

Skagit Valley Beekeepers



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September 2014

Fat Bees!

The next meeting will be **September 11th, 2014 at 7:00 PM** at the Skagit Farmers Supply CENEX Administration building, located at 1833 Park Avenue, Burlington WA. The speaker will be Joe McConnaughey and he will be talking about mites and Fall / Winter Management.

Ah, the second year beekeeper. You know, the one who thinks they know it all. They've kept bees a whole year. They've been reading everything here and everything there. Surely, they know everything there is to know.

I read an article that was in Bee Culture a while back and the author covered how second and third year beekeepers manage to think they know it all. The first year doesn't know anything, and they know they don't know anything. The fourth year beekeepers and on, know that it is impossible to know all there is to know about keeping bees. The experienced beekeeper knows that you're constantly learning. That the bees are always coming up with new ways to remind you that beekeeping is an ongoing learning experience.

Yeah, I'm a second year beekeeper.

Little factoids are always popping up in my head.

Have a question? I know the answer! *I'm just probably wrong.*

Have a problem? Sure, I know how to fix it. *I've been doing this for two years, I got experience!*

Recently I thought I knew a "fact" about bees -- and I did! I just wasn't thinking and remembered wrong. Later, as I laid in my bed, I wondered what I was thinking. I spewed out one answer, the wrong one -- but I knew what the correct answer was. It was one of those moments where I had what I call a "*brain fart*".

So. I try to constantly remind myself that I don't know everything. That most likely I'll never know everything. I remind myself that I need to keep reading. To keep

learning and relearning.

Sometimes it seems odd that the large amount of things about beekeeping that I've learned amounts to so little. The bees teach me that every time I'm with them.

Still, I'm lucky to be surrounded by people **who do know** what they are talking about.

Like these "Things To Do This Month". I really don't know what you're supposed to do this month. If it weren't for **Ed Markus** (and others who know what they're doing), I wouldn't have a clue. I read old issues of Ed Markus' newsletters every month, gleaning what I can about what to do each month - and any other bits of wisdom he was kind enough to share through the years he served as editor of the SVBA newsletter.

If you ever get a chance. Thank Ed and everyone on the board, past and present. Their help has been invaluable!

Western Apiculture Society 2014 Conference & 2nd International Workshop on Hive and Bee Monitoring

September 17th thru 20th, 2014
University of Montana, Missoula, MT

WAS Conference Information:
http://ucanr.edu/sites/was2/Conference_Information/

Things To Do This Month

- Make sure each colony has adequate pollen and honey stores. Each colony needs about 80 lbs of honey in Western Washington.
- You can extract now. Give wet frames back to the bees to clean. Removed partially filled honey supers. After extracting, store honey supers in a

cool, dry place.

- If you need to feed, feed 2:1 syrup - they can store and cap that faster. Don't wait til the weather is cold and wet, get it done now.
- Remove queen excluders
- Unite weak colonies, be ruthless. Perform a newspaper join. Do not try to winter weak or diseased colonies.
- There's still time to re-queen - if you do so promptly!
- Raise the back of each hive about one inch so that any water can flow out of the hive.
- If you need to treat for mites, do so while it is still warm.
- Consider adding a mouse guard before the mice move in.
- You should have about 10 deep combs of honey or about 15 western combs
- If needed, move your hives to provide good wind protection and to get them out of damp areas or where pockets of cold air settle.
- Some suggest having a top and bottom entrance just in case the bottom entrance becomes clogged with debris or dead bees.

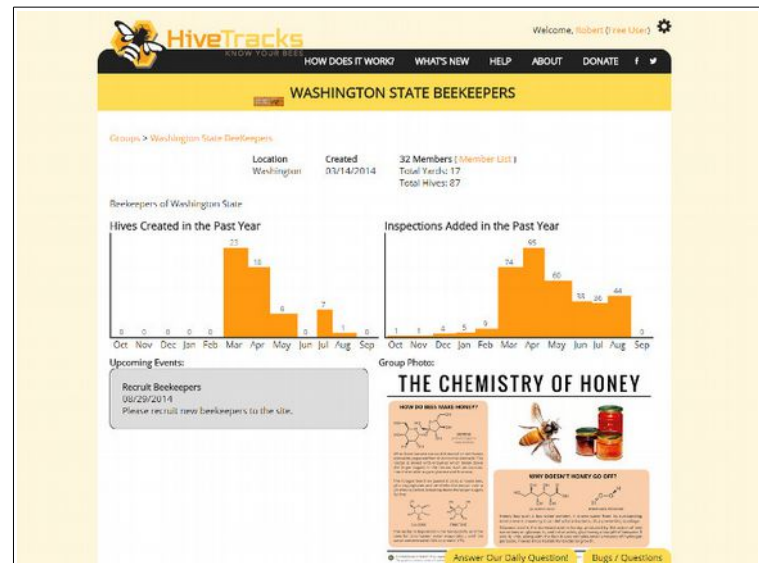
Join The Washington State HiveTracks Group

by Gary Ehrenfeld

Hello fellow Beekeepers, I would like to introduce a fascinating and useful web based hive management tool called **HiveTracks**. It is one the better hive management software I have used.

The website is comprehensive and very easy to use. Another great feature is it is free!

One very useful item of the site is you can set up a group of members that can share their data with the other beekeepers in the group. This is a great way to see what others are doing and what type of things they are doing with their hives. For example, what types of diseases they had encountered, what the method of treatment was and if the treatment was successful. Please go to the Hive Track site at <http://www.hivetracks.com> and take a look around. Please consider using the site to help fellow beekeepers in the state of Washington to become better beekeepers.



Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland Celebrate Harvest 16th Annual Fundraiser

When: September 20th, 2014 - Saturday - Dinner & Auction @ 5:30pm

Attire: Bling & Blue Jeans

Tickets: \$70 person or \$560 for table of eight.

Location: [Saint Joseph Center 215 No. 15th St. Mount Vernon, WA](#)

For more information, visit: <http://goo.gl/Dl6rY0>

I have setup a Washington State Beekeepers group so that we can see what is going on throughout the state and also to see if there are certain things going on in the state they we should be aware of. Once you create a free account and log in there is a wheel in the upper right part of the screen. When you click on that you will see Groups at the bottom of the selection screen. Click on that and it will take you to the group section. Then click on Washington State and then join.

<http://hivetracks.com/groups/washingtonstate>

About The SVBA Honey Report

I'm going to try something new and report the honey harvest by those in the Skagit Valley Beekeepers Association. I thought it might be interesting to see how we are doing as a community. We have everyone from those with just one hive to those with 130 hives ...and more (hi Bruce)!

Originally I had hoped that I could post the report in this edition of the SVBA newsletter but it was pointed out to me that there are a lot of people that haven't harvested just yet. So, I'll post the results of the survey in the October newsletter.

If you haven't already done so, email robert@yakima.net and let me know how many pounds of honey you have pulled from your hives.

I'm requesting from all of you how much honey you harvested this year.

No names will be mentioned, no companies mentioned. I just want to publish the low, the mean, median and the high amounts.

Just the amount of honey harvested in pounds (or you can provide the number of frames if you provide the frame size).

Just to show a bit of openness, I've harvested 39 lbs of honey this year.

My hope is that this will be an annual thing but it will all depend on you and how many responses I get.

I'll be sending out an email to remind everyone sometime in October.

Thanks you all for participating! This should be interesting!

Back To Fat Bees/Healthy Bees

A while ago, we had Sue Cobey as speaker for one of our SVBA meetings and within a superb presentation, one thing she said really stuck with me. She mentioned that good healthy bees can deal with a lot more problems than malnourished sick bees.

Think about it. If one doesn't eat well, is depressed, or is already stressed, then if that person gets another stressor

then that person isn't going to be able to handle additional stress like that of a healthy person.

It makes sense the same happens with bees.

So instead of trying to lecture you about things you can do and why they work (remember, I'm a second year beekeeper), I'll just point you to a series of really good articles by **Randy Oliver** of ScientificBeekeeping.com called "Fat Bees"

Fat Bees - Part 1

<http://scientificbeekeeping.com/fat-bees-part-1/>

Fat Bees - Part 2

<http://scientificbeekeeping.com/fat-bees-part-2/>

Fat Bees - Part 3

<http://scientificbeekeeping.com/fat-bees-part-3/>

I bring up these articles now because this is the time to ensure you have "Fat Bees", healthy bees to get through the winter and live to see spring.



Queen and her attendants on honeycomb

Photo by Robert Niles

