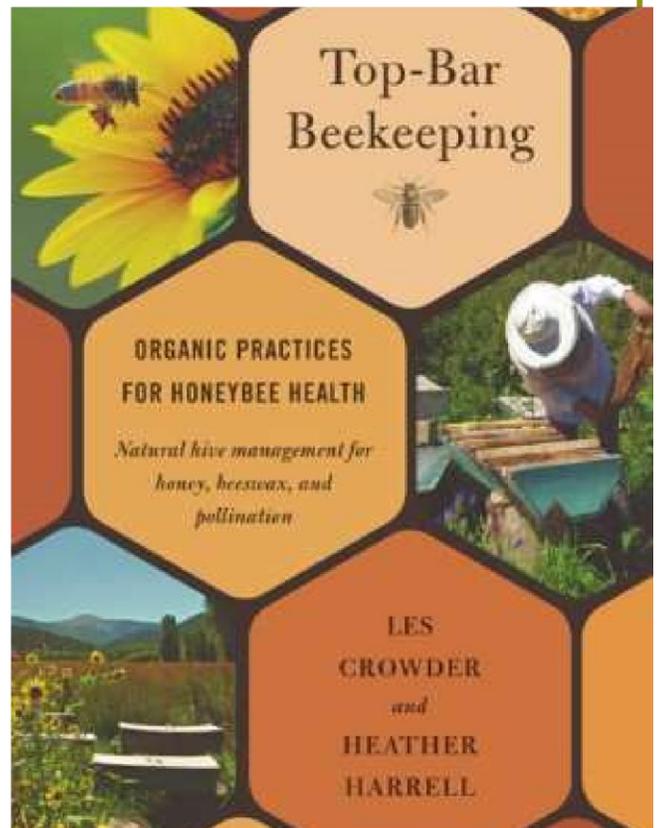
The book's ten sections discuss optimal practices of an organic beekeeper juxtaposed with discussion of industry standard practices and their drawbacks. Each section contains stories of the authors' successes and failures as well as diagrams and pictures to explain everything from hive design to plant species for optimal pollination.

Chapter 2, "The Supercreature," contains a thorough discussion of the social and industrial structure of a bee colony for farmers inexperienced with keeping a hive. The following section, "Beekeeping Basics," discusses issues such as being stung, placing a hive, and trapping a swarm of bees for commercial use. The authors' familiar voices elevate the book from a simple how-to manual to a memoir of common mistakes and earned victories in the beekeeping process.

In "The Seasons," section, Crowder and Harrell deal with diverse problems in an accessible way. The chapter provides succinct answers to common questions that beekeepers would have. When contemplating dividing a hive, they suggest: "Ideally, the queen would be moved to a new yard altogether, but this is not absolutely essential." In addition to dealing with times of the year, the chapter addresses a common pest for hives: bears. "It is important to set up the bear fence first.," advise the authors. "It is inconsiderate to bees and bears to leave bees unprotected in bear territory."

Whether the reader is looking to start their own hive or simply increase their knowledge of honeybees, the book provides interesting and detailed discussions of all aspects of raising them. Crowder and Harrell offer not only advice on how to get started, but an in-depth discussion of all aspects of keeping a hive, from bee capture, breeding, and selection to honey processing. They have crafted a book that is both informative and engaging, filled with introspective advice and practical knowledge.

Reviewed by Aubrey Blanche



-By Phil Chandler

Conventional methods of keeping bees are effective, but top bar beekeeping is simpler, less expensive, gives bees a greater degree of freedom, and still leaves you with honey and pollinated crops.



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PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS!

RRAA EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS: JANUARY 2021

Expect an email or a phone call from one of the Election Committee members in December! We are polling the membership for those you feel will benefit the association in the leadership positions. You will be asked the following questions:

- 1) Would you like to put your name forward for a position on the RRAA executive committee?
- 2) Do you nominate any member for any of the executive positions for 2021

Put some thought into helping organize this wonderful group of people. The time commitment is not very demanding, and we'd love to have your insight and perspective in steering the RRAA in the upcoming year.

Positions in the running every year:

President - Vice President I - Vice President II - Treasurer - Secretary -- Newsletter Editor - Web and Audio Visual Administrator

Advertising Changes

Starting next January, the Bee-Cause will be implementing a policy change when it comes to advertising in our newsletter. Classified advertisements for members will remain free of charge, however businesses or larger entities who's primary enterprise is selling bees, equipment, frames, or fasteners will be charged a nominal fee per issue. Members who sell nucs and queens will be published on an updated registry every issue as a resource for the general membership to reference. This change is to keep the



***What makes a great association great? Involvement, and contribution!
If everyone does one small task, gives up one HOUR a month to help the RRAA,
then we all benefit! (Call 204-612-2337 to lend a hand.)***

WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE: *Mentoring a novice beekeeper, join a RRAA committee, submit an article or a book review for the newsvetter, share experiences and advice with new beekeepers in novice webinars, network with novices to source Manitoba bred bees and equipment, Teach a class!*

TALK TO AN EXECUTIVE MEMNER FOR MORE DETAILS

Melissa's Musings

A friend give me an interesting book this summer. It's called the ABC's of Bee Culture, and it was first published in November of 1877. The author was Amos Root. The copy that I was given is one that was revised and rewritten by Amos Root and his son Ernest Root in 1905. Amos Root wasn't even intending to get involved with bees. He owned and ran a jewelry shop in Medina Ohio.

But one day in August of 1865, while he was working on a piece of jewelry, a swarm of bees flew over the jewelry shop. They must've landed nearby for he asked one of the workmen what they were doing and the workman said he could gather them up for Amos. Of course Amos thought his workman was just kidding and so he offered him a dollar for the swarm of bees. To Mr. Root's astonishment, the workman soon turned up with all of the captured bees in a rough wooden box. In the introduction to the book, Mr. Root writes this about that first introduction to the bees:

"At that moment I commenced learning my A B C in bee culture. Before night I had questioned not only the bees, but everyone I knew, who could tell me anything about the strange new acquaintances of mine."

Amos Root went on to start his own apiary, after finding a book written by Langstroth in a Cleveland book store, and quite soon after, he started up a bee equipment manufacturing business that is still in operation today, though it seems to make only beeswax candles now. Amos waxes strong about Langstroth in the introduction, writing "May God reward and forever bless Mr. Langstroth for the kind and pleasant way in which he unfolds to his readers the truths and wonders of creation to be found inside of a bee hive."

The book is organized alphabetically, and I thought it would be fun to print some of the sections over the next few months. To begin, I let the book fall open where it may, and it revealed the letter H. One entry says, HONEY, ADULTERATED. Part of the text reads thus:

"There was a time when adulterated honey was a rare article, but within recent years glucose, a product made of corn, and selling at \$.02-\$.03 a pound, has been used for adulterating honey. The amount of the inferior honey ranges as high as 33 to 75% glucose. Indeed dark honey, that which would be unsalable simply from it's looks, has been adulterated by putting in enough glucose to bring to a fair color. The temptation is so great to realize large profits, and to improve the appearance of dark looking honey, on the part of the dealer and, we are sorry to say, of one or two beekeepers, that far too much impure Honey has found its way upon the market.... It is to be hoped that the evil may be handled in some way, as there is probably no one thing that does so much to bring down the price honey, and disgust consumers, as the vile, cheap glucose that disgraces and cheapens otherwise good honey." -M.C.



“How to sit on a hive cover.”

What is a McFadyen Uncapper?

By Jim Campbell

What kind of gadget carries the name of the McFadyen uncapper?

The November meeting of the Red River Apiarists' Association is traditionally when members come together to demonstrate a beekeeping tool, a gadget, or some invention, used to make beekeeping life easier. During the "Code Red" lockdown across Manitoba to limit spreading COVID-19, coming together to show off "gadgets" in not possible for November 2020.

On the other hand, finding gadgets can continue, using the reach of the internet. This was realized after a friend in BC asked about a type of honey frame uncapper he'd heard about from an Albertan. Connecting with Lorne Peters, a Manitoba collector and historian, revealed stories of an older system using moveable heated knives to uncap wax along the length of frames. With that, the internet became my "gadget" for research.

A beekeeping operation in Ontario was found to be using a McFadyen uncapper, acquired when buying an existing business in 1980's, and upgraded with Stainless Steel components to comply with current food safety regulations. Further research revealed in 1940, inventor John F McFadyen of Tiverton, Ontario applied for a USA patent. Uncappers were made in Kincardine, and sold by F.W.Jones in the 1940's to 50's. Although seeking photos and additional historical facts, the BC friends' quest for verification of a story about a long ago gadget was answered.



To watch the video of this unusual uncapper, or see the original USA patent application, use the following links.

<https://www.facebook.com/647165302086834/videos/2657013174614800/>

<https://patents.google.com/patent/US2272808A/en>



And, should you have any photos or stories about this gadget, please send them to Jim Campbell, jaycam@mymts.net

Know your Speaker: Derek Micholson



This Month's presenter to the RRAA comes loaded with surprises!

Born in Winnipeg, an outdoor enthusiast, and from an early age, attracted to insects, bugs, butterflies, and eventually pursued an Environmental Science degree at the University of Winnipeg, studying courses like soil science and hydrology. In 2009, he took on a summer job with Dr. Currie working in the honey bee research lab at the U of M. Through this opportunity, similar to many of our previous guests, he became connected with MB industries Who's Who: Dr. Currie, Rheal Lafreniere, and Daryl Wright, who greatly influenced and became our presenters' mentors.

In the past two years, you may have engaged with our presenter through the Manitoba Hive Inspection Program where over 10,800 hives have been inspected. He holds and shares the current hive inspection contract with DLJ Consulting. Over the past 12 years, he has been engaged in full and part time research technician and began his Master's degree Entomology in 2016, which he is now finishing up.

He is no stranger to Beekeeping, and has also been hobby beekeeper for the last 7 or 8 years, currently maintaining about 24 colonies of his own.

Something that you may not know about our guest and his other pursuits: Along with his canine partner Nash, the two placed 7th in the Worldwide K9 Frisbee league in their rookie season. He is also a Hockey player and enjoys playing Ultimate frisbee himself.

There is much more coming from this individual, SO WATCH OUT!.... I would advise you to remember and keep this name and contact close to you.

When asked about his topic and a main message, his reply, "Different strains of bees have higher grooming tendencies."

When I inquired about his philosophy in beekeeping, he simply stated: "Hive health is a priority, and maintaining disease control a must. Queen rearing is easily my favorite aspect of beekeeping!"

On November 24th, at 7:30pm he will present to us:

**Mechanisms of Honey Bee Grooming Behavior and the
Control of Varroa Destructor**

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**Manitoba
Beekeepers'
Association**

Honey Bee Wintering. The Indoor vs. Outdoor Decision.

Or: Honey Bee Wintering, indoor vs. outdoor. Do what you want to! - By Brad Hogg

This is my take on how a person might decide which wintering strategy, indoor or outdoor, to employ in their beekeeping operation.

I want to take a moment to make a few things clear. These are my thoughts and mine alone. These thoughts were developed after only five years of beekeeping and while wintering outdoors only once, otherwise indoors. My intention is not to sway your decision one way or another but rather to simply take you down the decision-making path that I followed in my case and to talk about a few of the points I considered. Take this article for what it's worth with these facts in mind.

This is not an article about how to winter bees. The focus of this article is to compare the two systems in a way that might help you decide which you might want to employ with your bees. To save you time, if you're wanting the punch line. If you just want the answer as to which method is better, I'll tell you. Neither, and both. It has almost nothing to do with the bees and almost everything to do with the beekeeper.

Now you have the Coles Notes version, let's go into detail!

Survivability. According to the results from the provincial Apiarist's annual wintering survey, it is clear that there is, in general, not a significant difference between the two strategies as far as survivorship is concerned.

Year	Indoor % Loss	Outdoor % Loss	Indoor Advantage %
2017	15.3	20.7	5.4
2018	21.2	30.3	9.1
2019	21.3	21.4	0.1
Average	19.3	24.1	2.4

Costs. Building and setup vs. Wraps etc.

This will likely be one of the most influential factors which could be a building that I could use so there was no additional cost than wintering my bees. Being that I run about 100 colonies, and winter wraps is considerable. A Bee Cozy for a double deep hive is \$200 and you can see that the overall cost is considerable. Another replaced regularly after being soaked with water or eaten up by building, the cost of maintenance should not be considerable or be elaborate or expensive. I have an older large double garage are not in my building over the summer, I can make use of that space to mention a couple. If I were to own wraps for 200 colonies to store those wraps over the summer.



Security. Bears, vandals, thieves, weather.

I live in an area which, while certainly not infested, does see it though bears do hibernate in the winter, the hibernation season people realize. Bears can often be found on the prowl in late fall. Bees indoors gives me the confidence that they are safe from bears.

There are bad people among us and that's all that needs to be said in this situation. I feel that indoors, my bees are safer from these sorts of people.

Extreme weather events, ice storms, falling tree branches from the sky might

befall the bees as a result of nasty winter weather. These events happen day and night, month after month. Power outages are my fear of critical systems (the cooling fan, mainly) going should the power go out. I do target 4c as closely as I can but I am not worried about a few degrees.

(Continued on the next page.....)

Honey Bee Wintering. The Indoor vs. Outdoor Decision. Or Honey Bee Wintering, indoor vs. outdoor. Do what you want to! (.....continued)

Extreme weather events, ice storms, falling tree branches from high winds, whatever might befall the bees as a result of nasty winter weather. These events are not a factor for my bees, held steady at 4c all winter, day and night, month after month. Power outages are my fear but I have a good-sized generator at the ready to keep critical systems (the cooling fan, mainly) going should the power go out. In four winters, I have not had to use the generator. I do target 4c as closely as I can but I am not worried if the building temperature drops below that by a few degrees.

Feed consumption. Singles vs. Doubles.

It is a well known, yet still remarkable fact, that bees are very well adapted to staying warm during cold weather, even for extended periods. The one factor that beekeepers must take into account to allow this is feed consumption. The amount of feed that the bees consume over a given period of time is an inverse relationship below 4c and a direct relationship above 4c. This is a fancy way of saying that as the ambient temperature deviates either above or below 4c, the colony's feed consumption will rise. Since an outdoor colony is stored in an ambient temperature that is below, and often very far below, 4c, one can expect that this colony will consume more feed over the winter than will a colony which is wintered indoors and held at a constant ambient 4c all winter. For this reason, it is customary, although not mandatory, that a colony that is wintered outdoors will be wintered on two deeps of feed while a colony wintered indoors can easily survive the winter on one deep of feed.

While this is not a great determining factor, since I manage my colonies in single deeps otherwise, deviating from that, into doubles for winter, would be a management hassle that I can do without, thus making my management a lot less work.

Workload. Wrapping vs. moving.

My number one reason for wintering indoors is, it's easier, for me. Again, working with 100 to 200 colonies alone, I find it to be far easier to move my bees from my apiary, 300 yards to my wintering building than it would be for me to wrap that many colonies in the apiary where they sit. Again, the fact that this is easier for me is largely a factor of the equipment I have at my disposal, namely my beloved Kubota BX25 subcompact tractor. I have adopted a two-way pallet system that allows me to move my bees quite easily, four colonies at a time, into and out of the wintering building, and back again should the weather give me a big surprise. It takes me about three hours to do a complete move, working solo. There is no way I could wrap even 100 hives in that amount of time.



Again, this is my situation and my experience. You will need to evaluate all of these factors in the context of your situation to make the decision that works best for you.

Storing off-season equipment (wraps)

I've already mentioned the fact that if I were to winter outdoors, I would need almost one dedicated building in which to store my wraps for the winter. Even then, I would worry all summer about the mice chewing them up and what hassle and expense that would cost me in the fall. If I wintered outdoors in doubles, I would need to own 100 to 200 more deep hive bodies and 1000 to 2000 more brood frames as well. The cost of that alone could be \$3000 to \$5000.

Up to this point, you may be thinking that I'm a huge proponent of wintering indoors and in a certain context you would not be wrong, however, there are down-sides to indoor wintering.

(.....Continued on next page.)

Honey Bee Wintering. The Indoor vs. Outdoor Decision. Or Honey Bee Wintering, indoor vs. outdoor. Do what you want to! (.....continued)

Feeding. Stacking vs. accessible top openings for feeding and inspections.

When wintering outdoors, you may visit your colonies in February on those days that are warm enough to sneak open the top of the hive. Those quick visits in late February can give you an idea of their remaining feed stores and even allow you to add supplemental feed should they be running low. All the while you are doing this, my bees are stacked four colonies high in my building with the top covers on 75% of them inaccessible and the remaining 25% being six feet up, making inspection and feeding difficult to impossible. Contrary to popular belief, I've found that feeding syrup indoors at 4c is a waste of time and syrup. On the up-side, the bees indoors at a constant 4c exhibit a far more consistent feed consumption rate than those stored in a wildly unpredictably variable ambient temperature condition.

Winter cleanses. Natural vs. not?

One those warm winter days, January thaw, February melt, the outdoor bees can venture out and find much-needed relief with a mid-winter cleansing flight while their indoor cousins are stuck indoors, holding it for several weeks yet. In my case, this condition is one of the worst parts of indoor wintering. Some might contend that wintering outdoors would be a method that emulates nature more closely than does the dark sequestration of indoor wintering. I would not argue on this point. One would simply need to evaluate the importance of this in their decision-making process.



Predicting the weather.

If you winter outdoors, you can wrap and unwrap your bees almost at your leisure, or at least, on your schedule. Wrapping earlier than late and unwrapping later than early is almost a non-issue for the bees, you can do it when you have time. When wintering indoors, your bees are typically not wrapped at all so you are constantly watching that weather forecast for that magical -10c number in the overnight lows. You don't want to let your bees stay outside for too many 10c or colder nights in the fall and you don't want them outside over cold nights in the spring either. Many beekeepers run what are called "spring wraps" that they will use in the spring once the bees are moved outdoors. These wraps can give the hives enough insulation to make a difference in their survivorship and their brood buildup over the spring months. It seems that employing this kind of strategy starts to erode some of the benefits of wintering indoors, and it might tip the scales for some beekeepers, but not others.

In summary, as mentioned in the spoiler at the beginning of the article, the decision has far more to do with the beekeeper than it does the bees. There are perfectly viable methods for both strategies and the bees can survive and thrive in either situation. For these reasons, I believe, the decision is yours. It may take you a few seasons to fine-tune your method but rest assured, whichever you choose, even if you choose both, is not an incorrect choice by any means.



-Written by Brad Hogg

November 2020

R.R.A.A.

Classified

The RRAA , the Bee Cause, for you and through you:

Association for distribution to its members and their colleagues in

The Bee Cause is the official publication of the Red River Apiarists'

the beekeeping industry. It is published eight times a year on a

monthly basis except December and the summer months of June, meetings do not occur.

Advertisements

July, and August when membership

Articles can be best submitted in word documents as email attachments. Though they may be edited for spelling and basic

FOR SALE:

grammar, no changes will be made to their contents, message and opinions without the

authors written & expressed consent.

They are those of their originator and not of the

Stainless Steel Tank:
electrically heated

Red River Apiarists' Association. with an

water jacket. will hold more

Sunday preceding the membership meeting to allow for publishing

Deadline for any submission to this newsletter is the second than 2 barrels of honey.

and mailing delays and the legal obligation to allow membership to

review last meetings' minutes for errors or omissions before next

It has a bracket on the sides meeting. Regular membership meetings are normally near the top for holding scheduled 7:30 on the second Tuesday of every month at

a screen mesh which could except months noted above. Physical meetings have been

the Elmwood

Legion 920 Nairn Avenue in Winnipeg

be used for filtering honey into the tank.

suspended due to Covid-19, and will resume as soon as it is safe to do so. Webinars will take place in their stead.,

The heater element is

The Red River Apiarists' Association, formed in 1963, represents

thermostatically controlled.

the beekeepers of the Red River Valley and environs in southern

There are two outlets near

Manitoba. The association provides a forum for the promotion of

the bottom of one side of

opportunities, meetings, field days, workshops, presentations by sound beekeeping

practices through education, networking

the tank. One is for a honey gate and the other for machine.

local apicultural experts, as well as the dissemination of this monthly newsletter. attaching the portion

EZ-Fill Portioning Machine:

Once one sets it to dispense a certain amount of honey it consistently dispenses that amount and the gears back up a bit to prevent drips. Pays for itself in accuracy and waste reduction!

Sold as a Set:

\$5500.00 + G.S.T. Rob

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Border Hills Honey

We are in the market for wholesale purchase of yellow settled beeswax, looking to take in 3-5000lbs, and willing to make arrangements for pickup/delivery on any amount of wax.



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November. 13, 2020. RRAA Meeting Minuets

Beekeepers Zoom Meeting 7:30pm

-Monica Wiebe

Beekeepers Zoom Meeting starting at 7:30 Housekeeping:

John encouraged inviting guests. Send link to webinar and email address to John and they will send a few newsletters. Used wrong zoom account and we will reboot.

Nov. still virtual. January is standard election meeting, not sure if it will be virtual or not. How to do it will still open.

Issues from the floor: none

Minutes- see newsletter: Moved by Stephen Bowen moved and seconded by Jim Campbell

MBA report from Marg Smith:

See the newsletter, Marg open to questions

John thanked for the research updates

Treasurer John Speer: Balance \$ 6 688.94 Newsletter

costs outstanding Jan to Oct.

Some members have renewed, although Jan. is the beginning of the new membership year.

Some money saved due to not renting legion, and this is offsetting Zoom costs

Presentation by Rhéal Lafrenière – Provincial Apiarist

Late fall prep: Question to requeen or not to requeen in fall

Decision Making in the Fall: Cull?, What to feed?, Antibiotic treatment?, Miticide Treatment?, Honey?

Giving up on a colony is not getting rid of it – just reallocation unless disease is present.

Colony Development building blocks that impact in fall:

-Queen right and Genetics,

-Population Demographics- winter bees born at end of August or early August -Invest

in Health of Bees – Meds and nutrition

Scenario #1

Sept. 1, drone layer in a healthy, brood filled hive – not viable queen or drone laying queen

You could find queen and replace as lots of young brood and winter bee potential. Still worth spending money

You could cull/reallocate or if all other hives OK do nothing and see if it survives

Must do something

(...Continued Next Page)

November. 13, 2020. RRAA Meeting Minuets

Beekeepers Zoom Meeting 7:30pm

-Monica Wiebe

(...continued)

Scenario #1 – example B

No brood, but looks healthy, drone layer- drone brood

Steal brood from other healthy hives once queen gone

May be laying workers generating drone, lots of pseudo queens

Investigate carefully, if you find the queen requeen, but if laying worker shake in front of hives to get rid of laying workers (put in entrance reducers prior to doing this)

Cannot do nothing

Scenario 1 Example C: no workers,

hive not healthy looking,

To reallocate, ensure no disease

Shake in front to get rid of drone layer workers

If disease – remove

Scenario # 2

Sept. 20, almost finished mite control, finished feeding, lots of workers, no queen – looks healthy Requeening not an option

Reallocation – not necessarily necessary just because hive shut down brood production, may still have queen, bee genetics plays a role in this.

Put in young brood and see if they raise queen

If just a bit of brood let go and see what happens as you've spent your money on the hive Example

B of Scenario #2

Does not have lots of worker bees and you cannot find queen

Replace not option

Reallocate – shake some into a few other hives (if one hive weak move them there but if small number of hives, spread around.

Example C of Scenario #2

All the same factors as above but don't look healthy and all your other hive look healthy and strong

Be careful with spreading bees around so you don't spread disease

Cull if any questions

Do nothing and use resources in spring for new nucs

Disease: not usually the cause of queen-less-ness, If nosema – get tests done before reallocating. To requeen a very populated hive is difficult, kill and wait a day to reduce the pheromones. If laying workers, requeening is not a possibility. Rule of thumb – if combining 2 hives only increase by 50%. E.G. if original has 4 frames of brood, don't add more than 2 frames of brood or they may damage healthy bee.

-Continued next page

November. 13, 2020. RRAA Meeting Minuets

Beekeepers Zoom Meeting 7:30pm

-Monica Wiebe

(...continued)

Other Odds and Sods:

Wrap after 3 night of -8C, - advice of Ted Scheunemann given to Veronica
Make sure not moisture being wrapped in

Feeding late increases moisture

Pollen not needed in fall – not creating brood

Insulation helps reduce moisture

Re-Queening in July best, scenarios are for emergency

Waldemar has success with replacing queens with laying young queens if put exactly where old queen was running, especially when the honey flow is strong. Nurse bees will accept her and she lays immediately. Wrapped up at 9:25

Respectfully submitted,

Monica



RRAA DROP BOX ARCHIVES:**Pollen Patties: April 2018****Feeding Syrup: April 2018****Urban Beekeeping guide: March 2018****Packages VS Nucs: Feb
2018****Local Queens: A breeders perspective March 2018****Dead-out autopsy April 2019******CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS****

Have you come across an interesting article? Would you like to share an observation? Share an anecdote or an observation from your own beekeeping experiences?

Do you have an opinion you want to voice to the beekeeping community? Seen a video you found informative or would like a topic researched?

Send it in to the Editor!

Taking all submissions at: honeyb@mymts.net

**Dripping Slow and Sweet,
Four New Books About Honey and Bees**

HONEY AND VENOM**Confessions of an Urban Beekeeper By**

Andrew Coté

295 pp. Ballantine. \$27.

THEY LOVE

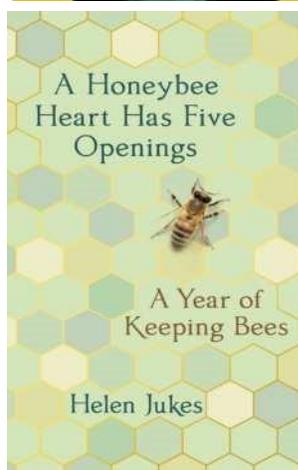
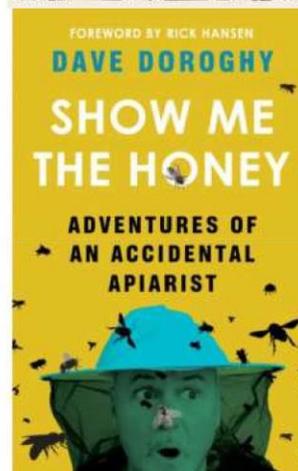
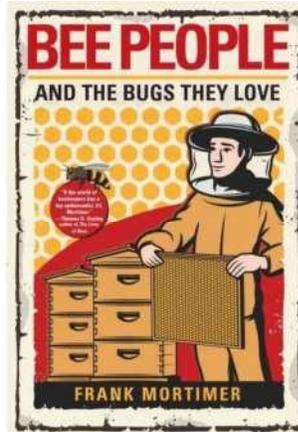
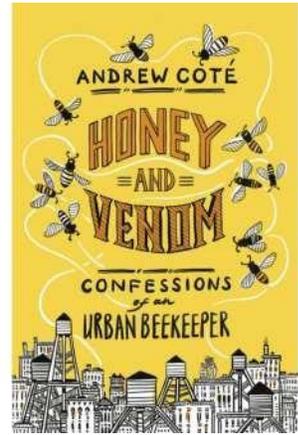
By Frank Mortimer

312 pp. Citadel. \$25.



BEE PEOPLE AND THE BUGS

By Dave Doroghy



SHOW ME THE HONEY Adventures
of an Accidental Apiarist

294 pp. Touchwood Editions. Paper, \$20.

A HONEYBEE HEART HAS FIVE OPENINGS

A Year of Keeping Bees

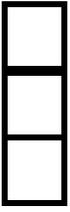
By Helen Jukes

238 pp. Pantheon. \$26.95.

Membership Application



**Note: Liability Insurance fees must be submitted before April 1st.*



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