

Bee Newsletter

5 August 2025

WEIRD, WEIRD, WEIRD!

Not you wonderful beekeepers, the bees and flowers:

Where is the sourwood honey, AND where is the spring honey?

We have been in a dearth all year. The weather has been good. Little heavy driving rain, wind, or hail. In most areas. Plenty of flowers. And generally enough bees.

Today, 26 July, there is evidence of shrinking brood patterns. Queens are laying some eggs, but not nearly what we would expect this time of year. The colony populations were large enough to swarm back in June. Why did they shrink.

It can only bee lack of food. Then the queen slows down laying eggs.

Now that sourwood is over and there is no chance of mixing syrup feed with nectar, contaminating our collectable honey, start feeding as if it were spring.

I see bees bringing in pollen which indicates they are visiting flowers. However, I will put pollen substitute in a field feeder and see if the honeybees come to it.

I need to raise a whole year's worth of brood before the end of September.

Don't rob too much honey off the hives. If this is a no honey year, so be it. Try to raise bees. Make sure there is enough honey in the hive for the winter (90#) by October.

The rumor in the scientific world is winter 2024-25 was the worst for survivability since 2000. Greater than 70% losses among those answering the survey. Mostly the big pollinators who can afford all the expensive treatments that did not work.

At the meeting we will talk about what to do now that sourwood has ended.

Feeding

Medicating

requeening

Growing lots of B's

Morale

<http://honeybeehealthcoalition.org/> Tools for Varroa mite management

All encompassing. I don't see one trick which was missed in a good and accurate discussion.

Copy it to your own computer and memorize it. Pretty complete "how to...". Varying your treatment method through out the year is part of the successful technique. Keeping your mite levels near zero is the start to keeping bees alive. Keeping them well fed through the whole year is the next step. Having large populations just on the verge of swarming is the third step. No guarantees, but live wintered over colonies should be the result.

Another aid is to plant flowers all over your neighborhood that attract honeybees. Native plants are nice but expensive. Highway department flowers work. You can get seeds at Home Depot (etc.). Plant along county roads, vacant lots in your subdivision, power corridors, etc. You want lots of stuff blooming out to two miles all spring, summer, and fall.