

Orange County Beekeepers Association

Minutes

August 12, 2021

7:00 pm

Carrie Donley, OCBA president, opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The meeting was attended by 30 people on Zoom and by 11 people at our meeting place in Hillsborough (Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Hillsborough).

Mites and Fall Preparation

Tim Struttman, OCBA vice president, introduced our speaker, Bridget Gross. Bridget is the NC Apiary Inspector for Region 2, which is mostly in the western Piedmont and runs from the Virginia border to the Georgia border.

Bridget discussed mites and fall preparation. She noted that this is the time when the bee population starts to decline and the mite population begins to rise. She said it is impossible to tell the level of mite infestation by sight alone, because the mites usually attach on the underside of the bees. She described how to do a sugar shake and an alcohol wash to determine mite counts. She recommends alcohol washes for beginners, since the numbers of bees used in the test can be counted.

Bridget said the [Honey Bee Health Coalition Guide](#) is a good resource for beekeepers. She said that the disease transmitted by varroa that she sees most often is deformed wing virus (DWV), which results in shriveled wings or no wings, something that is easy to see. Bridget also discussed other pests: small hive beetles and wax moths.

In the fall, Bridget said beekeepers might want to add robber screens to their hives. They should also combine weak hives (*"Take your losses in the fall"*). Other fall tasks include mite treatment and feeding with sugar water, if needed. Bridget said it is important to take notes, so you can learn from your experiences.

Bridget also discussed her favorite recipes for drone bread and drone granola.

State Fair

Dawn Rogers said she is still looking for OCBA entries for the State Fair competitions. Items needed include: cut-comb honey, chunk cut-comb honey in a jar, super-light extracted honey, and creamed honey (regular and flavored). If you let her know you have something to enter, Dawn will arrange to have entries picked up, taken to the fair, and returned to you. She is also putting together a gift basket. Email Dawn (dawnrogers006@gmail.com) if you have anything you'd like to contribute. And if you would like to help in any way with OCBA's booth, let Celeste Mayer know (celestemayer@gmail.com).

Carrie reported that OCBA's day to sell honey at the State Fair is October 15. Volunteers who sign up for shifts will get a free pass to the fair. Proceeds from the sale of honey support the North Carolina State Beekeepers Association. To sign up to work in the booth, contact Carrie (cdonley33@gmail.com).

Outreach

Dawn said that outreach has been kind of slow in the past month, but she expects it to start up again when schools are back in session. She noted that Mary Ann Rhyne and Wayne Vandenberg presented information about beekeeping to 4-H students at an event at Blackwood Farm and Cedar Ridge High School.

Apprentice Corner

Celeste reported that the OCBA website has a new feature called the Apprentice Corner (<https://theocba.org/apprentice-corner/>), which was created by our 2021 apprentice, Seokung Hong. Seokung created the blog/vlog to share her first-year beekeeping experiences.

Education Videos

Celeste reported that a committee looking at the creation of educational videos has held two meetings so far. They will focus educational videos on topics specific to Orange County beekeepers.

State Bee Lab

Carrie said that Charles Heatherly, NCSBA Apiculture Science Initiative chairman, said that funding (\$4 million) for the state bee lab is in both the NC House and Senate budgets. Next the budget moves to NC Governor for signature. If the governor vetoes the bill, the House can override it with 3/5 vote. If they don't override it, then we revert to the old budget, which did not include funding for the state bee lab.

Door Prizes

Carrie announced three door prize winners:

- Agritourism sign: Mary Ann Rhyne
- Honey dippers, Feeder, American Bee Journal: Dennis McGrath
- Frame jig assembly: Dawn Rogers

Upcoming Meetings

- Carrie said OCBA will be hosting another "Ask the Experts" session on August 26. Watch for an email with more information.
- Tim said next month's speaker will be Dr. Jerry Bromenshenk. He will describe a citizen science project that uses hive sounds to assess the health of a hive.